“Designing Investment Funds for UNESCO sites”

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Introduction

The economics of cultural heritage keep evolving, because of the expansion of its fields of application, and the redeployment of its objectives. Formerly the importance of cultural heritage was mainly related to the notions of memory and identity, while nowadays it is the role of culture as a pillar of sustainable development that is becoming stronger, as highlighted by the cognitive, social, economic, and environmental impacts that it can generate (Greffe 2012).
This evolution is certainly related to the transformation of the concept of cultural heritage, the extension of its field and the redefinition of the related value system. In this sense, three main phases can be identified (Hutter, Rizzo 1997, Avrami, Mason, De la Torre 2000, Throsby 2001, De la Torre 2002, Greffe 2003, 2010):

1. In the first phase, cultural heritage and its conservation appear to be a liability. The value of heritage is here mainly associated with its existence within a community, and little or no use-values are recognized. In this case, heritage is considered a financial burden, and the conservation of its existence value is the responsibility of the State, through subventions, as well as of other interested people, through donations. This conception has led to the implementation of public cultural heritage policies in several European countries, where the main value recognized was the contribution of heritage to the constitution of national identities and where the primary objective was to ensure its existence and authenticity, thanks to conservation measures.

2. However, the existence of use-values, mainly related to heritage site visits at the very beginning cannot be ignored. These values are associated with the multiple uses and reuses of cultural heritage and their mobilization becomes crucial to support the conservation of existence value. Indeed, the development of economic activities around a specific monument and cultural site can multiply benefits and create new sources, complementary to subventions and donations. This becomes even more important if we consider the need for compensating public fund reduction. Therefore, the sustainability of cultural heritage depends more and more on the market rather than on unpredictable contributions. Nevertheless, two reasons prevent this solution from being applicable in its entirety:
   - Firstly, even if cultural heritage is able to create new incomes, these incomes mainly benefit upstream actors (e.g. craftsmen, conservation enterprises) or downstream actors (e.g. hospitality industry) that rarely give part of the created value back to cultural heritage;
   - Secondly, the potential incomes expected by visits are reduced by cultural policies, which may lower entrance fees in order to sustain accessibility and educational purposes.

   This means that the expected increase in use-values cannot entirely compensate for the reduction in voluntary, public and private contributions, aimed at maintaining the existence value. In addition, the economy of cultural heritage is often considered an exceptional economy, both unstable and unprofitable: unstable because its resources are barely predictable, and unprofitable because it fails to benefit from a considerable part of the profits created.

3. Nowadays, the main challenge is to transform this unstable economy in a sustainable one, on the basis of the idea that cultural heritage contributes to creation and development in economic, social or environmental fields. How can we modify the traditional view of cultural heritage as a liability inherited from the past, in accordance with the more contemporary one which sees heritage as a productive ecosystem benefiting society as a whole? In the case of tangible cultural heritage, it is necessary to identify and underline the possibilities offered by a built environment of quality, often largely unused. In the case of intangible cultural heritage (Cominelli 2013), it is essential to emphasize its potential, in terms of know-how and experience, to find new solutions to contemporary social, cultural, ecological, health problems, and to incite innovation and creativity.

A CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

Funding Cultural Heritage: Main Constraints

The financial dimension of this new economy of cultural heritage is becoming a priority of the cultural heritage agenda. Nevertheless, financial perspectives are limited by three constraints (Greffe 2002, 2006; Towse 2010):

- *Cultural heritage is an experience good*: outcomes are uncertain and risks are high. This is a general characteristic of the economy of cultural goods and it means that we can expect to earn profits only after a site has been frequently visited and visitors feel satisfied.
- *Slow maturation of investments*: even when some uses of heritage appear able to create incomes, the development process may take time. For example, the rehabilitation of ancient constructions as accommodations often represents a strategic use for private heritage. Even so the investments made in this domain can be profitable, and their maturation is slow. The same happens in the case of publishing or audiovisual activities, critically related to the protection of intellectual property. Hence, the characteristic of these new uses of heritage is not necessarily a weak income, but mainly its slow maturation.
- *Externalities*: the profits generated can benefit other institutions, rather than the ones directly in charge of the conservation and promotion of heritage. This dissociation between the activity cost on the one side and the capture of benefits on the other side creates a problem of externalities within the economy of cultural heritage, which can lead to sub-optimal situations.

