



Ca' Foscari  
University  
of Venice

Master's Degree  
in Economics and Management of Arts  
and Cultural Activities

Final Thesis

**Strategic Partnerships and Corporate  
Support in Italian Cultural Organizations:  
the case of Fondazione Brescia Musei's  
*Alleanza per la Cultura***

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**Academic Year**

2020 / 2021

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## Introduction

The role of corporate support has become increasingly important for museums and cultural organizations. As the primary and secondary offering sales do not guarantee long-term viability and sustainability, the institutions of the sector, in order to last and to evolve on the long-term, must rely on external public and private forms of support. This paper focuses on the Italian funding system. Until the second part of the last century the sources of financing have been pre-eminently public; then, starting from its last decades the system has progressively turned into a more mixed one depending on individual and corporate interventions too. The core of the project is addressed to successful partnerships and focuses on the competitive advantage and benefits that both cultural and commercial organizations can achieve from them. Following a qualitative and explorative approach, the topic is investigated through the case study of Fondazione Brescia Musei's *Alleanza per la Cultura*, a public-private medium-long term partnership program signed by 36 local realities.

The starting point that led me to research the topic of strategic partnerships derived from the observation of the changes in Fondazione Brescia Musei's managerial approach, in the resonance of its latest operations and in the unprecedented engagement of nearly forty local companies in its sustenance. Partnership programs are an established way to support organizations but, before the facts described hereinafter, they have never been applied in such an organized way by Fondazione Brescia Musei. Here relies the interest to understand the efficacy of the strategy adopted by Fondazione Brescia Musei, how the project brings positive impacts and externalities on the organization, on the partners, and on the city and why it has been structured in this specific way. This paper then aims to better comprehend the strategic role that partnerships in general could acquire and the importance of corporate interventions for cultural organizations. In the following are illustrated the benefits, the possible negative impacts, and the externalities of these interventions, as well as the influence, significance, and motivations that they could acquire for all the stakeholders.

The paper is structured in three parts. Chapter I "Corporate Support for the Arts" draws a theoretical framework of the possible funding systems and of the existing forms of

corporate support. First, an introduction overviews the main characteristics of cultural organizations and their difficulties to reach long-term economic sustainability based on institutional equilibrium, durability, autonomy, and viability. In most cases they require, in addition to their primary and secondary products sales, external public and private forms of support, attracting investors and maintaining them with durable relationships. The topic was first studied in the Sixties by William J. Baumol and William J. Bowen that brought to the theorization of the so-called “Baumol’s effect” and to the justification of the necessity of external support to overcome the financial difficulties faced by cultural organizations. The amount of these interventions varies depending on the internal characteristics of each organization and on their external context. Considering the public support, there are two main counterposed models: the USA one relying mostly on private interventions and the European one depending mainly on public contributions. A third model could be considered, in between the two, typical of UK, Canada, and Australia. The paper focuses on the Italian case and its funding system traditionally public dominated, following the belief that culture is a merit good that brings benefit to the entire society and that represents a market failure whether left to private interventions only. However, starting from the 1980s the Italian funding system has shifted to a more mixed one. The decade 1980-1990, as a matter of fact, was characterised by the reducing of the public expenditure per capita and the tendency to privatise financial sources, through individual and corporate forms of support. At first advertisement and individuals’ expenditure increased, then sponsorships and foundations’ contributions augmented. The ongoing phenomenon has been possible due to the contingencies of the past decades and to the laws established in the field.

Corporate forms of support for cultural organizations bring benefits for both parties. These are listed in the paper together with the characteristics of the different forms of fundraising and the necessary engagement of marketing tools to effectively communicate them. Corporate support has different levels of complexity: donations (a paragraph on the Art Bonus is included), sponsorships, cause-related marketing and partnerships. The latter, representing the focus of the research, are the more advanced forms of corporate support as they guarantee long term agreements. Whether successful, they permit to install deep relationships and a great exchange of benefits

between the parties, as well as to gain competitive advantage, analysed in the paper through the Porter Model. Finally, the last paragraph reports a debate of experts' opinions about the phenomenon, as the involvement of the private sector have raised discussions about its eligibility since its amplification in the sector.

Chapter II "Fondazione Brescia Musei" introduces the case study analysed and debated in the third Chapter. Here, Fondazione Brescia Musei is described from its establishment. Including the former Musei Civici di Arte e Storia di Brescia, in 2003 Brescia Musei became a joint stock company and in 2007 a "fondazione di partecipazione". The Foundation comprises four<sup>1</sup> museums and a cinema<sup>2</sup>, whose establishment and development are portrayed in the paper. The analysis then addressed to the managerial aspect of the organization, presenting a study of its financial statement of the last period (2015-2020). In this way, it has been possible to understand the managerial model of Fondazione Brescia Musei, its performance over time, its investments, expenses and overall sustainability. In addition, some considerations about the different areas of competence of the Foundation are clarified. They regard the educational, events, promotion and communication, and the collection areas. The analysis conducted results to be functional for illustrating the latest "relational and outcome-based" management model of the organization, shaped by Fondazione Brescia Musei itself and Politecnico di Milano. This managerial approach gives importance and investigates the relationship of the Foundation with its stakeholders, it identifies the outputs and outcomes desired and the necessary expected resources to reach sustainability, and it measures and shares the results obtained. In accordance with it, the partnership program *Alleanza per la Cultura* was shaped. The project, case study of the thesis, currently involves 36 local companies including foundations of different nature, universities, entities with non-prevalent commercial scopes, enterprises and firms. As illustrated in the dedicated paragraph, *Alleanza per la Cultura* was launched in 2019 and publicly announced in 2020 as a public-private non-competitive agreement on the medium-long term for the sustenance of Fondazione Brescia Musei's extraordinary

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<sup>1</sup> The Santa Giulia Museum, the Archaeological Area, the Tosio Martinengo Gallery, and the Castle (comprising two museums: the Arms Museum and the Risorgimento Museum).

<sup>2</sup> Cinema Nuovo Eden.

activities. According to their financial power, participating partners could choose among three different contributions to which varied benefits are associated.

In the third and last Chapter "*Alleanza per la Cultura. A Model of Strategic Partnership*" the efficacy of the partnership is debated. The discussion is conducted considering a sample framework of corporate support funding systems in national museums, the Covid-19 pandemic impacts on the cultural sector and the general characteristics of the city of Brescia. *Alleanza per la Cultura* is evaluated upon several aspects, from the perspective both of Fondazione Brescia Musei and of the one of the partners. This research considers its ability to attract a broad pool of partners, its strengths, and the benefits it offers and how they are differently perceived by the parties. Moreover, the Chapter discusses the implementation of the managerial approach of the Foundation and its fundraising area, and the impacts that the project could bring to the local territory. In conclusion, the last paragraph reflects on the importance of culture as a strategic asset for the economic and social development, in particular after the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. Through strategic drivers, cultural organizations could strategize their fundraising planning, creating meaning and connection with their stakeholders and bringing benefits for all the parties.

## Methodology

The research uses both a qualitative and explorative approach. At first a theoretical framework of the topic is presented, followed by the analysis of a concrete case study. In this way, it has been possible to satisfy the initial research question proposed. The theoretical framework, presented in Chapter I, focuses on the Italian funding system, giving only a few references to the international scene. Therefore, the broad and varied discourse of corporate support has been circumscribed to the case study analysed.

The bibliography includes academic volumes, scientific and newspaper articles and national reports on the topic analysed. The Fondazione Brescia Musei website has been an important source for Chapter II, as well as the websites of the organizations included in the sample analysed in Chapter III. The Foundation's financial statements are another important reference: their data has been analysed and re-elaborate through a quantitative approach. Moreover, for Chapter II and III, semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with both the members of Fondazione Brescia Musei (4 interviews plus 1 interview with an ex-member) and the partners of the project (4<sup>3</sup> interviews on the 21 requested). The interviews with partners relate mainly to firms and enterprises' representatives excluding, with one exception, universities, and entities with non-prevalent commercial scopes. In this way, the research investigates realities whose main aims and operations are naturally distant from the ones typical of the cultural sector. These interviews, for number and typology, cannot represent a quantitative collection of data but they are a useful tool to understand and discuss the dynamics of the relationship between the Foundation and its stakeholders and the efficacy of the project from a point of view both internal and external to the organization.

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<sup>3</sup> The entities involved are 5, as Roberto Saccone is the President of both the Chamber of Commerce of Brescia and the Olimpia Splendid company.



## Chapter I. Corporate Support for the Arts

### 1.1 Economic Sustainability in Cultural Organizations

The cultural sector presents institutions and organizations of different nature. There are public cultural firms, which are run publicly, with different levels of autonomy, and have the duty to oversee public collections; non-profit cultural firms, that are private organizations promoting cultural heritage; private cultural firms, which are for-profit entities aimed at producing or distributing cultural goods and services (Dubini, 2017).

These organizations have their own characteristics, challenges, and advantages, and need to fulfil their mission of cultural activities. Equally to all types of firms, in order to reach their aims, they need to achieve and maintain viability and sustainability on the long-term (Rodriguez, 2016). They have to take long-term decisions to achieve growth and continuity, and to have an adequate remuneration system of all the conditions of production<sup>4</sup> in order to survive over time (Dubini, 2017).

Economic sustainability requires the presence of four interconnected conditions: institutional equilibrium, durability, autonomy, and viability. In beginning, it is necessary to clarify some peculiarities of the cultural sector with respect to the other economic compartments. First of all, monetary equilibrium is generally unbalanced with more outflows than inflows (Santesso, 2010). The factors provoking this could be different, such as monetary, psychological, and “civic” barriers or barriers of understanding, distribution, or information (Dubini, 2017). Therefore, it is essential for cultural organizations to diversify the sources of income in order to make more inflows and to have more autonomy (Carroll, Stater, 2008; Froelich, 1999). Another issue for cultural firms is efficiency, such as the ability to minimize waste maximising revenues thus using resources in the best way possible (Santesso, 2010).

Organizations of this sector are characterised by high levels of fixed costs, while marginal costs are small (Frey, 2019). This affects viability, as well as the remuneration system of the artists, among the others, that is generally asymmetrical and unfair, with just few

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<sup>4</sup> Differently whether they are for-profit or non-profit organizations.

established names confronting to little many others (Candela, Scorcu<sup>5</sup>, 2004; Frey, 2019). So, viability, which means the ability of an organization to attract enough resources through its economic activity to support its growth, is challenging in the cultural sector. In most cases cultural organizations need, instead, an external help by possible investors and the maintenance of their support on the long-term.

Over the last decades, it has been recorded a change of the different forms of cultural support spotting out their tendency to embed cultural institutions and for-profit companies in increasingly tied relationships<sup>6</sup>. On the one hand, cultural organizations advocate to operate in a more business-oriented logic. On the other hand, for-profit enterprises have begun to consider culture and creativity an important feature to differentiate from the competition (Comunian, 2008). The traditional antinomy between culture and economy, often presented in an underestimated and simplified way with old categories as reference (Trimarchi, 1993), has now been broken in some corporate boards and in governance bodies, and acquires interesting forms and logics for reaching the institutional aims of both the cultural and the commercial companies.

## **1.2 Sources of Income for Cultural Organizations. Internal and External Funds**

Cultural organizations need to obtain and secure financial resources in order to cover their financial outflows and to guarantee their long-term survival and growth.

Cultural organizations generate their cashflow from essentially three sources. On the one hand, income can be gained by selling products related to the core and to the secondary activities of the organizations. This type of revenue, anyway, hardly ever permits institutions to reach their economic and financial viability. For this reason, external sources are necessary for their survival over time. The other two possible sources of financial inflows and technical apports are represented by the external public and private support. All of these sources are interconnected, they influence each other

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<sup>5</sup> In particular, they refer to the “Superstar Model” by Sherwin Rosen (1981) and to the following one by Moshe Adler (1985).

<sup>6</sup> See Paragraph 1.3 “Towards Corporate Support for the Arts. Variations in the Italian Funding System”.

and their contribution to the organization<sup>7</sup> supported (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000). Generally, the presence of these three sources depends on the peculiarities of each cultural institution taken in exam, with its specific internal administration and offering system. According to the time period in consideration, they could change in nature and balance too<sup>8</sup>. Fluctuations of the relationship between these three sources, in particular between the two external ones, also depend upon general trends developed over time, that could refer to areas of the world<sup>9</sup> or could be typical of specific countries<sup>10</sup>.

The first study about financial difficulties faced by cultural organizations was conducted by William J. Baumol<sup>11</sup> and William G. Bowen<sup>12</sup> and merged in the milestone *The Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma* published in 1966. Analysing the performing arts sector in the USA in the 1960s, the two authors identified the phenomenon later called “Baumol’s effect”. Also known as “Baumol’s cost disease”, it describes the tendency of some economic sectors to raise their unitary cost of production, and consequently their sale prices, in order to avoid economic losses, thus reducing demand and making firms crave for external help for their survival. By this logic, even though tickets’ prices raise increasingly, they do not cover the overall costs of production. The economic sectors in question are called “stagnant”, comparing to the “progressive” ones. The first category comprises education, healthcare, and culture, while the second one manufacturing activities. The basic difference between the two is the incapability of stagnant sectors to exploit the technological progress to increment their productivity. Progressive industries, instead, tend to double their efficiency every twenty-nine years (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000). Over time, both of them tend to increase their salary grade; progressive sectors alongside with productivity, stagnant

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<sup>7</sup> For example, external funds can determine variations in the tickets’ price. By this logic, the more the involvement of sponsors is, the more the price of the tickets can be reduced (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> See Paragraph 1.3 “Towards Corporate Support for the Arts. Variations in the Italian Funding System”.

<sup>9</sup> Most of the information refers to the Western world.

<sup>10</sup> See Paragraph 1.2.1 “Two Counterposed Models”.

<sup>11</sup> William Jack Baumol (1922-2017) was an American economist and professor. His research focused, among the others, on theories for oligopoly, on welfare economics and on innovation in public organizations.

<sup>12</sup> William Gordon Bowen (1933-2016) was an American economist and professor. He had been chairperson of Princeton University from 1972 to 1988.

firms without it. For this reason, for the latter unitary cost of production grows increasingly and faster than in other industries resulting in the phenomenon briefly illustrated above, emphasized by inflation as well. Therefore, the inability of the cultural sector to increase productivity through technological innovation and to raise efficiency equally to the other industries is explained by factors peculiar to the sector itself. The main reason lies in the fact that cultural products are not standard, therefore they require the indispensable presence of the human factor that cannot be substituted by any technology (Trimarchi, 1993).

