periscopio

OVIEDO 2031
CAPITAL EUROPEA
DE LA CULTURA
CIUDAD
CANDIDATA

Transforming La Fábrica de Armas de La Vega, from industrial heritage to a new cultural space in Oviedo

Program

Fábrica de Armas
de La Vega, Oviedo

Thursday, 12 November

FUNDACIÓN CONTEMPORÁNEA
OVIEDO 2031 CAPITAL EUROPEA DE LA CULTURA CIUDAD CANDIDATA
OVIEDO.es AYUNTAMIENTO
Principado de Asturias
CON LA COLABORACIÓN DE alsa

Fábrica de Armas de La Vega, a project for the future

The site of the Fábrica de Armas de La Vega is closely linked to the history and cultural heritage of Oviedo. In 1153, the Benedictine monastery of Santa María de La Vega was founded here, serving as a refuge for pilgrims travelling along one of Europe's earliest routes, the Way of St James, which began right here in Oviedo.

Following the confiscation of church property in the 19th century, the monastery's grounds were used from 1857 onwards to house the arms factory, which expanded with various workshops until the 1940s, including the spectacular Cannon Workshop, designed by the engineer Ildefonso Sánchez del Río.
For over a century, this industrial complex shaped Oviedo's working-class and economic identity until its final closure in 2013, leaving a unique heritage legacy that combines the remains of the old monastery with magnificent examples of industrial architecture from the first half of the 20th century.

The future transformation of this former Fábrica de Armas de La Vega into a new cultural space is one of the key projects planned by Oviedo City Council as part of the renewal of the city's cultural model in the coming years, as set out in the recently approved Oviedo Strategic Plan for Culture (PECO 2035). This is a proposal of great symbolic significance that is already underway; it will heal an urban scar right in the heart of our city and will become one of the key legacies of Oviedo's bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2031.

The holding of these Periscopio conferences in Oviedo, in partnership with the Fundación Contemporánea, provides us with an excellent opportunity to present and introduce the project for the future Fábrica de Armas de La Vega within the ongoing discussions on cultural models and uses in the transformation of former industrial spaces, and to hear from professionals and project leaders involved in similar initiatives across Europe, so that we may exchange ideas and share best practices in their management.

Rodolfo Sánchez Farpón
Director of the Oviedo 2031 Bid

Thursday, 12 November

In person and online

9:00–9:30h

Registration

Fábrica de Armas de La Vega. Nave Almacén

9:30–10:00h

Opening

Fábrica de Armas de La Vega. Nave Almacén

Institutional welcome

Rodolfo Sánchez Farpón
Director of the Oviedo 2031 Bid

Sara Magán
Director of Fundación Contemporánea

10:00–11:00h

Round table discussion

Fábrica de Armas de La Vega. Nave Almacén

Impact in the territory, participation and programming

In English

How do cultural spaces impact their local areas, and how are the public and the cultural sector involved in their design and programming? Drawing on three European examples – Fabra i Coats (Barcelona), Poligon Creative Centre (Ljubljana) and Trans Europe Halles – we will explore different models of management and collaboration, ranging from creation and exhibition to support for artists, residencies and research. A discussion on participation, partnerships with other sectors and ways of developing a programme that is connected to its local context.

Moderator:

Antonia Blau
European Dimension I Oviedo 2031

Speakers:

Erika Haxhi
Network and Event Manager at TRANS EUROPE HALLES

Eva Soria Puig
Director of Cultural Sectors, Barcelona Institute of Culture (ICUB), Barcelona City Council

Luka Piškorič
Cultural & Creative Hubs Expert, Poligon Institute

11:00-12:00h

Round table discussion

Fábrica de Armas de la Vega. Nave Almacén

The relationship with industrial heritage and the nature

Former industrial sites retain traces of their past, but also open up new possibilities for their use and relationship with the surrounding environment. Drawing on the experiences of ICOMOS CIF, DEPO2015 and La Térmica Cultural, this round-table discussion aims to explore the challenges that arise when working with these spaces: how to intervene through architecture and landscape design, how to respect the nature, and how to incorporate new cultural activities without losing sight of the site's identity.