New Financial Perspectives

Budget restrictions in many European countries and the pressure exerted by the continuous growth of cultural heritage elements on scarce public resources make the need for finding new financial resources urgent (Rypkema 1995, Commission européenne 2010, European Commission 2010).
Thus, the current challenge is to be able to create a system:

- Developing new uses of cultural heritage and revenue-generating activities, respecting the artistic and historic value of the sites;
- Strengthening the relation between new uses and conservation objectives, in a sustainable perspective;
- Involving all stakeholders, with special attention to local community members;
- Associating them in the process of realization of expected benefits, that can last a long time;

- Ensuring that the external effects created by some, but beneficial to others, are correctly internalized either by mutual commitments in terms of investments, or through appropriate transfers. This means that when persuading the hospitality industry of the interest of sharing its gains with other cultural heritage institutions may be difficult, it may be easier to make it understand the interest of contributing to the quality of the heritage ecosystem in the long term.

This approach leads us to consider new financing principles, no longer based on discretionary grants, sponsorships or unexpected spin-off, but on stable commitments and mutual funds. The former is oriented toward the creation of sustainable funding, the latter to the creation of a positive-sum game.

A Specific Field of Study: UNESCO Sites in Europe

The need for a sustainable economy and funding of cultural heritage concerns all of its forms, but it is even more crucial when conservation is complex and expensive, as in the case of cultural heritage inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.
This is evident for monuments for which the recognition of an outstanding universal value is based on highly selective criteria in terms of authenticity, visual integrity and conservation. This recognition usually creates a significant challenge for the conservation and funding of the existence value, but also strong constraints on the possible range of use-values to be captured. It becomes clear that the increasing of labelized sites and the limitation of their possible uses, make the raising of apt funding more difficult.
This becomes apparent when we consider sites, cultural landscapes and historic urban landscapes. In this case, the quality of these assets results in a multitude of actor behaviors and initiatives, that may not be directly concerned with cultural heritage.
This finally appears crucial at the level of intangible heritage, such as arts and crafts skills, know-how, and cultural practices for which conservation is based essentially on the safeguard of the ecosystem permitting heritage reproduction.

In the specific case of European countries, we note that the continuous registration of heritage assets on the World Heritage List (Frey, Steiner 2011) not only helps the identification of cultural heritage, raises awareness of its value and engenders respect for the past, but also imposes new financial obligations. The financial demand becomes even worse if we consider the restrictions regarding alternative uses of heritage, that could alter the integrity of the site, but that could also represent potential incomes. Many States and UNESCO sites face increasing difficulties in mobilizing the resources they need, for the following reasons:

- Where conservation was primarily based on public funds, current public debt constraints leave little hope for cultural heritage conservation.
- Where conservation and promotion were mainly based on voluntary private contributions, a similar tendency can be observed since corporate philanthropy follows the economic conjuncture. The crowd funding system seems to open up new perspectives, but it is not easy to reproduce it with regularity, since it is mainly based on emotion and this feeling can be dramatically reduced by repetition.

Besides these financial issues, other problems concern the economies of outstanding cultural heritage. To give an example, virtualization can reveal new perspectives for promotion, but can also lead to the construction of a virtual, instead of a real, cultural heritage. The proliferation of sites and labels may contribute to reduce information asymmetry, but it may also create strong competition between heritage assets, and at worst, general confusion, apart from the most emblematic sites.
It seems evident that the World Heritage registration process does not always evaluate in the same way artistic value and financial sustainability. It is of course normal not to put at the same level the analysis of outstanding universal value and the analysis of financial sustainability. Nevertheless,

financial issues can generate the necessary pressure to create a consensus among actors with different or even divergent priorities.
European States face a rising tension between the growing need for safeguarding, based on deeper understanding of the value of heritage on the one hand, and on the other, the increasing lack of financial resources. Pursuing the safeguarding objective requires significant and sustainable financial support. How to ensure it? Which new financial tools and models can be developed?

FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES

Considering the above identified financial issues and the need of encouraging the sustainability of conservation projects, financial models for cultural heritage (Licciardi, Amirtahmasebi 2012) should present the following characteristics:

- they involve multiple actors and attract different resources.
- they mobilize resources for a long time period and with slow maturation perspective;
- they accept to invest in activities associated to high risk;
- they are able to re-inject the profits realized into new activities directly or indirectly related to cultural heritage;
- they are based on a systemic logic that takes into account not only the development of specific initiatives, but also strengthening their relations with other existing or potential activities and subsidies;
- they evenly distribute the financial responsibility for the safeguard of cultural heritage between public and private actors (States, local governments, private investors, owners…);
- they are apt to support continuous cultural heritage financial needs, since investment capital can be re-used more than once. This is important because the conservation of cultural heritage cannot be executed all at once, due to the weathering of construction materials and the evolving of its security norms. Hence, perpetual protection requirements become possible, when the financial support is of a revolving kind.