In retrospect, the Baumol's cost disease is a general reference that does not take into account several factors about the cultural field (Trimarchi, 1993). Still, it has been the "first attempt to make an organic classification of the economic problems of the cultural sector [...]" (Trimarchi, 1993:33)<sup>13</sup> and it officially reveals the importance of external fundings for cultural institutions.

#### 1.2.1 *Two Counterposed Models*

One form of external support is represented by the public administration, that has a primary role in sustaining cultural organizations. Its intervention can happen on different levels - national, regional, and local. It can give funds directly or through *ad hoc* institutions<sup>14</sup> and its importance varies depending on the country and on the amount of fundings given by the private sector (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000; Trimarchi, 1993).

It is generally acknowledged the existence of two counterposed models: the European and the US one. The former, typical of Italy and of the continental Europe, provides the State to have a primary role in the sustenance of the cultural sector while the latter, the US one, relies strongly on the contribution of private companies, directing just a few amounts of public funds to cultural organizations. At the beginning of the new millennium in Europe well-established museums and opera houses receive contributions of about 80% and 100% of their budget, while in the United States public

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<sup>13</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: "Il primo tentativo di inquadramento organico dei problemi economici del settore culturale [...]".

<sup>14</sup> For example, the Art Council in the UK or the National Endowment for the Arts in the USA.

funds equal 6% of the budget of performing arts organizations. A mixed model can be added to the previous ones, expecting the presence of the State to a lesser extent. It can be found in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

The two counterposed models are claimed by opposite ideas and priorities. On the one hand, those who suspect about the correlation between culture and economy, fear the possible loss of identity and meaning of the cultural heritage and advocate the importance of a centralized system. On the other hand, those who asserts the importance of privatisation are more inclined to attract investments through tourism and private partners and to gain benefits related to the reputation given by culture; at the same time, they face the risk of being negligence about problems such as the conservation and the preservation of the artworks themselves (Dubini, Leone, Forti, 2012)<sup>15</sup>. Part of the literature states that the best way to operate stands in between of the two counterposed models. Centralization should be addressed to protection and conservation of the cultural heritage, leaving to private entities, municipalities and non-profit institutions responsibilities of promotion and diffusion, and to private firms' duties of technical and financial support (Dubini, Leone, Forti, 2012; Leon, Trimarchi, 2003; Petrarola, 2006). The cited models are useful to highlights the general tendencies worldwide, that become peculiar in form and intensity for each singular country.

### 1.2.2 *Reasons Behind Public Intervention*

The decision of the public to intervene relies on non-economic and economic choices. The State can pursue collective objectives, acquiring social value for its community (Candela, Scorcu, 2004). In this case, the State decides which cultural offerings are more meaningful and “[...] reflect either the imposed preferences of a decision-making elite or preferences widely shared” (Cwi, 1980:39). Arts and culture, as a matter of fact, are commonly considered as merit goods<sup>16</sup> (Candela, Scorcu, 2004; Cwi, 1980, Trimarchi,

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<sup>15</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.5 “Debate about the Perceived Impacts of Corporate Support on Cultural Organizations”

<sup>16</sup> Merit good is “[...] a good which when consumed provides external benefits, although these may not be fully recognised - hence the good is under-consumed”.  
[https://www.economicsonline.co.uk/Definitions/Merit\\_good.html](https://www.economicsonline.co.uk/Definitions/Merit_good.html)

1993). Moreover, the economic side to consider is based on the calculation of costs necessary for the interventions in relation to the deriving potential benefits (Cwi, 1980). For this reason, accurate strategies lead arts organizations to obtain more subsidies.

State interventions derive not only from the idea that art is a merit good but also from the concept of market failure and from the idea that art brings benefits to the society. Market failure can derive from an underproduction or underconsumption of specific cultural goods, making the offer not adequate for the entire community, and from an inequal distribution of salaries, for example for artists. Moreover, it is often the result of asymmetrical information at the expenses of the community (Candela, Scorcu, 2004; Cwi, 1980, Trimarchi, 1993).

The implementation of public subsidies varies on the public structures of each State. Parallel to the models cited before, Colbert indicates that France and Italy work through a centralised system in which the Ministry of Culture decides goals and priorities of the cultural sector. In the USA, instead, the model is deeply decentralized with the establishment of federal and local Arts Council that receive money from the National Endowment for the Arts. Finally, Canada, Argentina and the United Kingdom have a National Council for the Arts which decide at a central level cultural policies, not renouncing the possibility to rely on alternative financial programs (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

As illustrated, the correlation between public and private fundings varies on the country analysed. Therefore, this research is going to focus specifically on the Italian context, for sake of clarity and for availability of information, with just a few references to the worldwide overview.

### 1.3 Towards Corporate Support for the Arts. Variations in the Italian Funding System

Starting from the 1980s the global tendency of the public sector to invest in the art world reduced in percentage (Panizza, Stewart, 2017; Cooper, 2011; Lindqvist, 2013; Bennett, 2014). Prior to the 1990s, the cultural sector had witnessed an increase in the volumes of the public and private fundings (Trimarchi, 1993; Bodo, 1994). In accordance with the global tendency, in Italy this shift in favour of the private fundings clearly appeared starting from 1992 afterwards the financial restriction in the public expenses and later to the introduction of Euro as the unique currency of the European Union (Bodo, 2004).

In Italy the percentage of public investments in the cultural sector decreased from the 18,7% in 1980 to the 17,6% in 1990, with the consequent increment of private bearing in forms of publicity, individuals' expenditures after the rise of prices for cultural services, and new forms of patronage for the national cultural heritage (Bodo, 1994). Starting only from the 1980s private investments and consumes in the cultural sector has been a phenomenon observed, analysed, and recognized officially<sup>17</sup>. Nevertheless, for this first decade, data is somehow incomplete and measurements are often not precise. The evidence presented in the national report *Rapporto sull'economia della cultura in Italia 1980-1990* stated that in 1990 investments in the cultural sector were of 33 billion Lire, the 82,4% of which private. Still considering the shift mentioned above, the percentage could seem extremely high. In this regard, it is important to know that the amount of 82,4 is comprehensive of all the sectors pertaining cultural and creative enterprises<sup>18</sup> and that a strong share of it was produced by individuals' and families' personal consumes of cultural and related activities regarding, in particular, the publishing industry and printing.

The novelty presented by data concerns, however, the rise of sponsorships, that previously were sporadic or almost inexistent. Considering the private expenditure at

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<sup>17</sup> For example, in the official reports about the economy of art in Italy, such as in Bodo Carla (edited by) (1994), *Rapporto sull'economia della cultura in Italia 1980-1990*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato and in Bodo Carla, Spada Celestino (edited by) (2004), *Rapporto sull'economia della cultura in Italia 1990-2000*, Bologna, il Mulino. These reports are used as main references in this paragraph.

<sup>18</sup> Visual arts, architecture, crafts performing arts, music, publishing, design, TV and radio, literature, computer games and advertising.

the beginning of the 1980s, estimated of about 27.338 billion Lire<sup>19</sup>, the 69,9% of it regarded individuals consumes, the 28,6% was finalized to publicity, and finally just the 1,5% to sponsorships and direct private interventions on the cultural heritage (Bodo, 1994). This situation has quickly changed in the following couple of years, making corporate support, in particular sponsorships, the most dynamic field of intervention. By the end of the decade, the overall private expenditure in culture had almost doubled with individuals' consumptions rather static<sup>20</sup>, with the twofold increase of publicity and with the quadruplication of sponsorships, mainly addressed to conservation and exhibitions of cultural heritage and to theatre, music and performing arts live shows (Bodo, 1994). Therefore, the decade 1980-1990 can be considered a paradigmatic period characterised by the reducing of the public expenditure<sup>21</sup> per capita and the tendency to privatise financial sources. This shift brought to a new conscience and attention towards the national heritage by private donors, that started to be significant contributors for the cultural industry together with the State. This has become a trend continued in the following decades, making contributions not sporadic anymore.

After the 1990s<sup>22</sup> there was a deceleration of private interventions. Taking an insight, individuals personal consumes decreased and publicity related to the cultural industry grew less with respect to the previous decade; on the contrary, sponsorships, patronage and fundings from bank foundations augmented becoming the most dynamic forms of support granted mainly to the cultural heritage. The fluctuation of sponsorships for culture varied from 524 to 624 billion Lire from the 1980s to the 1990s and from 624 to 750 billion Lire and from the 1990s to the 2000s, setting an increment of the 20%. Moreover, the contribution of bank foundations made sponsorships raise to the 80% compared to the decade 1980-1990. Similarly to the previous decade analysed, sponsorships were mainly addressed to cultural and historical heritage, followed by music and theatre. In parallel, the spread of policies regarding the need of a strategic

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<sup>19</sup> This is an approximated estimation because it does not include information about the art market and about private interventions of restoration made by the church. Data about sponsorships are not precise too.

<sup>20</sup> The data considers the precedent years when individuals' consumptions were the main field of influence for private fundings in the arts. It is important to take into account the raise of tickets' price for entering in museums and archaeological sites.

<sup>21</sup> With strong fluctuations over the decade.

<sup>22</sup> Data about private fundings in the 1990s are not exhaustive, in particular about donations.



communication and connections between cultural institutions and private companies began (Coni, Dal Pozzolo, 2004). In this sense, the effort of cultural organizations to develop plans of fundraising and of the State to develop incentives for private interventions has become increasingly fundamental.

The reasons behind this shift of paradigm are several. The main one is the economic and financial crisis that characterized the last decades of the XX century. The phenomenon strongly influenced the sector in the 1980s with impacts that lasted for the following years affecting the sources of investments in culture.

Another reason could be attributed to the lack of autonomy and of taxation power by regions and municipalities. The scenario depicted in the report *Rapporto sull'economia della cultura in Italia 1980-1990*<sup>23</sup> shows a recentralisation in Italy in the late 1980s, attributing additional power to the State and less to the other administrative areas (regions, provinces<sup>24</sup>, and municipalities). In Italy the State has been the main decision-making power and bearer of responsibilities in the sector. The four administrative areas' influences vary in means and amounts according to the time period and to the different recipient fields inside the cultural sector. It is significant to notice that the 1980s inclination towards a recentralisation is a specific Italian phenomenon, generally in countertendency to the other countries (Bodo, 1994).

Furthermore, over the period analysed, the cultural sector acquired increasing importance for the Italian economy, marking its influence on the PIL from the 1,7% in 1980 to the 2,5% in 1990. Another reason that enhanced private investments and corporate support could be attributable to the strong financial and economic development that happened at the end of the social tensions in the Seventies (Bodo, 1994).

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<sup>23</sup> Bodo Carla (edited by) (1994), *Rapporto sull'economia della cultura in Italia 1980-1990*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato

<sup>24</sup> Special administrative areas function slightly differently with more independence and financial resources.

### 1.3.1 *Legislations for Increasing the Private Fundings in the Cultural Sector*

In those years several legislations favourable to donations in culture were established for the first time and, for this reason, they could be considered in a way forerunners to the laws currently applied. Nonetheless they cannot be intended as the main motivation for private support to the arts, they had an important impact on the sector. The Law 512/1982 *Regime fiscale di beni di rilevante interesse culturale*<sup>25</sup>, approved the 2 August 1982, allowed the total deductibility for expenses, made by both natural and juridical entities, aimed to the restoration and preservation of historic and cultural buildings, to the creation of exhibitions and to the research in the cultural field. The deductibility of costs considered in this case was uncapped. The Law 163/1985 *Nuova disciplina degli interventi dello Stato a favore dello spettacolo*<sup>26</sup>, applied from 30 April 1985, established the FUS<sup>27</sup> fund and the tax benefits for donations addressed to activities related to the performing arts and to the modernization of cinemas and theatres. The tax credit considered in this case was set at 2% of the personal income, then raised to the 20% in 1989. Several issues arose connected to these decrees concerning their applicability or their convenience of use for corporate organizations. The tendency revealed, as a matter of fact, a preference in applying the tax credit established for advertisement expenditures rather than the ones before mentioned (Bodo, 1994; Bodo, 2004). For this reason, it seems that in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century tax credits were not the main reason boosting corporate support in the cultural field.

In addition, another legislation addressed to companies was established at the turn of the millenium. The Law 342/2000 *Erogazioni liberali per progetti culturali*<sup>28</sup>, promulgated the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2000, introduced the deductibility on the corporate income for donations addressed to subjects operating in the cultural sector, such as the State, regions, local and public institutions, foundations, and organizations legally recognized (Bodo, 2004). The legislation currently in force is the Decree Law 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014 *Disposizioni urgenti per la tutela del patrimonio culturale, lo sviluppo della cultura*

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1982-08-02;512>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1985/05/04/085U0163/sg>

<sup>27</sup> *Fondo Unico per lo Spettacolo.*

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.normattiva.it/atto/caricaDettaglioAtto?atto.dataPubblicazioneGazzetta=2000-11-25&atto.codiceRedazionale=000G0384&atto.articolo.numero=0&atto.articolo.sottoArticolo=1&atto.articolo.sottoArticolo=10&qId=&tabID=0.2963326182037227&title=lbl.dettaglioAtto>

e il rilancio del turismo<sup>29</sup>, usually called “Art Bonus”, that is going to be explained in the next paragraphs<sup>30</sup>.

The regulations introduced in the 1980s led to the phenomenon of “neo patronage”, that could be associated both to individuals and corporates. This work focuses on support granted by companies, as their contribution represented a novelty in the field. The phenomenon could be reconnected to a sort of new patronage for the arts but, since its beginning, corporate organizations made clear their commercial intentions and goals (Bodo, 1994). They have aspired to a return on image, given by the strong association between their brands and the arts, and to a consequent increase of profits<sup>31</sup>. This tendency, particularly common in Italy, extended then in the west part of the world after the 2008 financial crisis.

### 1.3.2 *Better Organized Forms of Entities and of Support*

Especially during the 1980s, it is unclear the amount of investment made in culture addressed both to public cultural entities and to cultural firms. In the first case, this made difficult the collection of data and the monitoring of funds received, in the second one, it perpetuated uncertainty and individuality of action (Bodo, 1994). Unlike other countries and the recommendations given by the *Confederazione generale dell'industria italiana (Confindustria)*<sup>32</sup> and by the CEE<sup>33</sup>, at first Italian firms did not follow a common path for investments in the artworld. They did not share and monitor the amount, the fluctuations, the provenience, and the destinations of their investments, and they were not organized through service associations. It is in 1990 only, as the phenomenon of sponsorship and public support increased its volume, that companies and public administrations felt the urge to fund the AMI (*Associazione Mecenati Italiani*), that signed a huge step forward for a more informed vision of the funds. This has been

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2014/5/31/14G00095/sg>

<sup>30</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.2.1.1 “Tax concessions. Focus on the Art Bonus”.

