



**Association for Heritage Preservation of the Americas
Asociación para la Preservación del Patrimonio de las Américas
Associação para a Preservação do Patrimônio das Américas**

2nd REGIONAL CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOPS IN HERITAGE PRESERVATION
***Managing Emergencies in Cultural Heritage:
Sharing Experiences and Strengthening Networks in the Americas***

October 2 to 5, 2018
La Antigua, Guatemala



From October 2-5, 2018, 70 heritage professionals from nineteen countries¹ gathered in La Antigua, Guatemala for the APOYOnline 2nd Regional Conference and Workshops in Heritage Preservation with the theme *“Managing Emergencies in Cultural Heritage: Sharing Experiences and Strengthening Networks in the Americas.”* The conference aimed to fortify communication networks in the region, particularly concerning emergency response and risk management. The theme was suggested by the majority of participants during the previous APOYOnline conference held in Colombia in 2016 and was considered a priority for the region.

Founded in 1989, APOYOnline is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote communication, exchange and professional development in the field of heritage preservation in the Americas and in Portuguese and Spanish speaking countries.

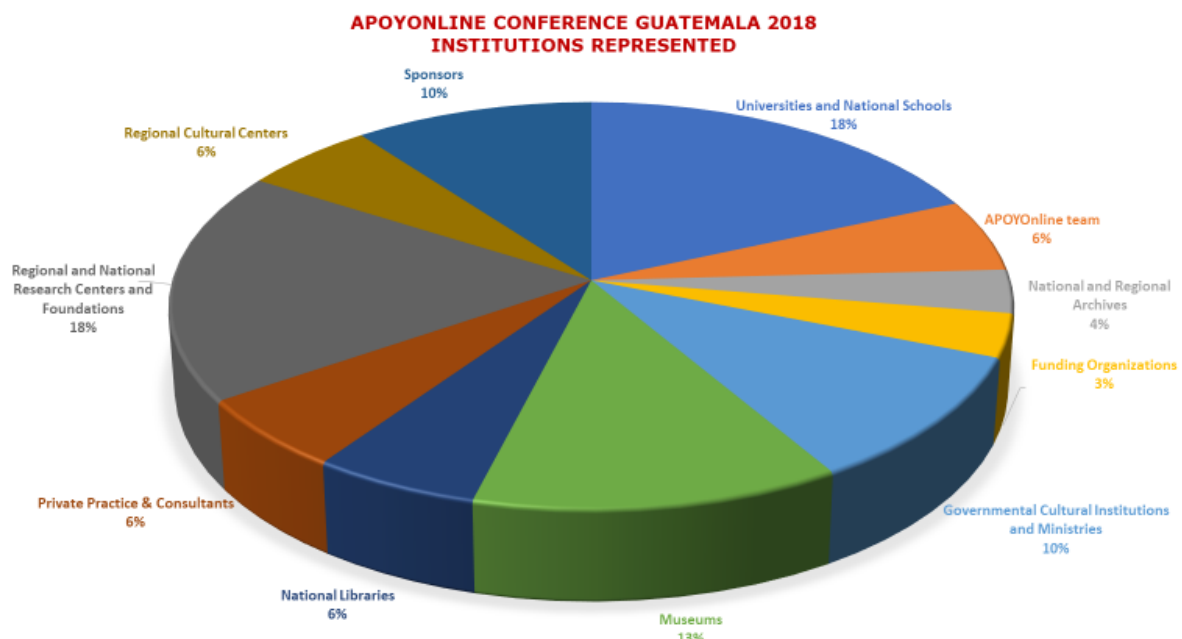
Participants from many specialties, age groups and levels of experience represented major institutions from the region, such as universities and national schools, regional and national research centers and

¹ Countries represented: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, United States, and Venezuela.

foundations, regional and national libraries and archives, museums, governmental cultural institutions and ministries of culture, professionals in private practice, consultants, funding organizations and sponsors.

The conference took place at the *Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española (AECID)*, in the historic center of La Antigua, a city surrounded by active volcanos. The topics selected for the four-day event were risk assessment, emergency preparedness, and post-disaster response and recovery. There were two program components: the presentation of selected works by participants as oral presentations or posters, and training workshops, which included theoretical modules, practical exercises, and emergency drills offered by a team of instructors from Brazil, Colombia, and the United States.

Participants presented thirteen papers, which covered issues such as the challenges of emergency management in a historic building, case studies in emergency planning, lessons learned from floods, and salvaging monuments and historic buildings after an earthquake, among many others. The conference also included a poster session during which twenty posters presented a range of topics including emergency plans in libraries, archives, and museums, teaching emergency response and planning at the graduate level, and case studies in emergency response and recovery from earthquakes and water events.



Preservation experts David Cohen of the *Fundación Erigae* and Mario Omar Fernández of the *Universidad de los Andes* conducted training sessions in risk management. They first outlined the tenets of successful risk evaluation before a technical visit to the *Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica (CIRMA)*² where participants were able to apply this new knowledge. Divided into five groups, participants noted potential risks in the building envelope, archives, library and other spaces. CIRMA founder and staff generously welcomed the large group into their workspaces, collections, and storage area, allowing participants to discuss their achievements and challenges in preserving archival collections in a historic building.

² CIRMA web page: http://cirma.org.gt/glifos/index.php/P%C3%A1gina_principal

Beatriz Haspo, APOYOnline manager and Alan Haley, Preservation Specialist at the Library of Congress, organized additional workshops that emphasized navigating different communication styles, problem solving and team building, and highlighted their broad ranging experiences in risk evaluation, and disaster management in the United States and abroad. They led presentations about emergency response and the salvage of water-damaged materials culminating with a salvage drill that tested the participants' grasp of wet salvage, communication, and organization. Everyone worked together to distribute roles and duties, including managing opportunistic robbers and members of the media, to safely and effectively organize the salvage of wet and dirty material that can be found in libraries, archives, museums, historical houses and private collections. Participants handled books, works on paper, documents on paper and parchment, photographs, audio-visual material, ceramics, metal, and textiles, before reconvening at the end to discuss the lessons learned during the drill and how to implement the gained experience in their home institutions.