Impact investments

In this perspective, investments in the field of cultural heritage should be conceived following the logic of "Impact investments": investments that aim to create positive outcomes (social, cultural, and environmental) beyond financial return (J.P. Morgan, Rockefeller Foundation, GIIN 2010). Investors attracted by these investments can be highly diversified: public institutions, philanthropic foundations, institutional investors, companies, communities, individuals. Investors should be ready to accept to trade-off financial returns for positive impacts, as well as investing in activities associated to high risk, compared to traditional investments. Even if they are often designed with the intent of creating a positive impact, for the long term sustainability of these investments it becomes crucial to be able to measure the impacts generated. In this perspective, impact investors have sustained the development of Impact Reporting and Investment Standards (IRIS) providing standardized and comparable data.

Revolving funds: acquisition and loan funds

The use of revolving funds in the field of cultural heritage is not new. Their development was already suggested by the Declaration of Amsterdam of 1975, promulgated by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, on the occasion of the Congress on the European Architectural Heritage. The Declaration emphasizes that Europe's architectural heritage is an integral part of the world's cultural heritage and its conservation must become an integral part of urban and regional planning, of educational and training programmes and that new legislative and administrative measures as well as appropriate financial support are needed for conservation. In particular, the Declaration states that "Authorities should set up Revolving Funds, or encourage them to be established, by providing local authorities or non-profits with the necessary capital. This is particularly applicable to areas where such programmes can become self-financing in the short or the long term because of the rise in value accruing from the high demand for such attractive property." Revolving funds can consequently be considered a useful financial tool for the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage.

A revolving fund is a pool of capital created for a specific purpose (Mitchell 2011, Palsson Skarin 2011). The capital of the fund is borrowed, on the condition that it will be later returned to the fund and "revolved" to new projects. In general, two types of revolving funds are recognized: the acquisition funds and the loan (or revolving) funds.

In the first case, the fund is used by an institution to purchase, rehabilitate and finally resell a heritage asset. The institution managing the fund buys the heritage asset, it restores and eventually promotes it, before at last selling it. The income generated by this operation is used to repay the principal and the interests (which are calculated as a percentage of the principal and that represent the cost of the use of the fund). The money returned to the fund is then used to acquire other assets, and so on. This mechanism allows the gradual renovation of cultural heritage assets, which once restored are put back into the economic system in such a way that they can reap some benefits without having to sustain the excessive costs related to restoration, conservation and even maintenance. Nevertheless, this kind of operation is limited by the amount of available financial resources and it may be difficult to attract new resources since their use is barely lucrative.

In the second case, the institution managing the loan fund plays a mainly financial role. It finances actors who can be owners of heritage assets or involved in the development of the economy of heritage sites. The resources provided by the loan fund can stimulate activities of conservation and promotion and even create synergies among cultural heritage actors, attracting new stakeholders and investments. The fund revolves through the repayment of the loan's principal and interests, over the course of a pre-established loan term. As in the previous case, the reimbursement permits investors to re-establish the fund and to use it for other projects.

In both cases, the goals and the functioning of the revolving fund organization cannot be exclusively based on traditional lending criteria: creditworthiness, equity, management ability, profits or cash flow. In fact, we can observe that:

- interest rates are often lower than the market ones and they may vary depending on the potential return of the project, according to ability-to-pay indicators. Thus, projects which are less profitable, but have strong non-economic impacts, can benefit from lower interest rates;
- the duration of amortization of the principal is often longer than in traditional loans;
- the level of risk accepted by revolving funds is often higher than the one tolerated by traditional loans;
- mortgage guarantees required should not impose penalizing conditions, as the market ones;
- technical assistance is often included in the fund basic services in order to raise the success of funded projects.

These favorable conditions are possible since revolving funds are not only created for financial purposes, but mainly:

- to increase access to capital for organizations and individuals engaged in projects related to the main goal of the fund;
- to make the preservation and safeguarding projects more economically viable and sustainable;
- to create synergies between the fund and the community benefiting from the fund.