<sup>31</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.3 “Reasons behind corporate support for the arts. A business perspective”.

<sup>32</sup> Confindustria is the main organization representing Italian manufacturing and service companies, including 150.000 firms. Firms decide voluntary to be represented by Confindustria.

<sup>33</sup> The European Economic Community.

fundamental for public administrations to trace the investments made in the Italian cultural sector and for private firms to better orient themselves in the field (Bodo, 1994).

As previously mentioned, the multiplication of corporate support for cultural organizations was a partially spontaneous event. According to this information and bearing in mind that legislations and mutual interconnections between firms did not succeed in the first place, a theoretical study of the origins of the phenomenon is hard to trace. In light of this, there are other possible reasons leading to corporate support for the arts in form of sponsorships at first and then as direct interventions.

First of all, the mass media, among them, created a new awareness of the importance of the national cultural heritage and about the lack of financial interventions directed to it. An effect of emulation spread among firms and enterprises after they had seen the positive impacts and the return of visibility on businesses through cultural policies. This led municipalities to compete to obtain more funds from sponsors. Finally, another possible reason is the willingness of firms to have their brand linked to the Italian cultural heritage (Bodo, 1994).

At the beginning of the 1990s, direct interventions made by companies towards the cultural heritage became more common. The phenomenon followed the failure of some episodes of sponsorships and the consequent bad publicity returning on the sponsoring firm. For this reason, companies began to address interventions on the cultural heritage directly becoming, for example, organizers of events or managers of cultural spaces. Similarly to the evolution of sponsorships, firms that at first acted individually started cooperating, to sustain the important financial efforts of these types of interventions, in order to reach viability. Afterwards, they unified their efforts in public-private collaborations and partnerships, in an increasingly potential and efficient way (Bodo, 1994).

The phenomenon of partnerships appeared later with respect to donations, sponsorships, and direct interventions for the arts and culture, and nowadays is still in development<sup>34</sup>. Partnerships can refer to different forms of collaborations: the outsource of specific activities to external contractors, the concession to third parties

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<sup>34</sup> See Chapter III "*Alleanza per la Cultura. A Model of Strategic Partnership*".

for the management of the organizations, the participation of the privates in the governance of the institutions, and finally the financing of cultural activities with the establishment of medium or long-term agreements.

Since the beginning, public-private partnerships (PPP) have been seen as an effective way to overcome public financial cuts not allowing cultural organizations to successfully fulfil their mission. At the same time, they resulted to be an instrument for public administrations to monitor cultural activities managed by privates. Public-private partnerships had been instituted after two Decrees Law, one of general interest and the other specifically related to the cultural sector.

The first reference is to the Law 142/1990 *Ordinamento delle autonomie locali*<sup>35</sup>, promulgated the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 1990, granting the possibility for municipalities and provinces to organize public services through joint-stock companies with a majority of local public capital, in collaboration with external public and private subjects.

The second reference is to the Law 4/1993 *Legge Ronchey, Conversione in legge, con modificazioni del decreto-legge 14 novembre 1992, n. 433, recante misure urgenti per il funzionamento dei musei statali. Disposizioni in materia di biblioteche statali e di archivi di Stato*<sup>36</sup>, established the 14<sup>th</sup> January 1993. Ronchey Law substituted the article 3 of the precedent law, declaring that the management of public services could be given in concession to private or public companies, enterprises, or cooperatives. The advantages of involving on some level private subjects could be several: raise of efficiency, bring benefits for both investors and customers, and increase the level of competition between organizations improving their services and products and adjusting their prices (Dubini, Leone, Forti, 2012).

In the 1990s foundations started to affirm their central role. Foundations present different natures and have varied roles. They could manage directly cultural organizations, they could be a mediator for addressing funds from banks, firms and enterprises to cultural projects, and finally they could supply funds for cultural activities and organizations. The Law 218/1990 *Legge Amato, Disposizioni in materia di*

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1990/06/12/090G0189/sg>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/1993/01/15/093G0027/sg>

*ristrutturazione e intergrazione patrimoniale degli istituti di credito di diritto pubblico*<sup>37</sup>, proclaimed the 30 July 1990 refers to foundations, in particular bank foundations, and to their role in managing funds for the sustenance of the national cultural heritage (Coni, Dal Pozzolo, 2004).

In conclusion, in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the economic crisis brought to public cuts for culture. Cultural entities in search of different sources of fundings met the private will to support them. This determined companies and other forms of private investors to have an increasingly important role in the funding system of the cultural industry.

The administrations of museums and of cultural organizations, as well as researchers and cultural managers, understood the potentiality of these investments and made the fundraising an established activity ever since. Anyway, cultural organizations do not every time have all the financial and economic resources they need, in particular the small and municipal organizations, as the fundraising activities may not be capable of covering all the costs (Trimarchi, 1993). Recently, alongside the activity of fundraising marketing for the arts has affirmed its role, helping to develop the organizations' activities and to communicate them in a more efficient way, attracting the potential targeted customers and investors.

## **1.4 Corporate Support for Cultural Organizations**

### *1.4.1 An Introduction*

Corporate support for the arts can be defined as the transfer of goods, services or economic resources from a for-profit company to specific beneficiaries, mainly non-profit arts organizations, in support of artistic and cultural initiatives aimed at the preservation and promotion of different art forms. Differently from the past, the business world has become increasingly present in the cultural sector due to a change of paradigm either in the sector itself, in the society and in the individuals' behaviour<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> [https://www.fondazionecariplo.it/static/upload/3\\_f/3\\_fondnp22.pdf](https://www.fondazionecariplo.it/static/upload/3_f/3_fondnp22.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> In the last decades, customers' demands and habits in the cultural sector has increased due, among the other reasons, to a general improvement of the educational level of the population, to higher incomes and its consequent tendency to buy more than just essential goods, to minor costs for transportation, to

Cultural organizations could manage their fundraising operations as internal or external activities. If internal, a designed staff dedicates time and resources to obtain external fundings. In this case, internal resources could be diverted from the core activities of the organization. If external, resources destined to the main cultural activities are preserved, requiring instead additional operating costs to outsource the operations (Candela, Scorcu, 2004).

Except for donations, the role of cultural corporate support demands bidirectionality. For cultural institutions it is fundamental to receive technical and financial support from investors to survive over time, while for firms and enterprises it is functional to acquire competitive advantages and benefits of different nature and to encourage them in continuing their support. As this should lead to a win-win situation with benefits for both parties, organizations over the last decades have improved their agreements in a logic of communication and understanding of each other's needs.

In an analysis about performing arts organizations and its stakeholders, Colbert recorded that the terminology most used by sponsors and by cultural organizations underlined the repetition of the concept of relationship, relational behaviour, honesty, and openness. Parallely, he highlighted the more recent tendency of companies to expect return of investments and commercial assets from the relationships (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

Since for-profit firms receive numerous requests for sponsorships and partnerships, while cultural organizations<sup>39</sup> necessary seek them, a hasty conclusion could lead to associate the need of a strategic plan just to the latter. Anyway, it is only when both funders and receivers strategize their relationships that conditions can merge to create successful and lasting engagements (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000). As collaborations require time, energy, and possible risks, the clearer the relationship is, the better the return on investments, the mutual respect, and the willingness to continue the relationships will be.

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the presence of similar facilities and to the increased accessibility of cultural events, both for their physical characteristics and for the opening hours (Candela, Scorcu, 2004).

<sup>39</sup> Here Colbert is still referring to the performing arts world, but the discourse can be easily expanded to the whole cultural sector.

Considering the different environments and the diverse cultural organizations and firms with their distinctive needs and aims, corporate support for the cultural sector needs to be targeted and tailored. This is one of the reasons that led to the spread of studies related to the marketing of the arts and to the increasing involvement of marketers in the cultural organizations' chart. Nonetheless the advantages of corporate support are well-documented nowadays<sup>40</sup>, a strategic fundraising plan and the use of the business language is fundamental to attract potential investors and partners. These methods, as a matter of fact, reduce the perception of risk related to the financing activity and better interpret the companies' willingness and needs (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

Furthermore, strategic plans are necessary because each relationship is different depending on the nature of the organizations involved and on the motivations behind their sponsorship or partnership. Therefore, cultural organizations must constantly review their propositions, as they operate in an ever-changing environment and in continuous adjustment of their relationships with stakeholders. To achieve greater benefits, time and trust need to be built step by step in a process that can require a long period of time (Dubini, Leone, Forti, 2012).

Communication processes for fundraising activities increased as well, becoming a fundamental tool of promotion. If accurately targeted, they could be a powerful device to create an emotional bond, to attract stakeholders and to deeper understand their needs. Media coverage permits to create more opportunities for firms to receive a return on image (Comunian, 2009).

To deepen the analysis, different typologies of corporate support are presented in the next paragraphs, starting from simple forms of donations to long-term agreements.

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<sup>40</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.3 "Reasons Behind Corporate Support for the Arts. A Business Perspective".



## 1.4.2 *Forms of Corporate Support*

### 1.4.2.1 *Donations*

Donation is the simplest form of corporate support and consists in the provision by for-profit companies of money, goods, or time to cultural organizations. The amount of the donation is up to the companies that can decide to make an offer towards an organization or a specific project.

Donations are a philanthropic act of patronage. They are, generally, a one-time action, a short-term and a unidirectional agreement, where the cultural organizations receive benefits without necessarily promote the company that made the donations. For this reason, differently from the other types of contributions, a strategy for donations is not mandatory. They are acts without a return, tax credits apart<sup>41</sup>. However, cultural organizations can decide to reward firms making the transactions public and visible, and building the brand image of the companies with all the possible consequences of that. Still, this is a pure stand of the beneficiary and benefits are not the main aim of companies. Donations, as a matter of fact, sustain a social cause to benefit the entire community (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

Normally, donations are a form of support chosen more by individuals and families and less by for-profit companies (Candela, Scorcu, 2004), with the exception of some specific cases where there is the presence of a strong sense of social responsibility and incentives by the State. The Vittoria Alata, placed in Fondazione Brescia Musei, is an example of restoration undertaken thanks to the donations it received from both individuals and companies.<sup>42</sup>

#### 1.4.2.1.1 *Tax Concessions. Focus on the Art Bonus*

The State can give incentives to natural and legal persons to invest in culture. In the previous paragraphs, there have been explained some past legislations in favour of donations for the cultural sector<sup>43</sup>. These led to one of the most powerful current

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<sup>41</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.2.1.1 “Tax concessions. Focus on the Art Bonus”.

<sup>42</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.2.2 “Promotion and Communication” and Paragraph 1.4.2.1.1 “Tax Concessions. Focus on the Art Bonus”.

<sup>43</sup> See Paragraph 1.3 “Towards Corporate Support for the Arts. Variations in the Italian Funding System”.

instruments in Italy in this regard, the so-called “Art Bonus”, which is a tax credit for everyone that makes donations addressed to the cultural world. It was established at first by the Decree Law 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014 *Disposizioni urgenti per la tutela del patrimonio culturale, lo sviluppo della cultura e il rilancio del turismo*<sup>44</sup>, and entered into force the 1<sup>st</sup> of June of the same year. The legislative text, which has been modified and integrated during the years<sup>45</sup>, stresses the idea of the urgency to find resources for the conservation of the national heritage, for the revitalization of tourism, for the development of all the activities of digitization and computerization related to it, and for the remedy of the situation of emergency regarding several Italian cultural sites<sup>46</sup>. Other interventions concern the protection and the restoration of artworks<sup>47</sup>, the sustenance of cultural centres, theatres, opera houses, festivals and of other cultural and performing arts activities.

The fundamental prerequisite to apply the Art Bonus is that the organizations or the works to which the donations are addressed – or the subjects holding their concessions – must be public and must possess cultural relevance. Private sites and private artworks are excluded, with some few exceptions<sup>48</sup>, as the interventions addressed to them should need more inspections<sup>49</sup>. This limitation, together with the public

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<sup>44</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2014/5/31/14G00095/sg>

<sup>45</sup> Here there are signalled the modifications made from 2014 to 2020. In 2014 subjects holding a concession for public cultural goods became able to receive donations and traditional theatres were include in the law. In 2016 Art Bonus was set at 65%. In 2017 the law was extended to organizations for concerts and orchestras, national theatres, theatres of high cultural interest, festivals, theatrical and dance enterprises and production centres, and distribution circuits. In 2019 donations were made possible for the city of Venice and Matera. In 2020 the law was widened to instrumental ensembles, concert and choral societies, circuses and travelling shows.

<sup>46</sup> The legislative text refers in particular to the archaeological site of Pompei, to the Royal Palace of Caserta and to places damaged by natural disasters like L’Aquila and the region of Abruzzo. It is important to consider these specific examples also in relation of the year in which the law was drafted (2014).

<sup>47</sup> The aforementioned Vittoria Alata case is a perfect example of this. See Paragraph 1.4.2.1 “Donations” and the Paragraph 3.2.2 “Promotion and Communication”.

<sup>48</sup> There are two exceptions. The first one refers to cultural goods of religious interest or belonging to religious organizations that were damaged by earthquake (Law 17 October 2016 n. 189 *Interventi urgenti in favore delle popolazioni colpite dal sisma del 24 agosto 2016* <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2016/12/17/16A08716/sg>) and the second one to interventions for the safeguarding of Venice and Matera (Law 12 December 2019 n. 156 *Conversione in legge, con modificazioni, del decreto-legge 24 ottobre 2019, n. 123, recante disposizioni urgenti per l’accelerazione e il completamento delle ricostruzioni in Corso nei territory colpitis da eventi sismici* <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2019/12/23/19G00163/sg>).

<sup>49</sup> The possessors of private cultural heritage could benefit of other incentives, like the tax reduction applied by art. 100, co. 2, lett. f and g of TUIR (text on income taxes) (<https://www.brocardi.it/testo-unico-imposte-redditi/titolo-ii/capo-ii/sezione-i/art100.html>).

intermediations that donors must observe without making direct interventions, makes administrative procedures simpler and it reduces risk (Lupi, 2014).