Moderator:

Nacho Ruiz
Curator for Architecture and Urbanism I Oviedo 2031

Speakers:

Concepción Fernández Díez
Director of Museums, Heritage and Culture at the City of Energy Foundation (CIUDEN)

Cristina Gonzalez-Longo
Architect, University of Strathclyde. President of ICOMOS CIF

Soňa Rychlíková
Director of DEPO2015

12:00-12:30h

Coffee break

Fábrica de Armas de La Vega. Nave Almacén

12:30–14:00h

Participatory Session

Fábrica de Armas de La Vega. Nave Almacén

Take your seat at the table

A table, three chairs and a shared theme: the transformation of the Fábrica de La Vega into a new cultural venue in Oviedo. Zoe López Mediero will set the scene and explain how the event will work. Marcella Ciacci, editor and founder of The 99.art, will share her experience, after which the discussion will be opened up to professionals in the sector. A participatory session in which anyone can take a seat and speak up to contribute ideas, suggestions and concerns, with the aim of listening to the sector and involving it in the discussion about the future of this cultural space.

Facilitaded by:

Marcella Ciacci
Editor and Founder of The99.art

Zoe López Mediero
Co-Artistic Director Oviedo 2031

14:00–14:30h

Closing

Fábrica de Armas de La Vega. Nave Almacén

Conclusions

Alicia Suárez
Cultural Journalist

Verónica Grech
Illustrator

Speakers

Alicia Suárez

Journalist. Head of Communications, Outreach and Sponsorship Projects at Ópera de Oviedo

Alicia Suárez Hulton is a journalist and specialist in corporate communications, cultural outreach and project development aimed at bringing culture to new audiences. She coordinates the Communications and Projects department at the Spanish Association of Lyric Theatres and the Communications and Sponsorship department at the Oviedo Opera, where she spearheads initiatives such as 'Ópera en el Territorio'. She is vice-president of Pasarela Campoamor and a lecturer at the University of Oviedo and other institutions, teaching courses on event organisation and communication. She has extensive experience as a radio and television presenter on programmes dedicated to promoting music, as well as a moderator and host of cultural and institutional events.

Antonia Blau

Expert in European cultural policy

Antonia Blau is an expert in European cultural policy and an adviser to the Oviedo 2031 bid. Originally from East Berlin, she studied German Language and Literature, American Studies and Political Science. She has worked for the Goethe-Institut for fifteen years, holding posts including director in Madrid, at the Goethe-Institut's office to the European Union in Brussels, and in Marseille. She completed her PhD on transnational cultural policies at the Universities of Aix-Marseille and Hildesheim.

Concepción Fernández Díez

Director of Museums, Heritage and Culture at the City of Energy Foundation (CIUDEN)

A sociologist, cultural manager and director of the Museums, Heritage and Culture department at the City of Energy Foundation (CIUDEN). She is the director of La Fábrica de Luz. The Energy Museum and La Térmica Cultural in Ponferrada, driving the transformation of industrial heritage into spaces for knowledge, creativity and public engagement. Her career spans social research, regional development, science communication, exhibition curation, the performing arts, music, and educational and cultural outreach programmes.

Cristina Gonzalez-Longo

Architect, University of Strathclyde. President of ICOMOS CIF

Cristina Gonzalez-Longo PhD RIBA SCA RIAS FHEA FRSA holds a PhD in Architecture from the ETSAM and is a specialist in architectural restoration from Sapienza University of Rome. She is the founder and director of the Master's programme in Architectural Projects for the Conservation of Built Heritage at the University of Strathclyde (United Kingdom), where she leads the ADCRU research group. She has led award-winning restoration and new-build projects, such as Queensberry House, part of the Scottish Parliament, and Bowbridge School. She is President-elect of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Education and Training, a position she is holding for a third consecutive term.

Erika Haxhi

Social media and events manager I Trans Europe Halles (TEH)

Erika Haxhi (she/her) works as Network & Annual Event Manager at Trans Europe Halles (TEH), where she supports networking, learning, advocacy and fundraising activities among independent cultural centres, and co-produces TEH's annual conferences.With a background in politics and creative production, Erika has previously worked with grassroots cultural collectives in the Balkans on post-industrial and repurposed spaces, with community theatres and third spaces in Sweden, and with international organisations operating across the Balkans and Europe on social welfare. She is also passionate about exploring history and migration dynamics through textiles, upcycling and politics behind it.

Eva Soria

Director of Cultural Sectors I Institute of Culture of Barcelona, Barcelona City Council

Eva Soria Puig heads the Cultural Sectors department at the Barcelona Institute of Culture (Barcelona City Council). She has extensive experience in cultural management and public policy. She holds a PhD in Law from the Autonomous University of Barcelona (cum laude and with an exceptional award), a Juris Doctor from Golden Gate University (San Francisco, California), a degree in Art History from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, and a diploma in painting conservation (Palazzo Spinelli, Florence, Italy). She contributed to UNESCO's work on the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. She is a lecturer in Intellectual Property at the Open University of Catalonia and the author of the book *Contemporary Art and Copyright* (Reus, 2023).