The final day included a discussion panel entitled "Global efforts for managing risk and emergencies" with leaders in the field discussing recent major events and the current state of emergency management in the Americas and an open forum with the participants. David Cohen spoke about the importance of training opportunities such as this and the training initiatives in Colombia, Mario Omar Fernández about the challenges of preservation actions in Cuba, Beatriz Haspo about the recovery efforts from the recent devastating fire at the National Museum in Rio de Janeiro, and Alan Haley about activities at the Library of Congress. The panel also included special guest Sanne Letschert, Researcher at the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development, who highlighted the inspiring global efforts of the Cultural Emergency Response program (CER) to support emergency response and recovery of cultural heritage. To underscore the spirit of collaboration running throughout the conference, Francisco Vieira, international consultant from the United States, presented a lecture and tips about international alliances and partnerships with a focus on financial institutions.

A new exciting addition to the conference this year was "**MANOS A LA OBRA**" ("*Helping Hands*"), a community-focused volunteer-based initiative organized by APOYOnline. First time ever implemented in Latin America, this initiative was created to give back to the local hosting community by combining the skilled hands of so many professionals in one place to complete a preservation project for a small institution in need. For the inaugural **MANOS A LA OBRA**, participants assisted the *Archivo Histórico Municipal de la Ciudad de La Antigua*, that houses important documents, maps, photographs, negatives and manuscripts of the municipal administration from the 19th and 20th centuries, including topics such as urban life, military, economic, religious and education. Participants were generously allowed to perform basic collections care actions such as cleaning, removal of acidic enclosures and housing in some documents and photographs of the José Guillermo Salazar Collection. This inspiring and rewarding experience is an endeavor that APOYOnline looks forward to repeating in future events.

The conference was enriched by cultural tours of the *Paseo de los Museos*, a unique grouping of galleries at Casa Santo Domingo Hotel, and additional tours of the library at the *Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española*.

An APOYOnline session presenting the current and future activities of the organization capped the conference and allowed participants to voice their feedback about the conference, opinions and expectations in preparation for the 30th anniversary of the organization in 2019.

The organization of this event could not have been possible without the support of many corporate and private sponsors from several countries and national and international organizations who believed in the importance of professional development and networking opportunities to foster preservation of cultural heritage in the Americas. Many sponsors exhibited their products and services during the

conference. APOYOnline is very grateful for the generous support of donors and sponsors that allowed granting full stipends to 53% and partial stipends to 47% of the participants of the conference. A total of 60% of the participants were first time grantees of APOYOnline.

The impact of the conference was recorded both in video clips during the conference and in the survey carried out on the last day, where participants shared their impressions in words and statements. The opportunity to gather in person during the four-day conference greatly improved the effort to consolidate networks in the region. As one of the participants wrote, *"institutions with abundant resources were able to communicate with many who work with very scarce resources, but common, realistic approaches to challenges were emphasized"*. The use of social media and group applications enhanced the communication tremendously during the conference and continued to serve as a platform of communication with the entire group, sharing experiences, events and newsworthy issues related to preservation even after the conference ensuring sustainable networking in the region. *"The level of success was visible through the camaraderie shared among the participants, organizers, instructors and sponsors, which can leave us with much optimism about the future abilities and potential for communication, sharing, support, from both personal and professional perspectives"*.

The APOYOnline team would like to thank the presenters and instructors, and the enthusiastic, thoughtful, and energetic participants who represent the robust, creative faces of the cultural heritage field in the Americas and Portuguese and Spanish speaking countries.

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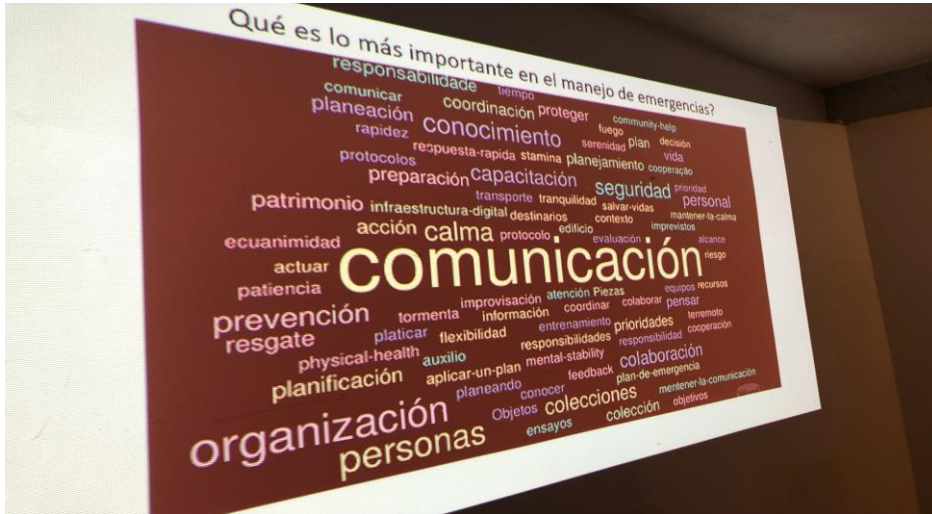
Patrocinadores:



Agradecimientos:



PHOTO GALLERY



Conference is over; great success!
Exhausted but very happy 😊



At CIRMA



At Paseo de los Museos







Emergency Drill



APOYOnline team