The incentive given is the 65% of the liberal donation made with a limit of the 15% of the taxable income for natural persons and non-commercial entities and of the “5 per Mille” of the annual income for enterprises. According to the directives given by the government, the credit is received throughout three years in three shares of the same amount, with different modalities depending on the subject<sup>50</sup>. The beneficiary cultural organizations have the duty to communicate every month to the Ministry of Culture<sup>51</sup> and to the general public, through their institutional site and through a dedicated portal of the Ministry<sup>52</sup>. Objects of the communication are the donations received and how they have been used, the other public funds obtained, the state of conservation and the interventions made on the sites, the information about their accessibility, and other details about the organizations’ structure.

The places needing interventions can be found on the website of the cultural organizations, on the Art Bonus dedicated portal or, if missing, they can be signalled by the subjects making the donations. Currently, the patrons who have donated with the Art Bonus are 23.403<sup>53</sup>.

Since its establishment, the diffusion of the Art Bonus has been increasing steadily. To allow this, the MIBACT, then MIC, has been signing several agreements with national institutions through the ministerial organizations ARCUS<sup>54</sup>, then ALES<sup>55</sup>. For example, they established agreements of different natures regarding information events or preferential loans with ANCI, Confindustria, Istituto per il Credito Sportivo, Federazione Nazionale Cavalieri del Lavoro and Ordine Dottori Commercialisti di Napoli. The aim was to guarantee the diffusion and promotion of the Art Bonus on the national territory.

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<sup>50</sup> For natural person and non-commercial entities in tax returns, while for enterprises in compensations.

<sup>51</sup> The denomination “Ministry of Culture”, translated by the Italian word *Ministero della Cultura*, is the current name of the office, approved in 2021. Instead, on the legal text the reference is to the “Ministry of Heritage and Cultural Activities and Tourism”, translated by the Italian term *Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo*, as it was the name of the office in 2014 when the law established.

<sup>52</sup> [www.artbonus.gov.it](http://www.artbonus.gov.it)

<sup>53</sup> Year 2021.

<sup>54</sup> A.R.C.U.S (*Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Università Statale Milano*), association dedicated to social advancement.

<sup>55</sup> ALES (*Arte Lavoro e Servizi S.p.A*) is the in-house company of the MiC. It deals with activities of conservation, technical support, enhancement, and promotion of the national cultural heritage.

ALES furtherly elaborated another strategy in order to develop a better common understanding of the tax credit. In collaboration with Promo PA Fondazione - LuBeC<sup>56</sup>, it founded in 2016 the contest called *Progetto Art Bonus dell'anno* that over the years has permitted, through an online voting opened to the general public, to award a project beneficiary of the Art Bonus for that year, with its beholder organization and all the patrons that contributed to its preservation and fruition. Finally, the Art Bonus has been promoted through communication campaigns, one in 2015 and one in 2019, using the traditional channel of communication – radio, TV, web, social and informative events.

The Art Bonus is one of the possible tools for investors in culture to receive benefits. After its introduction in the Italian laws, in order to avoid overlaps, if a subject exploits the Art Bonus in that period of time, he/she/it cannot deduct the related costs or benefit of other reductions.

#### 1.4.2.2 Sponsorships

For-profit companies are more oriented towards sponsorships and partnerships as types of support.

Sponsorships towards the cultural sector can be technical or financial contributions that companies make in order to sustain an organization, an artwork or a specific cultural project and event in exchange, among the other benefits, of a return on image and visibility throughout the cultural organizations' communication channels. The return on the corporate brand image is gained by the clear association that sponsors create with the cultural organizations supported (Coni, Dal Pozzolo, 2004). Contributions can be technical when companies act like suppliers, or financial when they provide a monetary transaction addressed to the cultural organizations (Candela, Scorcu, 2004). Moreover, sponsorships could become a tool for cultural organizations to reach a broader public, generally with a strong purchasing power, and to communicate their mission in an alternative, effective and competitive way.

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<sup>56</sup> Promo PA Fondazione is a company founded in 2003 mainly dedicated to the development of education and cultural heritage.

The promotion of the companies' brand is aimed at gaining a better position in the market and in society, with the potential increase of their financial return. Cultural organizations and events are also considered an important channel for the artistic and social progress of a community. For this reason, even though companies could employ a "selfish altruism"<sup>57</sup> (Candela, Scorcu, 2004:123) expecting a return on image, stakeholders judge positively the operations of sponsorships as an example of commitment of companies towards their place and society (Rich, 2000). Together with the positive link between for-profit and cultural organizations, this led to an improvement of the relationship with old customers and to a potential increment of the firm's clients (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

The relationship with the companies' stakeholders can also be strengthened by the benefits and services offered by the cultural organization in exchange for the support received. Some examples of this are represented by the possibility to use the cultural spaces for meetings and business events, to participate to private views and *ad hoc* guided tours or to visit a museum during special opening hours. The aforementioned benefits are similar to the ones of partnerships.

Moreover, for-profit companies can expect different types of return depending on the cultural organization they decide to invest on and on the values they want to be associated with. For example, they could be identified as progressive companies if their support is addressed to progressive shows, or they could be associated with a particular community or city if companies concentrate their commitment on specific places.

Sponsorships are a business expenditure included in the strategy of the firm, having their promotional aims and objectives measured on specific targets and goals. Potential contributions are calculated in advance and they become part of the available budget, which is typically related to the advertising expenditures or to the public relations ones given the similarity of the promotional aims (Rich, 2000).

This type of support is bidirectional, it has to be conjunctively planned and it has to satisfy both parts. Sponsorships, in fact, go along with the communication strategy of companies and with their marketing mix. Therefore, on the one hand, cultural

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<sup>57</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: "altruismo egoistico".

organizations need to develop interesting and targeted sponsorship packages, highlighting the link between their programs and the potential sponsors, and the consequent transfer of benefits from one to another (Rich, 2000). On the other hand, sponsors need a strategy to choose effectively which cultural organization to support. A further development on this topic, applied to partnerships, is debated in the next paragraphs.<sup>58</sup>

To make a sponsorship successful, a correlation between the sponsor and the sponsee is required. It could be based on functionality – when the compatibility is between the firm’s products and the cultural event or project supported – or on image resemblance – when the products and the events sponsored present the same standards and techniques, typical of a country or of a market. When successful, sponsorships could turn to continuative collaborations and become partnerships.

#### 1.4.2.3 *Cause-related Marketing*

Cause-related marketing is a “[...] strategically planned promotional effort to increase the sales of a company or to improve its positioning in the market through actions that benefit a non-profit organization, too” (Rich, 2000: 211-212).<sup>59</sup> Therefore, for-profit companies make a donation to a cultural organization or project for every product or service sold.

Cause-related marketing implies the presence of a for-profit company and a cultural organization, that have to be both satisfied and receive benefits from the cooperation. In addition, consumers actively participate to the exchange, as donations are made depending on the number of sales of the firms’ products. Similarly to sponsorships, companies need to predict in advance the amount of potential donations considering them as a business expense because they are part of the promotion strategy. So, there is a return for enterprises, both on their income and on their brand image (Rich, 2000).

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<sup>58</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.2.4 “Partnerships”.

<sup>59</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] uno sforzo promozionale pianificato strategicamente per aumentare le vendite di un’azienda o per migliorare la sua posizione nel mercato tramite azioni che vanno anche a beneficio di un’organizzazione non-profit”.

#### 1.4.2.4 *Partnerships*

With respect to the sources previously analysed, partnerships are the most advanced form of support. They imply a more structured agreement, a greater flow of interactions between the parties, and a strategic planning in order to reach benefits for both the for-profit and the non-profit reality. Partnerships are a long-term collaboration between enterprises and cultural organizations that want to develop a common project.

Whether the output is common, premises and goals of the two differentiate, bringing to different kinds of benefits. For the arts organizations advantages can be the possibility to have continuity over time, fundamental for the implementation of long-term projects and for the sustainment during periods of financial crisis characterised by the lack of public interventions. For-profit companies benefit mainly of the strong association between their brand image and the cultural organization they are supporting.

The significant difference between partnerships and the other form of support is the active role that private partners play. Donations implies a unidirectional flow of resources from privates – individuals or for-profit firms – to cultural organizations. Sponsorships a bidirectional agreement where the technical or financial support given by enterprises is repaid by a return on image promoted by the arts organization. Cause-related marketing expects the cooperation, more or less consciously, of for-profit companies, cultural organizations and consumers. Finally, partnerships move a step forward providing partners with an increasingly active participation in the operations of the cultural organizations. This participation can be activated at the operational level, rather than the sole financial support level. Examples of the first one could be the possibility to share responsibilities with the supported organizations and the participation of the privates in the decision-making processes of the institutions. An example of the second is the financing of cultural activities with the establishment of medium or long-term agreements.

Fundamental for a successful partnership is the common dialogue and understanding, especially for the private organization that has to comprehend the artistic aspirations and mission of its cultural partners. Technical partnerships can co-produce a series of artistic events, initiatives, shows and projects, giving private partners the possibility to follow them step-by-step.

Benefits for private companies can be the same of the ones illustrated for sponsorships<sup>60</sup>, for example the possibility to use cultural spaces for business events, to participate to guided tours and to make visits outside the regular opening hours and other activities depending on the necessities of the partners. The active role of the partners leads to a strengthening of the relationship with the other stakeholders as well.

Partnerships are often established after a successful collaboration of sponsorship, with the decision to continue the union changing the relation from a general agreement of sponsorship to a more structured and multi-yearly cooperation one. Naturally, to be successful, the relationship implies the presence of a strong compatibility between the parties.

Besides some common characteristics and benefits that are likely to be observed in partnerships, these types of agreements can actualize in different forms and in different levels of sharing capacity, due to the specificity of each cultural organization program, for-profit firms' managerial procedures and local context.

#### 1.4.3 *Reasons Behind Corporate Support for the Arts. A Business Perspective*

From a business perspective, motivations behind corporate support rely traditionally on the willingness of firms to promote social and artistic initiatives. Companies seek, at the same time, a better market position, an improvement of reputation in society, an increase of their economic results and of the quality of their relationships with stakeholders. Equally, corporate support is an opportunity for cultural organizations to attract economic and technical resources through which they can achieve their artistic and social mission (Rich, 2000).

Given its width, the following is an extract of the great amount of literature that investigated the topic, starting from the 1990s to the first decades of the new millennium. Rich talks about “strategic philanthropy”<sup>61</sup> (Rich, 2000: 211): a term

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<sup>60</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.2.2 “Sponsorships”.

<sup>61</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “filantropia strategica”.



elaborated in the 1980s<sup>62</sup> referring to the willingness of firms to strategically improve their image, to increase their sales, to gain more recognizability for both themselves and the cultural organizations supported. Panizza and Stewart, referring to the theories of Rhonda (1999), Koetler and Keller (2012), Mazodier and Merunka (2012), and of Wiedmann and Gross (2013), identify five central aims, not mutually exclusive, to elaborate a corporate support plan. These are enhancing the corporate brand image, realizing marketing promotion and sales objectives, exploiting media to reach the target market, to build relationships both internally and externally, and to fulfil the personal objectives of the CEO or of the senior manager (Panizza, Stewart, 2017). Fisher and Brouillet (1990) claim that the 37% of firms wants to improve their company image, that the 22% wants to increase sales, that the 15% wants to acquire more visibility, another 15% wants to have a social impact on their community, the 5% is willing to sustain a cause, 4% aim for a better communication and, finally, the remaining 2% wants to reach specific targets (Rich, 2000). Moreover, other reasons inducing companies to participate to corporate support programs regard the number of visitors, the visibility of the brand on the promotional materials, the resonance and the economic potential deriving from the events supported, and the media coverage. Candela e Scorcu (2004) highlight the potential benefits regarding the communicational aspects oriented both to the present and potential customers, the cohesion and the positive attitude induced in the staff, the recognizability in the market and in the society and the positive influence that the sponsorship could create for the company's brand image. The latter could set them as leaders in their sector of origins. Other reasons could rely on the willingness of firms to either increase public awareness on their reality or to change the general perception about them (Comunian, 2009).

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<sup>62</sup> The 1980s are considered the period in which public support for the cultural sector diminished and private investments increased. See Paragraph 1.3 "Towards Corporate Support for the Arts. Variations in the Italian Funding System".

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Average*</b>
<b>Sales objectives</b>	<b>2,93</b>
Increasing sales	3,26
Making easier the forecasting of sales	2,58
<b>Product objectives</b>	<b>2,90</b>
Increasing the knowledge about the product	3,30
Identifying the product with a market segment	3,07
Changing the product's image	2,67
Encouraging consumers to try the product	2,50
<b>Business objectives</b>	<b>2,65</b>
Enhancing the corporate image	3,56
Increasing the company's reputation	3,36
Increasing long-term economic results	3,34
Getting involved in the community	3,13
Identifying the company with a market segment	2,92
Favourably impressing the opinion leaders	2,88
Acquiring new business contacts	2,81
Changing the public perception of the company	2,58
Improving internal relations with employees	2,48
Keeping staff morale high	2,37
Underlining a special event	2,31
Reacting to negative press (damage control)	1,98
Reassuring shareholders	1,79
Facilitating the recruitment of new employees	1,77
<b>Personal objectives</b>	<b>2,09</b>

\*4 = very important; 3 = important; 2 = not very important; 1 = negligible.

**Table 1.1: The Relative Importance of Sponsors Objective.**

Source : Godbout A., Turgeon N., Colbert F., Pratique de la commandite commerciale au Québec: une étude empirique (Montreal, Chaire de gestion des arts, école des Hautes études Commerciales, cahier de recherche GA91.02, September 1991), p. 31.

The research finds out that the main benefits and reasons that determine companies to support cultural organizations regard:

- The expected return on image: the organizations often search for an enhancement of their brand in the customers' eyes in order to gain a better position in the market, ameliorate their reputation or change the perception of their company. Promotion through investments in culture permits to better transmit the companies' aims in a competitive way to reach a larger user base.
- The social corporate responsibility that firms and enterprises increasingly have: they act to pursue the stakeholder wealth and their own satisfaction in doing what they consider right.
- The tax benefits deriving from investments in the arts, established in varied modalities by the public government.
- The consequent return on profits, given by the positive return on image companies gain and by the potential opening to new markets (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000; Comunian, 2008; Comunian, 2009, Trimarchi, 1993).

Over time the reasons behind cultural corporate support and the possible choices of investments have increased in number and firms expect more than traditional benefits.