In the specific case of cultural heritage, revolving funds can support a variety of projects: conservation of all kinds of heritage - architectural, archaeological, moveable, cultural landscapes, natural heritage, immaterial heritage -, revitalization of heritage areas, promotional efforts, educational projects, etc. Hence, if the repayment of the loan remains essential to keep the fund revolving, its main focus becomes the success of the project related to a cultural heritage site. Thus, it is crucial to evaluate not only the financial sustainability of the supported projects, but also to capture the multiple non financial effects that incite interest in taking the risk of establishing these kind of funds.
Making revolving funds work is not without constraints and risks, nevertheless they represent a valuable and challenging tool for the preservation of cultural assets and a credible solution to the lack of public resources in this field.

Revolving funds for the rehabilitation of historic centers: the case of Porto

The regeneration of urban spaces, including historical centers, is present in several Portuguese policy instruments, aiming at adding value to the territory, promoting its social, cultural and economic development. The implementation of this policy is financially supported by the European structural funds that play a strategic role in avoiding market failure, sustaining public and private initiatives. Even if they are mainly applied through grants, recently a new investment based approach, Jessica, has been developed to use these funds. Jessica is a financial engineering mechanism that permits to EU countries to invest some of their EU structural fund allocations in revolving funds. On this basis, the original fund is never drained and returns from supported investments can be reinvested in new projects.
In Porto, these funds and mechanism (Deloitte, EIB 2009) have supported the rehabilitation of Quarteirão das Cardosas, located between the historical and the modern area of the city. Constructed at the beginning of last century, this area was particularly dynamic for its economic, civic, social and cultural role. Nevertheless, in the mid 80's it lost its strategic role and started to be neglected.
The project of rehabilitation of Quarteirão das Cardosas has been defined by the strategic document adopted in 2007 by the board of Porto Vivo SRU, a urban regeneration society created by the Municipality of Porto, in order to plan and realize the renovation of specific areas of the city, that suffer from social and economical degradation, reduced population, abandon of houses. The rehabilitation plan involves both public and private actors:

- Porto Vivo SRU, project leader, that defined the intervention framework and took care of the expropriation process. According to Porto Vivo's data, 6/7 families have been relocated to ensure the realization of the project.
- LUCIOS, a private company specialized since three generations in residential, industrial, trade and services, sports and leisure, maintenance and rehabilitation construction. The company took care of the rehabilitation works and of the real estate promotion business.

The costs of the renovation (estimated at 13.6 M€) have been sustained by LUCIOS. In order to manage cash flows and increase fiscal benefits, the company created in 2011 an investment fund, managed by the real estate investment fund Fundbox, that will be liquidated in 2016. The capital of the fund has been constituted using: 1) the outcome of the sale of the car parking constructed by LUCIO under the square of Quarteirão das Cardosas and sold in the first year of the project (6.2 M€ euros) 2) and a low interest rate loan obtained through Jessica to finance the creation of commercial spaces (1 M€). Except from the car parking, the revenue obtained from the sale of the commercial areas and houses is equally divided between Porto Vivo SRU and the private partner. For Porto Vivo SRU, won't realize any profit, since revenue equals supported costs. For the private partner, a profit of 1.1 M€ is expected (8.45% of construction costs). The main risks of the project concern the variation of sale prices of the assets, the underestimation of construction costs, as well as the potential speculation of real estate investors that could increase gentrification and limit the

repopulation of the area.
The availability of Jessica funds in Porto facilitated the realization of the project and thank to its revolving mechanism financed other activities: e.g. the restoration of Palácio das Artes by the Youth Foundation, the rehabilitation of ecclesiastic heritage by Irmandade dos Clérigos, etc.

Community Shares

The term "community shares" refers to withdrawable share capital, that represents a mean for funding solid community projects. This type of share capital can only be issued by co-operative societies, community benefit societies and charitable community benefit societies, created with the mission to conduct a business or trade for public benefit.
This system permits to raise significant amount of capital through the investment of small sums by many members of a community. Thus, community members can invest in an ethical way and in projects serving a community purpose. Instead of being distributed among members or external shareholders, profits are returned to the all community. Besides economic return, community members take directly advantage of social, cultural, environmental benefits generated by funded projects.

The case of Portland Works

Portland Works Little Sheffield Ltd. is a Community Benefit Society (CBS) established in 2010 to buy, rehabilitate and manage Portland Works, a Grade II* listed building located in the Little Sheffield district of Sheffield (Portland Works 2014). The aims of the CBS are:

- to maintain physically the building, and to manage it in a democratic way through the work of tenants and supporters, in order to provide affordable workshops and studios for craftspeople, creative industries and small business start-ups.
- to safeguard a building recognized for its architectural and historic importance (since in 1914 it was the first place where stainless steel was used in manufacturing).