Luka Piskoric

Cultural & Creative Hubs Expert I Poligon Institute

Luka Piskoric is an expert in the development of cultural and creative hubs, with more than 30 years of experience in the cultural and creative sectors. He co-founded and managed Poligon Creative Centre in Ljubljana (2014–2020) and is co-founder of Poligon Institute. He works with cities, communities and institutions to develop creative hubs, programmes and support environments for workers and organisations in the cultural and creative sectors. His work includes collaborations with international development organisations, as well as the development of new cultural and creative centres in Slovenia. He is a former board member of the European Creative Hubs Network.

Marcella Ciacci

Editor and Founder of The99.art

Marcella Ciacci, editor and founder of The 99 Movement, develops projects that bring together art, travel and experience as forms of knowledge. Born in Panama, she studied History and Italian at Georgetown University, and her career has taken her to Washington D.C., New York, Milan, Madrid and Menorca. She has worked in the diplomatic and business spheres, particularly in the travel and gastronomy sectors. She co-founded Ida y Vuelta Viajes and the Madrid restaurants Minabo and Micono. Having travelled to almost one hundred countries, she channels her experience into artistic and cultural initiatives with an international reach and an interdisciplinary focus.

Nacho Ruiz

Doctor of Architecture (RAAL Arquitectura) Chair of the Architecture, Culture and Territory Association

Nacho Ruiz Allén holds a PhD in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Madrid. He carries out his professional work at RAAL arquitectura, where he combines practice, research, education and the promotion of architecture. His work approaches architecture from a cross-disciplinary perspective, with a particular focus on the transformation of the landscape, industrial heritage and the relationship between architecture and time. He has participated in and coordinated international research projects, and is the author of various publications and books.

Rodolfo Sánchez Farpón

Director of the Oviedo 2031 Bid

Born in Oviedo in 1960, Rodolfo Sánchez Farpón studied journalism at the University of Lejona in Bilbao. His professional career began at *La Voz de Asturias*, where he served as deputy editor. He subsequently worked in the Cultural Outreach department at Ediciones Nobel and took over as director of Radio Nacional de España in Asturias. Since 1999, he has held the post of press officer for Oviedo City Council. He is currently Director of the Oviedo 2031 Bid.

Sara Magán

Director I Fundación Contemporánea

She holds a Bachelor's degree in Humanities and a Master's degree in Cultural Management from Carlos III University in Madrid, as well as a Master's degree in Feminist Studies from Complutense University. She has built her career in the cultural and creative industries, leading national and international projects across various disciplines. In 2007, she co-founded Magán Innovación Cultural, and whilst running the organisation, she combined this with her teaching work, mentoring and training cultural entrepreneurs. She has also worked as a strategic consultant in business development and gender mainstreaming for third sector organisations. Since 2022, she has been part of the management team at La Fábrica, where she is currently Director of Institutional Relations and of the Fundación Contemporánea.

Soňa Rychlíková

Director I DEPO2015

A cultural management professional and trained educator, she has been working since 2000 in various cultural organisations in Plzeň (Czech Republic). She was part of the team that spearheaded the city's bid to become European Capital of Culture 2015, coordinating the regeneration of industrial spaces for cultural use. She oversaw the conversion of a former public transport depot into a venue for part of the cultural programme. She currently heads DEPO2015, a cultural organisation that keeps this space alive.

Verónica Grech

Ilustrator

For the past decade, Verónica Grech has been illustrating for leading publications such as The New York Observer, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The Los Angeles Times. Her work, which has won awards such as the American Illustration Award, stands out for its conceptual strength. As an illustrator, she has founded the illustration agency BranuStudio, which specialises in graphic storytelling to artistically document current affairs and produce narrative and visual summaries that are easy to understand for any type of event, from workshops to conferences.

Zoe López Mediero

Coartistic director I Oviedo 2031

Cultural manager, curator and researcher specialising in cultural programming, art in context and cultural policy. Since 2026, she has been artistic co-director, alongside Paula Mota García, of Oviedo's bid for European Capital of Culture 2031. She was curator of the Avilés Climate Biennial (2024–2026) and director of Intermediae at Matadero Madrid until 2023. Her career combines management, research and teaching, with collaborations with institutions such as the Reina Sofía Museum, Goldsmiths and the University of Vienna. She has acted as a consultant on national and international cultural projects.