#### *1.4.3.2 The Porter Model and the Search for Competitive Advantage*

The studies about investments in the artworld from a business perspective are a quite recent tendency, with more evidence starting from the last decades (Comunian, 2008). Corporate support for cultural organizations requires a competitive strategy that "[...] is the plan aimed at resisting pressure from competitors, and from environmental forces, where resisting ultimately means maintaining over time the profit margins set as goals" (Cirriuncione, 2017:194). Sponsorships and partnerships need to be analysed in their cost-advantages, planned and organized, as they become a strategic part of a firm's activities and a potential way to gain a competitive advantage. In this regard, the study should not be limited in considering the internal characteristics of cultural firms, but it should

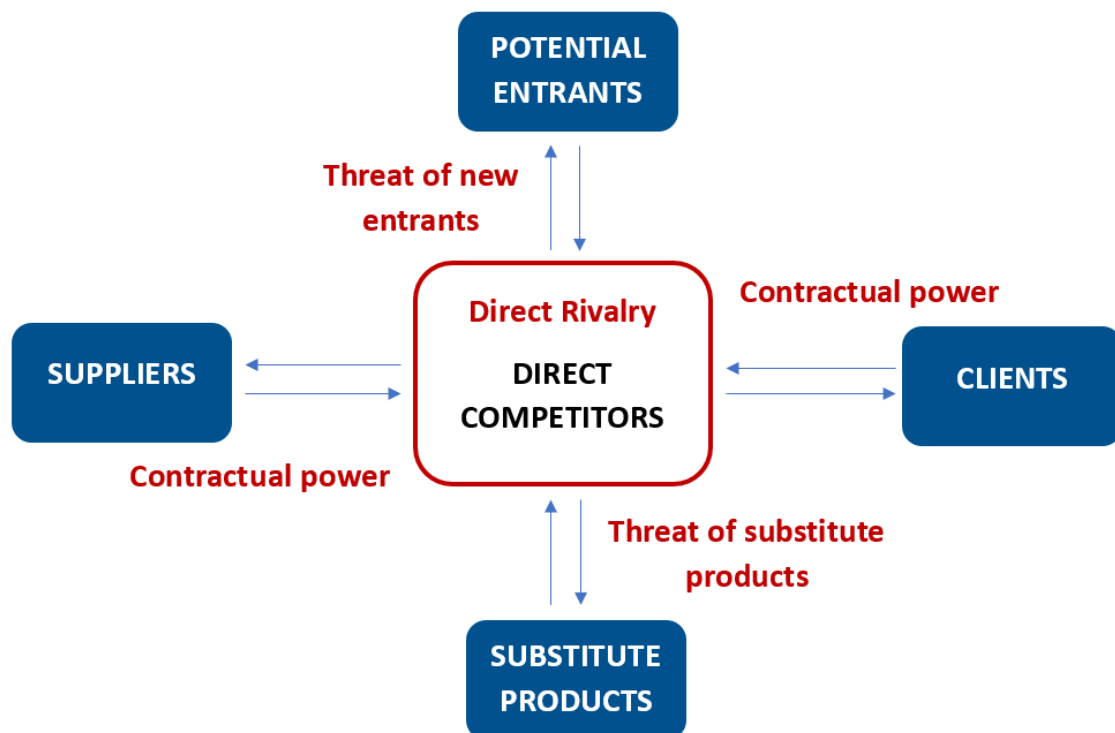
ponder their external context, as competition deals with the fragmentation of other productive sectors too (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000).

Competition could be intratype or intertype. The first one refers to companies using similar solutions to provide the same offering, while the second one differs in its proposals to satisfy the same clients' needs. Intertype competition, in particular, is widely present in the cultural sector. Cultural organizations face a competition to attract the audience more than other offerings, proposed by cultural or by non-cultural organizations. At the same time, they race against the other organizations to acquire the resources in the market, especially partnering companies already sustaining culture and the other firms or enterprises willing to grant their financial support to the cultural or to the non-cultural sector (Carrol, Stater, 2008). In the intertype competition the consumers, the audience, or the companies, generally search for the best benefits to satisfy their needs not following precisely the market guidelines. For this reason, organizations must adopt the customers' perspective to be effective (Cirrincione, 2017).

The traditional way to analyse a firm's competitive advantage and its intertype competition is using the Porter "five competitive forces" model (1980). The model takes into consideration the whole environment and not the pertinent sector only (Cirrincione, 2017). Moreover, it is fundamental "to understand how business investments in the arts can be conceptualised within the search for a competitive advantage" (Comunian, 2008:38). The model consists in the study of five factors external to the organization whose dynamic interactions influence competitiveness making companies acquire or lose their advantage in a particular sector modifying the companies' margin. In this way, companies could be seen, from the customers' point of view, as alternatives or they can stand out from the market by the control of crucial factors of production. The five competitive forces, as they are called in the model, are represented by

- the rivalry with direct competitors operating in the same sector. Direct competitors are "[...] those organizations that compete to satisfy the same need for the same group of clients, adopting the same technology" (Cirrincione, 2017:189).

- the threat of potential entrants willing to become part of the market. The potential entrants represent organizations not operating in the same sector but that could use their expertise and position in the market to become competitors.
- the threat of substitutes products and services that could fulfil the same needs sought-after by customers. Organizations could use their different position and expertise to appear as an alternative in the customers' eyes.
- the bargaining power of intermediate or final clients.
- The bargaining power of suppliers. Both intermediate and final clients, and suppliers could negotiate the agreements as they often possess strategic components and technology useful for the organizations (Cirrincione, 2017).



**Figure 1.1: The Porter Model**  
 Source: Porter (1980)

Depending on its features, a sector could be fragmented or, alternatively, highly concentrated. Competition is usually higher when markets are close to saturation. This determines the use of a “competitive strategy” (Cirrincione, 2017:194) to differentiate and survive in a highly competitive field. In this way, companies’ gain is related to the

efficacy of the operations, the relationship with customers and the control of resources necessary for the organizations.

The process above mentioned complies both with the art sector and the business perspective. Corporate support for cultural organizations could then represents a “meaningful socio-economic choice within a company value-chain and [...] (an) impact in terms of economic competitiveness” (Comunian, 2008:38).

The convergence between the cultural and the economic sector increased in the last decades, either at an investment level and at a production one<sup>63</sup>, making firms more able to exploit the added value from culture as part of their success in their own field. Indeed, “[...] the need for business to build relationships with the cultural sphere, artists, or arts organizations, has become central” (Comunian, 2008:37-38). Consequently to a specific researched strategy companies could develop their unicity, differentiating their products and services.

Success generally derives from the place where the firm is located and the necessity to secure strong connections with the firms’ stakeholders. In addition, the modality by which the investments are made has to be a “co-management of initiatives in order to maintain the link with the mission of the business and to improve its expertise, innovation processes and networks” (Comunian, 2008:38), underlining the necessary condition of a long-term agreement (Porter, Kramer, 2002). In this way, organizations could gain competitive advantage by creating added value, resultant from the unicity of their offer, by the possibility of acquiring different points of view, by assimilating different expertise that can become “[...] a valuable asset to the company and improve management skills for future sponsored events” (Comunian, 2008:39), and by engaging the stakeholders. It is necessary to shape a strategy that could impact on the internal structure of the company itself.

Besides investments in the arts, there are other manifestations of the collaboration between companies and the cultural world. Some of these are represented by the foundation of cultural institutions or contemporary art spaces, by corporate museums

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<sup>63</sup> Consumers, indeed, prefer products with increasingly aesthetic features and symbolic and creative content (Comunian, 2008).

and enterprises collections, or by the added value derived from creativity in the product development that can also open the firms to new markets. Creativity and culture in corporate processes and the derived increment of innovation is a topic that has been widely discussed by Lotte Darsø (2005) and in the World Economic Forum in Davos (2004).

#### 1.4.5 *Debate about the Perceived Impacts of Corporate Support on Cultural Organizations*

The increasing involvement of private funders in the cultural sector has received some criticism, too. These derive from the administrative boards that considers the economic aims of enterprises non coherent and alien to the artistic and social mission of cultural organizations. Others regard the negative thought linked to the idea that commercial companies exploit making profit from their cultural collaborations (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000). Several worries regard the constraints that cultural institutions face in the presence of external entities, limiting their artistic freedom, their power of innovation and their authenticity. In this sense, organizations risk to modify their offer, their structure, and their contents in order to become more easily fundable and to be in agreement with the common taste (Candela, Scorcu, 2004). This tendency could be reconnected to the phenomenon of organizational isomorphism<sup>64</sup>. Supporting this theory, private funders generally tend to finance secure projects with implicit values shared by the community; they research a safer return on image and the enlargement of their demand. For-profit organizations generally avoid connections with projects that could seem inappropriate or controversial to the majority. As a consequence, assumed that artistic innovations are perceived as riskier to fund and therefore they receive less support, in most cases, cultural organizations present more established and secure cultural projects to potential supporters. This mechanism is similar to the one for receiving public fundings (Candela, Scorcu, 2004; Draskowitsch, 2003; Froelich, 1999).

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<sup>64</sup> According to the definition given in 1983 by DiMaggio and Powell, organizational isomorphism is “the constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions”.

Another consequence of this mechanism is that companies often have a power strong enough to influence both their stakeholders and the society about art. The first ones are moved through the benefits offered by the cultural organizations and indirectly transmitted to the companies' stakeholders such as the visit to specific museums or to the events supported. In this way, firms could contribute to the formation of the taste of their employees, suppliers, and consumers. On the other hand, companies could influence society with the cultural offers they sponsor. This could be considered dangerous because it gives too much power to privates. Public control, instead, provides a global and pluralistic approach, particularly useful for small realities relying pre-eminently on external types of support (Draskowitsch, 2003).

An additional critique moved to private funders concerns the tendency of firms, recorded mainly in the past, to act separately without a specific planning and a strategic management<sup>65</sup> (Bodo, 1994). Finally, Biraglia, Gerrath and Usrey (2018) highlight anecdotal evidence about visitors' negative vision of sponsorships related to ethical, environmental, and moral issues, in particular addressed to the possible loss of authenticity of museums.

All the concerns above mentioned could be a risk if underestimated. Nonetheless, if every action is ethical, coherent and gives positive returns to both the for-profit company and the cultural organization, the collaboration should be pursued (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000). Cultural products, as a matter of fact, create multiple different positive externalities and values to the society that could be enhanced and reach a broader public if supplied with the right number of technical and financial resources. Cultural products can transmit identity-related values helping consumers to develop a sense of belonging to a particular place or community, they can reiterate a political status and relevance or a social message for aggregation and for peaceful co-existence. Values can be also educational and, finally, economical under the form of tourism (Dubini, 2017). The importance of cultural values is recognized by the society, as well as the importance to have resources to create artistic projects to promote them. In the USA, as a matter of fact, the public opinion is favourable to private fundings, in

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<sup>65</sup> See Paragraph 1.3 "Towards Corporate Support for the Arts. Variations in the Italian Funding System".



particular to partnership agreements as they guarantee a long-term social commitment (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000). This tendency has acquired even more importance on the global level in the period of pandemic Covid-19<sup>66</sup>.

Successful relationships occur when there is mutual cooperation, shared interests, parity between the two parties with the acknowledgment of each other's competencies and trust, possible when the relationship is continuous. Other important features of partnerships are the engagement in an active participation by all parties, the respect of timing, the expertise and the strong reputation of the organizations, and the clarity of individual responsibilities. In this way "the traditional tension between public and private logics can be resolved through managerial-level cooperation and responsibility sharing, instead of a rigid definition of exclusive areas of competence" (Dubini, Forti, Leone, 2012:70). This mechanism acquires even more importance when considering that the economy of culture is a mixed economy (Bodo, 1997). And still, it is important to remember that private fundings do not prohibit public interventions; their correlation could enhance the output instead. The possible situations and cases are multiple, depending on the context, on the peculiarities of the realities involved, and on the level of private involvement that organizations desire to obtain.

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<sup>66</sup> See Chapter 3 "*Alleanza per la Cultura. A Model of Strategic Partnership*".

## Chapter II. Fondazione Brescia Musei

Chapter II introduces the case study discussed in Chapter III “*Alleanza per la Cultura. A Model of Strategic Partnership*”. At first, Fondazione Brescia Musei is presented with a description of its four<sup>67</sup> museums and one<sup>68</sup> cinema. Then follows an analysis of its last period financial statements (2015-2020) and a comment about the changes in its main operational areas. These descriptions are functional to introduce the latest managerial model that the organization has adopted in 2019 and the case study *Alleanza per la Cultura* in its main characteristics.

### 2.1 The Foundation

Fondazione Brescia Musei is a “fondazione di partecipazione”<sup>69</sup> managing and enhancing the principal artistic and monumental heritage of the city included in the former municipal Musei Civici d’Arte e Storia di Brescia and the cinema Nuovo Eden. At first, the museums were under the direction of the Municipality of Brescia, whose activities started to be supported in 2003 by the joint stock company Brescia Musei S.p.A. In 2007 the company was transformed in the current “fondazione di partecipazione” with a concession of management and enhancement for the five cultural sites.

As seen in-depth in the next paragraphs, all the museums have ancient roots and they represent a peculiar aspect of the social and cultural history of Brescia, testifying its transformation throughout the centuries. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the sites underwent works of restoration and enhancement, in order to give importance to the collection in number and quality. An example of these efforts is given by Andrea Emiliani<sup>70</sup> with his plan, requested in 1976 by the Municipality under the influence of Vasco Frati, to

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<sup>67</sup> The Santa Giulia Museum, the Archaeological Area, the Tosio Martinengo Gallery, and the Castle (comprising two museums: the Arms Museum and the Risorgimento Museum).

<sup>68</sup> The Nuovo Eden Cinema.

<sup>69</sup> The “fondazione di partecipazione”, also called “stakeholder foundation”, is a private juridical entity with an established scope and formed by a plurality of founders. The founders participate with different shares established, with material and immaterial assets, financial provisions, and services.

<sup>70</sup> Andrea Emiliani was an influential art historian, cultural operator, and professor. In his career he became the Superintendent for the Cultural Heritage of Ferrara, Bologna, Forlì and Ravenna and the Director of the National Gallery of Bologna. In 1976 he was commissioned by the Municipality of Brescia to implement a renovation plan for the complex of Santa Giulia in Brescia.

requalify the Archaeological site and the complex of San Salvatore and Santa Giulia. At that time, issues about restoration, use and management of the cultural heritage were not new, and with this restoration finally found a political encouragement. One year earlier, in 1975, a five-year period administrative guideline was set about how the operations and the arrangements of museums should be to fulfil the idea of a *“museo vivo”* (Emiliani, 1976).