The firs stage of the project was the purchase of the building at a price of £390,000 in February 2013 and the beginning of the renovation work. The capital requirements have been met from a combination of community shares, short-term loans from social investment businesses, and Community Bond loans from individuals. The second stage of the project will be to ensure management and renovation using revenue from rental income and capital grants.
The community shares created have a nominal value of £1, with minimum holdings of 100 for ordinary members and 25 for tenants of the Works, and a maximum £20,000 (in accordance with the Financial Services Authority's rules for CBS). Independently of the value of the shares held, each share holder has the right for one vote at the AGM, that elects the Board of Directors. Shares qualify for interest payments, to be proposed annually by the Society's Directors and agreed at the AGM. The Society aims to pay a rate of interest, as a members' protection against inflation, that should not be considered a return on investment for those prioritizing financial return.

The raising of funds through community shares has permitted to the Sheffield community to ensure the safeguarding of a historic building otherwise destined to a residential programme with poor chances of success. The Community Benefit Society of Portland Works maintains a living heritage site where traditional and creative trades, important for the economy of the city, are practiced and transmitted. The conjoint work of community members with different competences and roles contributes to strengthen the social capital of the community, attached to the identity of Portland Works' heritage.

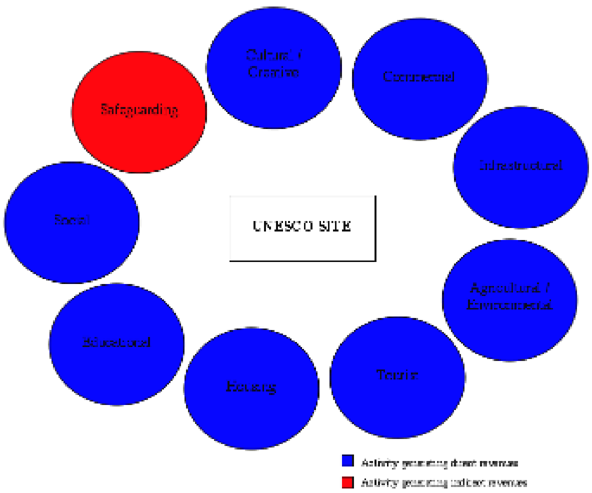
CHALLENGES FOR UNESCO SITES

Designing new financial instruments for Unesco sites

Is it possible to foster the implementation of these financial instruments in the field of cultural heritage and especially of Unesco sites? Which specific characteristics should these instruments present? Which kind of activities should be financed in order to garantee financial return and positive outcomes? Which investors can be involved in the creation of funds? Can public measures foster positive outcomes and limite negative ones?
These questions will be further adressed in the framework of the STAREBEI research "Designing Investment Funds for UNESCO sites: demand, governance and structure". Nevertheless, some general previous considerations can be shared about the creation of specific funds for Unesco Heritage:

Definition of needs and objectives of the fund
Because of the lack of suitable public resources, new financial instruments now represent a major opportunity for the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. Their implementation requires us to clearly identify the needs of the cultural site and the related cultural community, that could benefit from the fund. This means clarifying objectives as well as identifying and measuring potential impacts, both financial and non-financial. Impact funds can attract new investors and resources not only based on a logic of financial return, but also by fostering other positive outcomes. The functioning mechanism of revolving funds strengthens relations among different stakeholders financing and accessing the funds, increases the supply of capital and lowers asset prices, creates a permanent source of capital, and reduces the default risk, thanks to a continuous monitoring of projects financed. This availability of funds, continuously reinvested following the same needs and objectives, sustains the development of positive outcomes in the long term.

Identification of typologies of sites and revenue-generating activities
The specificity of a fund is strongly related to the different typologies of sites that may be concerned. In this sense, it is crucial to define sites not only by category (cultural, natural, and mixed) and by theme (cities, cultural landscape, forest, marine & coastal, earthen architecture), but also on the basis of the type of activities that can be sustained and financed and that will be able to generate resources apt to pay back the loan. These activities are thought out in a broad way considering not only the ones specifically oriented to the conservation of the site, but also the ones able to sustain new uses and to create new meanings. Heritage is an ecosystem and the financial resources mobilized may be associated with a variety of uses, from conservation to virtualization.



