



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Archaeological Conservation through Community Engagement: a case study from Petra in Jordan

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## Abstract

This paper presents the results of the Petra Maintenance Project implemented by Sela for Training and Protection of Heritage in Petra between 2022 and 2025. This project proposes a pioneering approach to cultural resources management through the engagement of the host communities. This model bridges the gap between technical projects and social initiatives, aiming to transform the Jordanian cultural resources management (CRM) sector into a sustainable industry. The project piloted an innovative public/private sector cooperation model, including a blended finances model. In cooperation with and with the support of the Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority, Sela trained and employed several multidisciplinary teams to undertake maintenance projects and equipped the participants with soft skills and hands-on experience, enhancing their employability across various sectors. The project targets multiple community layers: individual (through job creation and career guidance for young adults and students), community of practice (through multidisciplinary training fostering shared values and experiences), and society (through awareness campaigns promoting cultural heritage). By involving 300+ direct beneficiaries and their households, this project generated a long-term income and developed a local task force skilled in heritage preservation that addresses immediate preservation needs.

## Keywords

Community archaeology, Sustainable heritage, Petra, Conservation, World Heritage Site

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