At the turn of the new millennium these museums progressively acquired the aspect known today and they continuously underwent renovation works to be kept up to date. Here are listed a few important steps in their history: in 1998 the complex of Santa Giulia has been declared “Museum of the City”, in parallel to the several works of restoration for the Archaeological area starting from 2011. Nowadays the Museum of Arms, included in the Museums of the Castle, is under renovation while the Tosio Martinengo Gallery, that underwent important works lasted nine years from 2009 to 2018, is now open to the public.

In 2003 the municipal managerial direction of the Musei Civici d’Arte e Storia di Brescia began to be supported by the new established joint stock company named Brescia Musei. The major shareholder remained the Municipality of Brescia with the 92% of the share, in partnership with Fondazione CAB, Fondazione ASM and Camera di Commercio. As it acquired major responsibilities in management and promotional planning, the company was later legally recognised, by a prefecture measure on the 26th of January 2007, as “fondazione di partecipazione” under the name of Fondazione Brescia Musei. The foundation, in this way, states the possibility “[...] to give continuity of management to the innovative public-private partnership that allowed the reopening of Santa Giulia and the progressive enhancement of Brescia as a city of art, through an articulated cultural program”<sup>71</sup>. The statement refers to a previous public-private collaboration in 1999 between the Municipality and the Fondazione CAB aimed, among its goals, to fund Santa Giulia works of “musealization” and the design of a new

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<sup>71</sup> Statement from the Fondazione Brescia Musei’s website <https://www.bresciamusei.com/pag.asp?n=11&t=Fondazione+e+suoi+Organi>. Translation by the author. The original: “[...] per dare continuità di gestione alla innovativa partnership pubblico-privato che ha consentito la riapertura di Santa Giulia e la progressiva valorizzazione di Brescia come città d’arte, attraverso un articolato programma culturale ed espositivo.”

managerial system for the Musei Civici d'Arte e Storia di Brescia. The statement then refers to the idea of enhancement and promotion at different levels. It refers to potential events, to projects of research and exhibitions, previously approved by the founding partners, and to the direct management of the public cultural heritage of the museums, whose preservation and administration has been transferred from the Municipality of Brescia to the Foundation. Brescia Musei changed its juridical form converting its support from the typology of service contracts to the one of concession agreements. It increasingly acquired a greater importance in the administration, the enhancement, and the promotion of the strategic development of the museums. With time it overcame its role as a “[...] parallel operating structure that acts in close collaboration with the Settore Musei d'Arte e Storia for implementing tasks, (and it became the main manager of the individuated cultural heritage) so that all aspects relating to promotion, communication and marketing, extremely relevant in a modern museum system, could merge in it” (Fondazione Brescia Musei, 2018:4)<sup>72</sup>.

Besides conservation and promotion, part of the mission of Brescia Musei, and previously of the Musei Civici d'Arte e Storia, has been the educational one. This has been a fundamental pillar for the fulfilment of its social role and for the engagement of the public, as beforementioned in the report by Andrea Emiliani. The relationship with the local community and the territory has been further strengthened with the new juridical form Brescia Musei acquired and with the new-established relational managerial system currently in use that permits to implement organic programs and to fulfil a common mission. The local cultural heritage therefore acquires a social meaning, partly setting aside its self-referentiality (Fondazione Brescia Musei, 2018).

Currently Fondazione Brescia Musei oversees five realities: the four Musei Civici d'Arte e Storia (the Santa Giulia Museum, the Archaeological Area, the Tosio Martinengo Gallery, and the Castle – comprising the Arms Museum “Luigi Marzoli” and the Risorgimento Museum) and the cinema *d'essai* Nuovo Eden.

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<sup>72</sup> Translation by the author. From the original: “[...] una struttura operativa parallela che agisca in stretta collaborazione con il Settore Musei d'Arte e Storia per compiti attuativi, così da far convergere nella stessa tutti quegli aspetti relativi a promozione, comunicazione e marketing, estremamente rilevanti in un moderno sistema museale”.

## 2.2 The Museums of Fondazione Brescia Musei

### 2.2.1 Santa Giulia Museum

Santa Giulia Museum, appealed “Museum of the City”, is the main museum of the city of Brescia. After few attempts in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, its first theorization was shaped in 1976 when the Municipality commissioned to Andrea Emiliani the elaboration of a proposal for the renovation. This included the organic redevelopment of the San Salvatore and Santa Giulia complex and of the nearby Archaeological area. They are considered two of the pilasters of the cultural heritage of Brescia nowadays. In his report *Relazione Propedeutica alla formulazione di un piano per la sistemazione museografica del complesso di Santa Giulia e degli attuali spazi archeologici* Emiliani (1976) analysed the contemporary status of the buildings and elaborated several propositions for their efficient and effective use. Since its origins, it emerges the museums’ pursuit of a strong educational aim to enrich visitors and to implement their knowledge of the territory and of the local culture.

In order to fulfil the museum’s mission and the willingness of the Municipality, it has been pivotal the restoration of several artworks, the architectural renovation of the buildings, necessary after their precedent use and their abandonment over time, and the reorganization in a functional and organic way for an adequate set-up of the collections. Moreover, the installation of necessary technical implants was needed, as well as the guarantee of the right conditions of conservation and management.

The educational aim and the link with the territory can be found in the content of the collections, that makes another reason why Santa Giulia is considered the museum of the city. As a matter of fact, the objects preserved there represent the origins, epochs, and transformation of the local territory over time, an aspect taken into consideration in the organization and rearrangement of the spaces. Emiliani (1976) stated that the cultural heritage owned by the Municipality presented a balance between the architectural and the mobile form. The first one is represented by the contemporary excavations, typical of the Neoclassical spirit of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the second one by the history of collecting, especially regarding local objects and artworks that often reveals to be experimental.

The main collectors to whom the heritage is reconnected to are the Martinengo, Gaifami, Avogadro, Averoldi, Avoltori e Ilana, and Lechi families. Therefore, Santa Giulia is considered an historical, artistic and urbanistic place strictly related to the city. Used in the past as a source of pride, it is a public space with public functions and a social mission. Giving its characteristics, the museum acquires political connotations too (Emiliani, 1976).

As previously stated, the Santa Giulia complex dates back to ancient origins. Its 12.000 findings and its approximately 14.000 square meters surface are located in the Benedictine feminine monastic complex of Santa Giulia and San Salvatore, founded in 753 B.C. by the Langobardic king Desiderius and his wife Ansa. The complex presents a strong stratification of different epochs that is still visible, through a continuous exhibition itinerary of the different sections, when visiting the museum. In this sense, the Santa Giulia Museum could be defined as a unique example in Italy and Europe for its place and exposition, and for its embeddedness in the local context<sup>73</sup>. Visitors can explore the art, the history, and the culture of the city of Brescia and of its citizens, from the prehistoric period up to date. The building complex was constructed on Romans *Domus*, the *Domus dell'Ortaglia* complex with the *Domus di Dioniso* and the *Domus delle Fontane*, active from the I to the IV century in the Roman residential area. The place then became a state-owned territory and finally the *hortus* of the Santa Giulia monastery. The productive *hortus* and the *Viridarium*, with its decorative and contemplative purposes, are currently recreated with vegetative elements used in the Roman era. Subsequently, the Langobardic monastery of San Salvatore was built in 753 B.C. on the project of king Desiderius, becoming one of the most important examples of the early medieval religious architecture preserved in elevation<sup>74</sup>. Here were found the remains of Santa Giulia, repositioned at the beginning of 1600 in the new Santa Giulia church. The building, constructed on previous findings, symbolised the dynastic power of monarchy.

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<sup>73</sup> From Brescia Musei's website <https://www.bresciamusei.com/santagiulia.asp>

<sup>74</sup> From Brescia Musei's website <https://www.bresciamusei.com/nsantagiulia.asp?nm=5&t=I+luoghi%2E+La+basilica+di+San+Salvatore>

In the passing time a bell tower, later chapels and the suggestive *coro delle monache*, erected in the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century and painted with frescos by Floriano Ferramola and Paolo da Caylina with themes related to the salvation, were built and opened to the public in 2002. They now represent the point of union between San Salvatore and Santa Giulia. The cultural legacy of the museum enlarged with new discoveries from the past, frescos of Romanino, and new architectural restorations.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century the church of Santa Maria in Solario was constructed in Roman style, conserving the Treasure of Santa Giulia and precious vessels, part of the heritage of the monastery. Here are preserved the *Lipsanoteca* and the rare king Desiderius' Cross with rich eclectic decorative elements from the Roman, Lombard and Carolingian period, whose symbols recall both the dynastic power and the religious one. The Cross survived in time even after the suppression of the monastery, under the Napoleonic period (1798), when cultural and artistic artworks were transferred in other locations like San Domenico and the Queriniana Palace.

In time Santa Giulia readapted to several modes of use, up to the foundation of the Museum of the Christian Era in 1882. Here were arranged the cultural objects moved by the Napoleonic suppressions, especially from the Museo Patrio<sup>75</sup> and from the Library Queriniana<sup>76</sup>, and further legacies obtained.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century proposal of renovations of the space had been made and concretized in the current Museum of the City, established in 1998. The 25 June 2011 Santa Giulia with its church and its cloisters, was included in the World Heritage List, together with San Salvatore and the Capitolium area. It was introduced in the serial site *I Longobardi in Italia. Luoghi del potere (568-774 d.C.)*, the first list of sites of this kind, creating a network with the discoveries in Cividale del Friuli, Campello sul Clitunno, Torba-Castelseprio, Spoleto, Monte Sant'Angelo e Benevento, that together testify an "extraordinary universal value"<sup>77</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> See Paragraph 2.2.2 "Archaeological Area".

<sup>76</sup> The Queriniana Library is another pilaster in the cultural history of Brescia. It was founded in 1747 as a library, museum, and location for erudite Academies.

<sup>77</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/>.

### 2.2.2 *Archaeological Area*

Located in a sacred site of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., the Capitolium is a unique example of a Roman temple dedicated to the so-called *Triade Capitolina* – Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. The entire site is full of testimonies of the glorious past of the city, one of the most important of the Romanic period in Northern Italy, also including the sanctuary from the Republican age, the Capitolium, the theatre, the *decumanus maximus* and all the important palaces and the forum nearby<sup>78</sup>.

In accordance with the Neoclassical fascination to archaeological excavations and rescues, and from the willingness of the Congregazione Municipale, the Ateneo di Scienze, Lettere e Arti pursued in 1822 an excavation campaign to rediscover the archaeological site. In 1826 the operations led to the revelation of an important heritage of bronzed sculptures, fragments, ornate cornices, equestrian statues, and many other findings that were hidden in a cavity in the wall. The restoration of the archaeological spaces under the guidance of Luigi Basiletti<sup>79</sup>, Rodolfo Vantini<sup>80</sup> and Giovanni Labus<sup>81</sup> preserved the original planimetry with the integration of materials alien to the Roman ones<sup>82</sup>. The temple became in 1830 the location of the first municipal museum of the area, the Museo Patrio, with strong aims of conservation, exhibition, research, and social, cultural, and economic revitalization of the area.

The Archaeological Area comprehends the Capitolium temple, the Theatre and the Sanctuary. The Capitolium represents a fundamental proof of the architectural forms under the empire of Vespasian, in line with its contemporary tendencies in Rome. Originally destined to the imperial cult, the inside presents the original floors with coloured marbles forming geometric motives of 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. combined with findings of the 1822 diggings, sacred sculptures, and furnishings. During the various set ups that

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<sup>78</sup> From Brescia Musei's website <https://www.bresciamusei.com/capitolium.asp>.

<sup>79</sup> Painter, engraver, architect, art conservator and archaeologist, Luigi Basiletti was one of the main promoters for the diggings of the Capitolium Area.

<sup>80</sup> Rodolfo Vantini was an architect operating in the Lombard area during the first part of the XIX century. In Brescia he built the cemetery, the Tosio Palace and the Bonamini monument.

<sup>81</sup> Giovanni Labus was a political figure of the city of Brescia. After his approach to the literal environment of the time, he undertook studies of the local cultural heritage publishing volumes and contributing to the restoration of the Archaeological Area.

<sup>82</sup> A traditional way to differentiate the original parts of the findings to the added ones. In the Capitolium the technique was used for the work of restoration conducted from 1938 to 1945 of the pronaos and of the writing on the fronton dedicated to Vespasian dating back to 73 A.D.



occurred time by time, the collection hosted original and painted epigraphies, archaeological findings and manufacts from the local territory donated by institutions and citizens. Over time these had been dislocated in other venues due to the historical events and then returned to their original place of finding. An accurate example is represented by the Vittoria Alata sculpture that originally belonged to the temple. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was exhibited in Santa Giulia until its recent relocation in the Capitolium area at the end of 2020.

The Museo Patrio was then divided in two sections. On the one hand, the Christian cultural heritage merged into the new-born Christian Museum in Santa Giulia<sup>83</sup>, on the other hand the Roman findings remained in the Archaeological Area transforming the Museo Patrio in the Roman Museum.

The continuous research was fundamental for studying findings, for better understanding the use of space and for acknowledging the original architectural construction, the reasons of foundation and its phases in history. The temple underwent several works of renovation in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century for the pronaos and the fronton, for the cells and the general architectural structures.

Later, in 1998, the Municipality, thanks to public and private support, undertook an organic plan to recover and promote the entire area and open it to the public, following the proposal originally stated by Andrea Emiliani<sup>84</sup>. Up to date there is a plan of unifying the areas of the Capitolium and of the Santa Giulia Museum through a cultural passage between the two realities (Bazoli, Karadjov, 2020).

Alongside the temple, it is located the ancient Theatre built in the Augustan age. Used until the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, it then became a quarry after the damages suffered due to an earthquake. It has had many functionalities over time, and periods of abandonment that permitted to conduct the archaeological excavations and restorations required until its opening to the public on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2014.

The following year, in 2015, the Sanctuary of the Republican Age was open to the public. Here there are frescos, sacred furnishings, and mosaic floors. Consequently to its

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<sup>83</sup> See Paragraph 2.1 "The Foundation".

<sup>84</sup> See Paragraph 2.1 "The Foundation".

rediscovered in 1823, the Superintendency for Archaeological sites in Lombardy and the Civici Musei di Arte e Storia di Brescia carried out diggings and implemented continuous research from 1956 to 1961 and again in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, concluded in 2005.

In 2011 the whole archaeological site was proclaimed part of the World Heritage List, together with the Santa Giulia complex, as one of the most significant and better-preserved archaeological sites in Italy. The Capitolium, in particular, could be considered the most representative temple of its genre in Italy for its conservation, architectural features and its magnificence<sup>85</sup>.