Safeguarding activities concern the restoration, conservation and maintenance of the integrity of cultural heritage sites. This typology of activity necessitates important financial and technical resources to be implemented, but do not generate any direct revenues. Nevertheless, they are crucial for maintaining the existence value of the site and its specificity that are at the basis of all other direct and indirect uses. The mechanism of revolving funds can be easily employed to develop activities generating revenues, and able to ensure the payment both of interest rates and of the principal. In addition, a mechanism of compensation should be created to partly finance the safeguarding of the site with the generated revenues. Considering the sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list, it is also important to understand that many uses of this heritage can be limited to respect the existence value of the site and safeguarding priorities.

Establishment of a fund
The initiative of creating a revolving fund can come from public institutions or individuals as well as the start up capital, generally granted by local foundations, corporations, local government agencies, private enterprises or benefactors. Apparently, public and private, for profit and non-profit sources are needed to generate the seed capital. Even once the fund is established, fund-raising activity is necessary to keep attracting new capital. An ambitious objective is to attract capital from local entrepreneurs who indirectly benefit from cultural regeneration projects and/or causing its deterioration through their activities (e.g. hospitality industry, tour operators, polluting industry damaging the material heritage…). This process can be voluntary, encouraged by marketing strategies, or outlined in a legal framework. Establishing a revolving fund can be the opportunity to unite different actors, such as donors, proprietors, project administrators or program initiators, to change their perception of cultural heritage, and their responsibility focus, creating an effect of synergy.

Structure managing the fund
The structure of the organization managing the fund can be private or public, depending on the objective of the fund and national laws. Nevertheless, in the field of cultural heritage, non-governmental and non-profit organizations seem to be more inclined to pursue the objectives, especially non-economics ones, of the fund. In the same way, local organizations, directly related to the targeted site and territory, seem to have better results than statewide ones.

Borrowers
The individuals and organizations accessing revolving funds should primarily be the ones that, considering the characteristics and the expected impacts of the project they want to implement, do not easily have access to traditional loans. Nevertheless, the projects they propose should be financially sustainable in the long term, permitting the reimbursement of the fund.

Project eligibility
To facilitate access to the fund and to filter funding requests, it is important to identify a minimum of criteria to be respected during the selection process. For example, in the case of interventions aiming at historical preservation, it can be required that buildings benefiting from the fund are inscribed on a local, regional, or national register, attesting to their historical and artistic value, but also that further uses respect its existence value. Financing projects related to the same UNESCO site can create synergy and yield overall result or ripple effects. Moreover, the revolving fund can be complementary to other incentives (e.g. tax credit, grants, sponsorships), in order to make the whole rehabilitation and promotion project more feasible.

Fund functioning
The functioning of the fund should be oriented firstly toward guaranteeing the success of the projects and secondly at profit making. In this perspective, it is important to guarantee:

- Interest rates lower than prime rates.
- Technical services: borrowers usually lack expertise, and need technical assistance to set up business plans, complete forms, develop management and administration skills, keep the all activity healthy. This becomes even more important when the

objective of the fund is to rehabilitate historic areas, since it permits the needed competences to be shared among borrowers, limiting gentrification processes and increasing successful results.

- Long courses of the loan: especially for projects requiring important investments and generating poor cash flows. Nevertheless, to improve cash flow of communities benefiting from the fund and also from the organization managing the fund it can be advantageous to associate long-term and short-term loans with slow and fast return possibilities.

Success and sustainability
Besides all the indications given, the success of a fund strongly depend on its capacity to develop financial leverage and marketing actions aiming at inciting potential borrowers, stakeholders, projects and especially partnerships at different levels.
To establish the success of a fund it is also necessary to monitor results and impacts, in order to determine whether specific goals have been achieved, and raise awareness of the accomplished results among financers and other stakeholders. The evaluation process should concern financial results, but also non-monetary ones like the improvement of quality of life, the maintenance of the specificity and identity of sites, the limitation of gentrification processes, the capacity of encouraging new investments, creating virtuous circles and maintaining options.
A successful impact investment or revolving fund should also be able to ensure further support in order to guarantee the durability of the conservation process. This means encouraging today's heritage financers to continue supporting cultural heritage, through appropriate incentives and information.

Communities
Recent economic crises fostered the emerging of a new actor: local heritage communities. Designing investment funds nowadays cannot avoid considering this tendency. Community involvement becomes crucial both on the side of the collection of resources necessary to achieve cultural heritage projects and on the side of the implementation of activities that can have important positive impacts for the community itself.

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