### 2.2.3 *Tosio Martinengo Gallery*

The Tosio Martinengo Gallery comprehends the collection originally belonged to the Tosio and Martinengo families. The Tosio collection (1832-1846) includes paintings both from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary international ones: Raffaello, Lotto, Moretto, Romanino, Hayez, Appiani, Bartolini, Canova. Moreover, it counts mobile objects such as bronzes, stamps, glass objects, cameos, and paintings. The importance of the family in the city was cherished in the first 19<sup>th</sup> century, making their palace a location for a literary salon, that currently is the location of the Ateneo Scienze, Lettere e Arti of Brescia.

Subsequently, in 1884 the Martinengo family left to the Municipality its legacy comprising their palace, where the two collections were relocated in 1906. Further legacies and donations enlarged the number of artworks to 130 paintings and the two collections have remained located in what today is the Tosio Martinengo Gallery. Another important collection that recently merged into the museum is the Camillo Brozzoni's one with its *objects d'art*, comprehensive of goldsmiths, glass and ivory pieces.

The present joint collection and the choices of the former Directors of the gallery showed at first a dominant interest in artists from the whole country, rather than local

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<sup>85</sup> From Brescia Musei's website <https://www.bresciamusei.com/capitolium.asp>.

ones. The tendency has changed with the new acquisitions made in the last decades, focused on the school of Brescia and on the artistical history of the city. This shift links to the educational aim recommended by Andrea Emiliani as one of the fundamental principles of the social mission of the museums of Brescia. Furthermore, together with the opening of the first civic art gallery in the palace, the Academy of Fine Arts “Scuola Moretto di arti e mestieri” dedicated to Moretto was founded maintaining the same administration of the museum.

The collection disposition was then influenced by the new-born Museum of the City<sup>86</sup>, that hosts in its rooms 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries’ frescos traditionally exhibited in the Tosio Martinengo Gallery where, in alternative, a space is dedicated to the display of decorative arts, originally in the project of the Santa Giulia Museum. The decorative arts exhibited in the Tosio Martinengo Gallery connect with paintings of the collection retracing the local collecting history of Brescia. The gallery collections and their exhibition history, together with the local collecting history of Brescia, are two of the logical strands in guidance of the scientific project at the base of the Tosio Martinengo Gallery, mainly enhanced with its reopening in 2018.

An additional principle of the project regards the systematic investigation of each art piece, that led to the publication of the general catalogue of the collection published in two volumes. The research permits the reevaluation of the importance of several artworks and of their provenience, important to consolidate the knowledge of the aforesaid strands. Thanks to the research it has been possible to assess that the exhibition itinerary regards paintings from the late Gothic to the first 19<sup>th</sup> century, with works of well-known artists such as Raffaello, Lotto, Ceruti, Canella, Canova, Hayez, Thorvaldsen and Pelagi, and reflects the origin and the consequent history of the collection in all its complexity. Another fundamental *nucleus* of the Tosio Martinengo Gallery itinerary includes artworks by the most important Renaissance local painters such as Vincenzo Foppa, Giovanni Gerolamo Savoldo, Romanino e Moretto, together with several portraits and landscapes subjects<sup>87</sup>.

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<sup>86</sup> See Paragraph 2.2.1 “Santa Giulia Museum”.

<sup>87</sup> From Brescia Musei’s website

<https://www.bresciamusei.com/npinacoteca.asp?nm=308&t=Il+progetto+scientifico>.

The theoretical and practical reorganization of the spaces was concluded with the reopening of the gallery, after nine years of functionalisation and renovation works since 2009, and subsequently to the restoration of some art pieces. The major project was realized thanks to the Municipality of Brescia, Fondazione Brescia Musei and Fondazione Cariplo, with the support of private investors. The merge between private and public support has been strongly evident thanks to the Art Bonus practice, addressed in favour to eleven artworks, and to the fundraising campaign *Donate - Per una Nuova Pinacoteca*. Fundings have permitted a new reorganization of the collection, a better arrangement of spaces, and a necessary cataloguing of the artworks.

#### 2.2.4 Castle Museums: the “Luigi Marzoli” Arms Museum

The Castle includes the Arms Museum and the Risorgimento Museum. Located on the Cidneo hill, the Castle is one of the greatest examples of fortifications in Italy for its size (52.000 m<sup>2</sup>) and for its proofs of past dominations<sup>88</sup>. The fortress is the location of two museums and of *en plein air* events and festivals and it is included in the spaces managed by Fondazione Brescia Musei.

The “Luigi Marzoli” Arms Museum offers great collections of armours, firearms, and melee weapons. Founded in 1988, it is located in the 14<sup>th</sup> century *Mastio Visconteo*, one of the ancient parts of the Castle of Brescia. The exhibition project made by Carlo Scarpa, it now includes ten rooms hosting 580 pieces<sup>89</sup> that covers the history of the weapons production of Brescia and nearby, with its specific craftsmanship techniques and development in aesthetic and use throughout the centuries. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, for example, the production was concentrated on armours, while in the 16<sup>th</sup> century the more advanced and light equipment and firearms were either for war and for representative purposes and social recognition aims. The latter brought to a production of more artistical items, focused on details and on the development of an aesthetic taste. In the exhibition itinerary, the Arms Museum displays further proofs of the development in weapons production and new-born traditions.

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<sup>88</sup> From Brescia Musei’s website <https://www.bresciamusei.com/castello.asp>.

<sup>89</sup> The original legacy is composed by a total of 1.090 pieces.

### 2.2.5 *Castle Museums: Risorgimento Museum*

The other component of the Castle is the Risorgimento Museum, located in the 16<sup>th</sup> century *Grande Miglio*. The museum's aim is to recreate the events of the Risorgimento period in the local territory through the exhibition of everyday items, portraits, prints, as well as relics, documents, and maps. Therefore, it displays the micro-history of Risorgimento, important to discover the heterogeneous heritage of Brescia that was greatly influenced by those events. The period of Risorgimento shows several manufactures of war but also a vivacity of styles and costumes<sup>90</sup>.

The most important historical events, seeing Brescia as the main character, that brought to the unification of Italy are narrated in specific areas of the museum. Two of the most significant sectors are the one dedicated to the *Dieci Giornate* of Brescia, showing the local population revolting against the Austrian oppression, and the one presenting an itinerary about the San Martino and Solferino Battle<sup>91</sup>. Its related exhibition called *La grande battaglia, l'immenso ospedale* narrates the atrocity of war and the efforts of citizens to create a healthcare system transforming the city in an enormous hospital. The set-up of the entire museum wants to create dense suggestions in order to engage visitors and to lead them to a sort of self-identification that could revive the local consciousness<sup>92</sup>. The museum is currently under infrastructure renovation works and will be reopened in 2023.

### 2.2.6 *Cinema Nuovo Eden*

The cinema *d'essai* Nuovo Eden is an asset managed by Fondazione Brescia Musei since 2007. Qualified as part of the European network Europa Cinemas, it is a fundamental cultural centre in the heart of Brescia. The events offered are varied: from movie screening of different genres, mainly contemporary independent films, restored ones or silent movies with live performed music, to laboratories for schools and meetings with

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<sup>90</sup> From Brescia Musei's website

<https://www.bresciamusei.com/ncastello.asp?nm=18&t=Museo+del+Risorgimento>.

<sup>91</sup> A pivotal battle that signs one of the first steps to reach the unification of Italy. It led to the military loss of the Austrians and the annexation of Lombardy to the Kingdom of Sardinia.

<sup>92</sup> From Brescia Musei's website

<https://www.bresciamusei.com/ncastello.asp?nm=18&t=Museo+del+Risorgimento>.

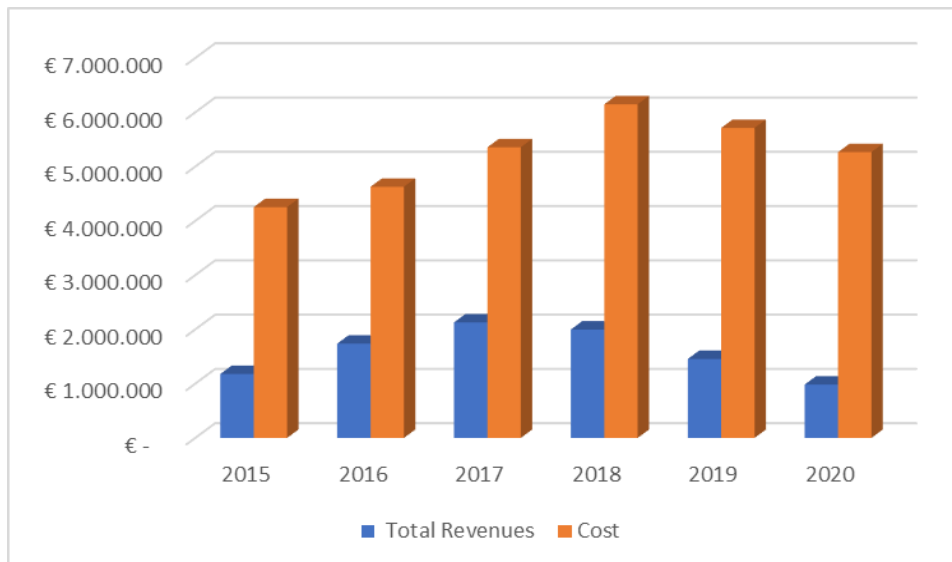
Directors, as well as events dedicated to poetry, literature and music. With Nuovo Eden, Fondazione Brescia Musei offers a programme dedicated to the audio-visual media, expanding its cultural offer and creating an artistic hub with strong social functions for the local population.

### 2.3 Fondazione Brescia Musei’s Management Model

#### 2.3.1 Financial Statements Data Analysis for the Period 2015-2020

A study of the financial statements permits to better comprehend Fondazione Brescia Musei’s management model. Due to procedural reasons, the analysis of them regards the recent past of Fondazione Brescia Musei (2015-2020) excluding from most of the analysis data of the year 2020, strictly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

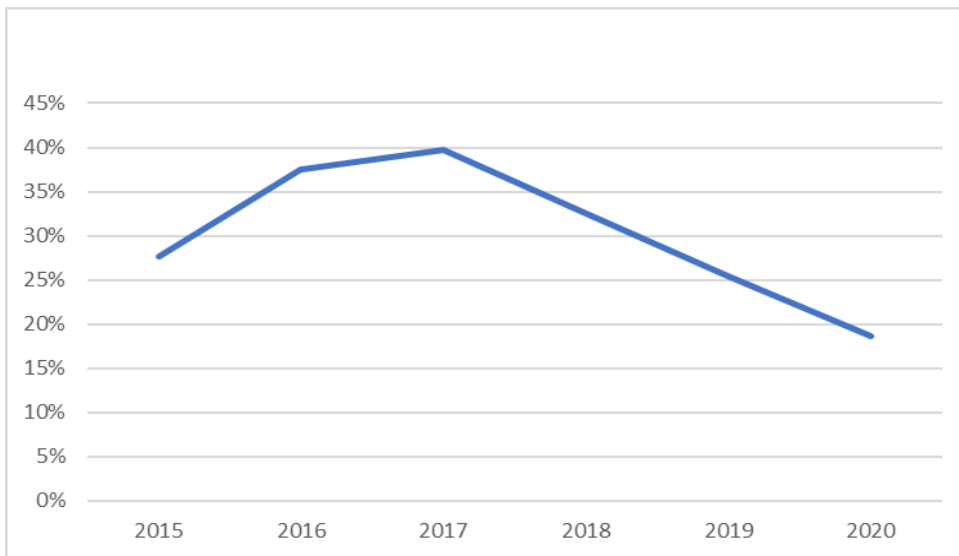
The analysis of the period 2015-2020 highlights the decline of the global turnover of the Foundation. The ordinary turnover related to the years 2015 and 2016 comprehended the municipal non-repayable fundings that are hereafter removed for reasons of homogeneity.



**Figure 2.1: Comparison Between the Core Business Revenues and the Costs over the Period 2015-2020**

Over the period 2015-2020 the overall revenues from ordinary operations highlight a fluctuation. Revenues increased in the period 2015-2017 of the 44,6% that, in absolute value, equals to 951.000<sup>93</sup> Euro and they decrement in the following period (2017-2020) of the 46,3%<sup>94</sup> that, in absolute value, means lost revenues equal to 674.000<sup>95</sup> Euro. Over the period<sup>96</sup> costs increased of the 34,3%, more than proportionally with respect to the core business revenues. In absolute value the overall increment of costs amounted to 1.459.000<sup>97</sup> Euro (Figure 2.1).

Therefore, it is significant to consider the impact of the core business revenues on the overall costs.



**Figure 2.2: Impact of Revenues on Costs over the Period 2015-2020**

The impact of revenues on costs underlines a majority of costs with respect to revenues, being far from an ideal performance (Figure 2.2). Excluding the year 2020 due to its anomalies, in percentage, it is possible to deduce that, starting from the year 2018, the ordinary revenues contribute increasingly less to the coverage of the total operational costs. It has gone from an index of more or less 38% in the period 2016-2017 to a precipitous drop that stopped at 25% in 2019.

<sup>93</sup> Data are rounded off to the thousand.

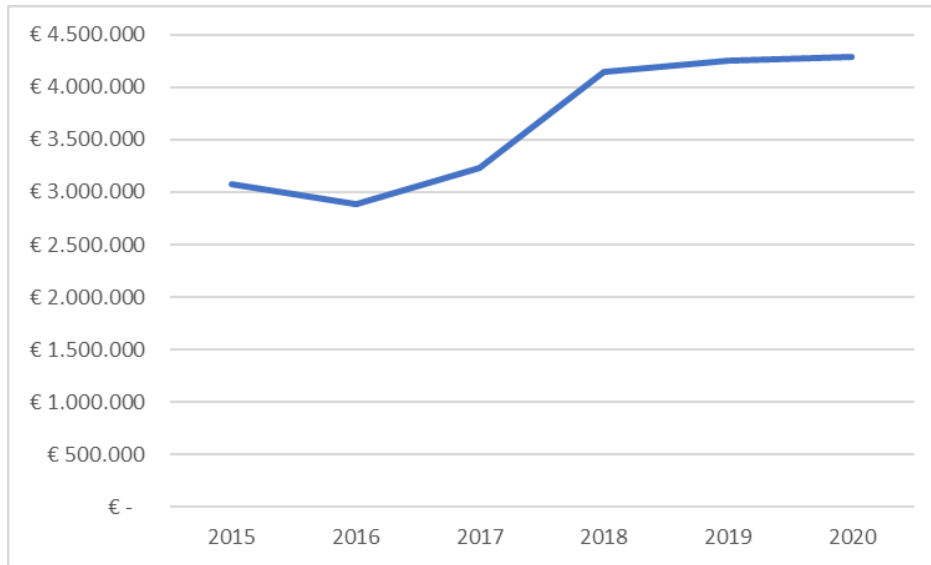
<sup>94</sup> The year 2020 is excluded from the analysis as it is strictly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

<sup>95</sup> Data are rounded off to the thousand.

<sup>96</sup> The year 2020 is excluded from the analysis as it is strictly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

<sup>97</sup> Data are rounded off to the thousand.

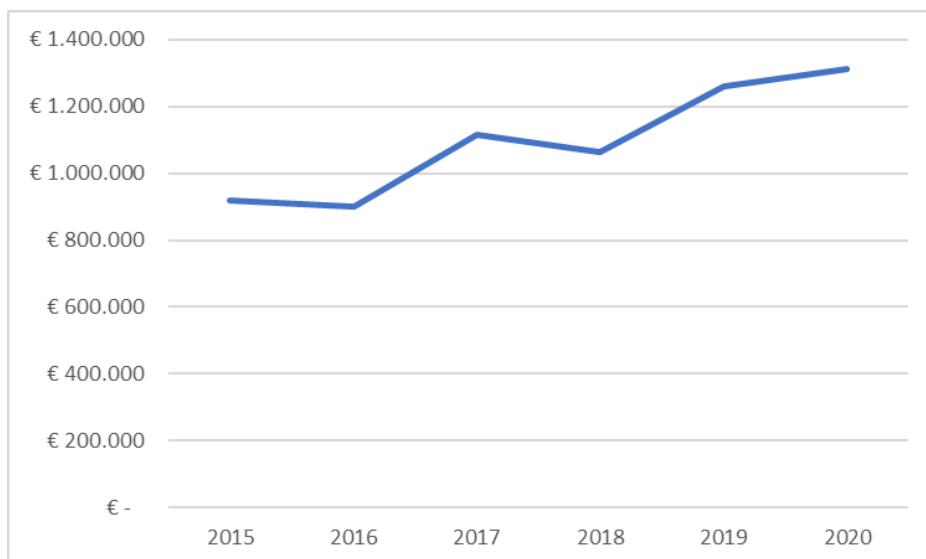
Analysing what stated above, there is a loss deriving from the ordinary operations, obtained from the difference between the overall costs and the core business revenues.



**Figure 2.3: Loss (Overall Costs – Ordinary Revenues) over the Period 2015-2020**

From the data shown in Figure 2.2, the generated loss increased in the period considered.

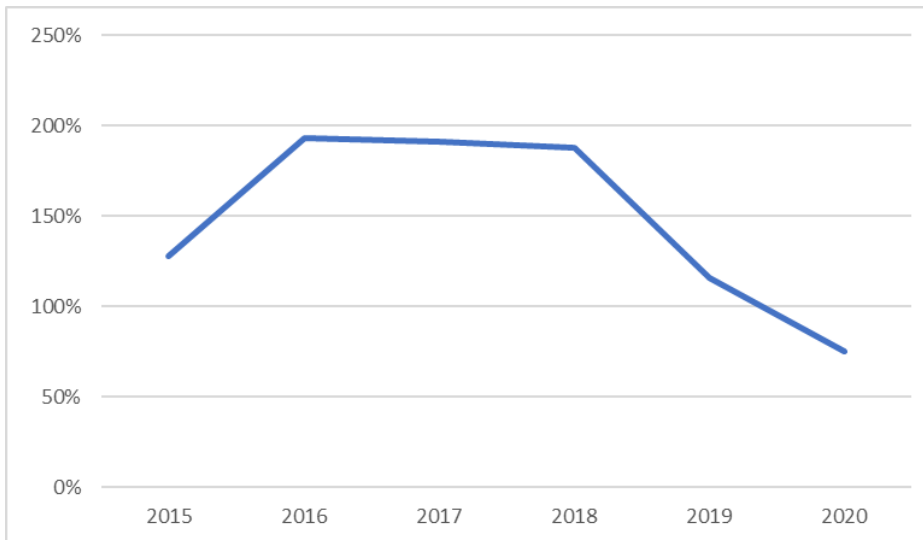
Likewise, analysing the evolution of personnel expenses over the same period, the expenses increased of the 37%, in absolute value for 340.000<sup>98</sup> Euro (Figure 2.4).



**Figure 2.4: Staff Costs over the Period 2015-2020**

<sup>98</sup> Data are rounded off to the thousand.





**Figure 2.5: Index of Coverage on Staff Costs over the Period 2015-2020**

The analysis of the index of coverage on staff costs by ordinary revenues highlights that in the three years 2016-2017-2018 personnel expenses were widely covered, while in 2019 barely (Figure 2.5). In 2020 the situation presents anomalies.

Since 2015, the main source of funding covering the loss have been represented by the municipal non-repayable fundings (Table 2.1), amounting to:

2015	2.930.000
2016	3.078.000
2017	2.616.000
2018	3.678.000
2019	3.539.000
<b>2020</b>	<b>3.859.000</b>

**Table 2.1: Municipal Non-repayable Fundings over the Period 2015-2020<sup>99</sup>**

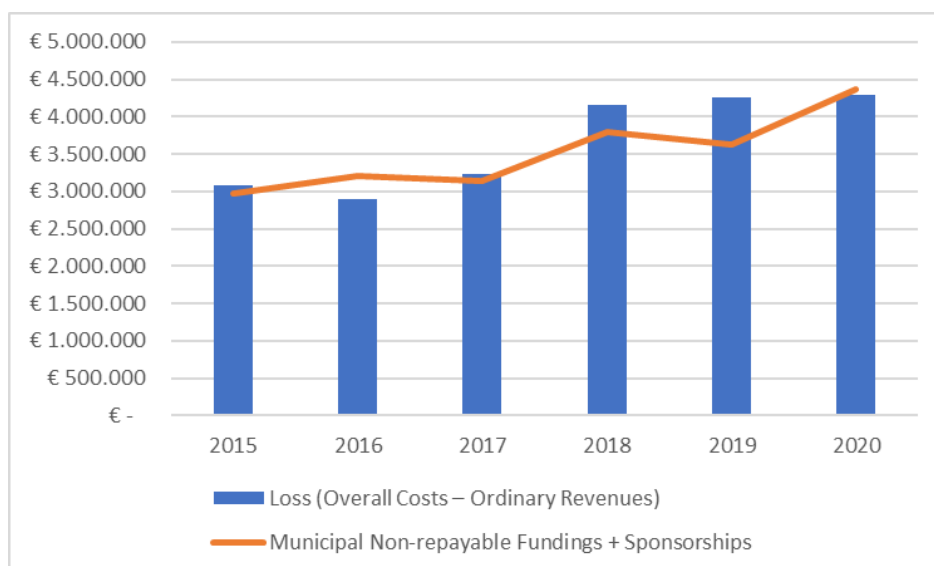
<sup>99</sup> Data are rounded off to the thousand.

The *deficit* has been marginally covered also by takings from corporate support, hereafter quantified (Table 2.2).

2015	37.000
2016	127.000
<b>2017</b>	<b>517.000</b>
2018	119.000
2019	90.000
<b>2020</b>	<b>514.000</b>

*Table 2.2: Sponsorships over the Period 2015-2020<sup>100</sup>*

The management council report, in comment to the financial statement related to the year 2017, underlines a significant increment of private support associated to the introduction of the Art Bonus decree for the Vittoria Alata statue. Equally, it is pointed out by the management board that the important increment of corporate support in 2020 is due to the introduction of the public-private agreement *Alleanza per la Cultura*, explained in the next paragraphs<sup>101</sup>.



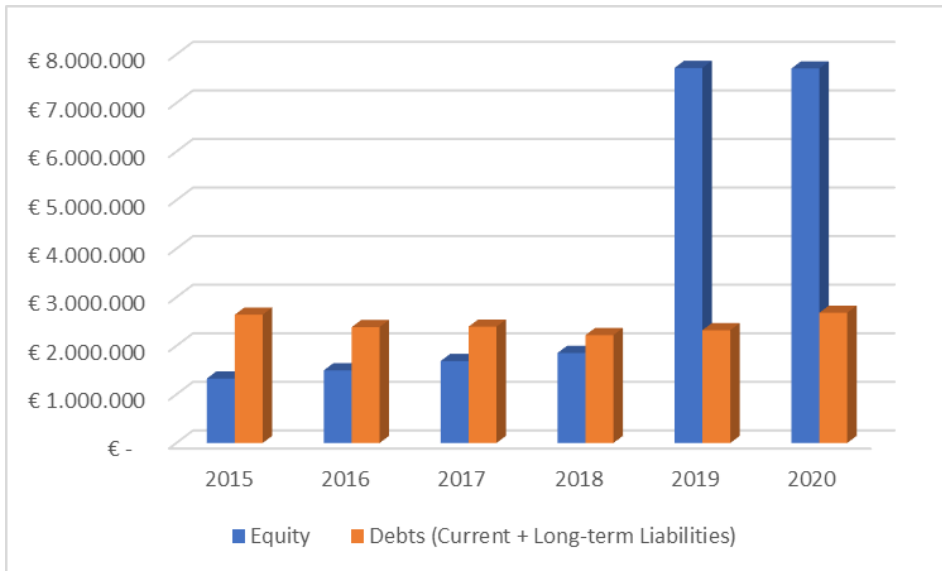
*Figure 2.6: Coverage of the Loss in the Period 2015-2020 by Municipal Non-repayable Fundings and Sponsorships*

<sup>100</sup> Data are rounded off to the thousand.

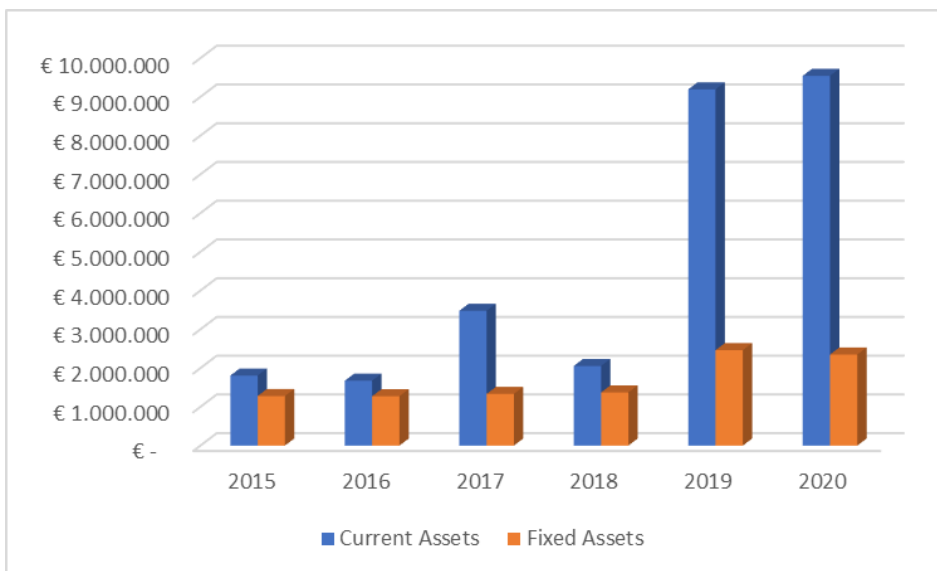
<sup>101</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.4 “Strategic Partnerships. Case study *Alleanza per la Cultura*”.

The above graphic (Figure 2.6) represents how the volume of the municipal support and sponsorships equals the measure of the losses for each year.

Analysed the revenue account, it seems appropriate to underline significant data concerning the balance sheets of the considered period.



**Figure 2.7: Equity and Debts over the Period 2015-2020**

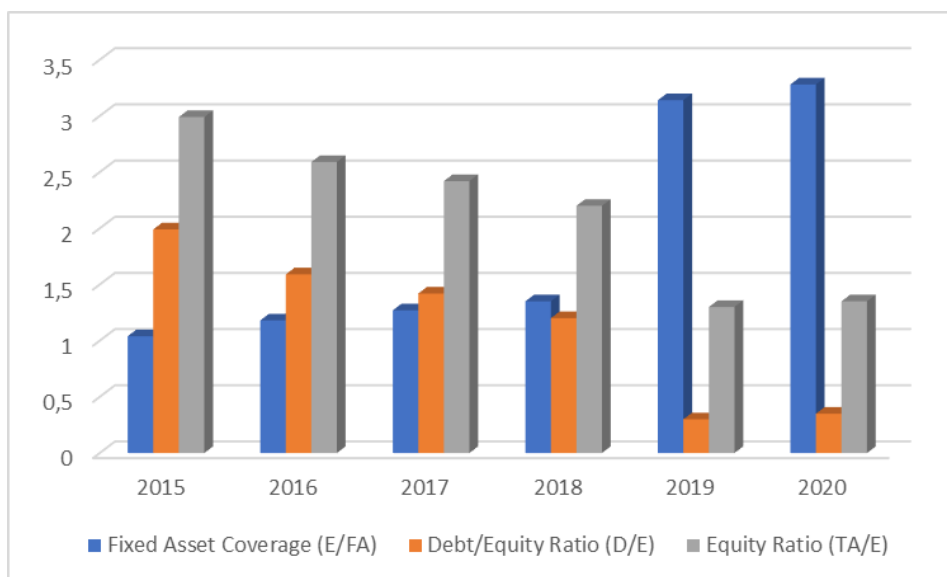


**Figure 2.8: Current Assets and Fixed Assets over the Period 2015-2020**

The increment of the equity in 2019 (Figure 2.7) is prevalently due to the legacy of the artist Bruno Romeda<sup>102</sup> that left liquidity for nearly 5.443.478 Euro and the French society SCI Du Mas of an estimated market value of 1.050.000 Euro.

Looking at the current assets of the Foundation in the period (Figure 2.8), it is immediately clear that the strong liquidity available in the year 2019 is related to the legacy above mentioned. Beyond the performance of the ordinary business, it becomes evident that the foundation is heavily capitalised and highly liquid.

The increment of the equity has been important for Fondazione Brescia Musei to have a positive solvency, in particular starting from 2018. The indicators that show the Foundation's solvency over the period 2015-2020 are the fixed asset coverage<sup>103</sup>, the debt/equity ratio<sup>104</sup> and the equity ratio<sup>105</sup>.



**Figure 2.9: Fixed Asset Coverage, Debt/Equity, Equity Ratio**

<sup>102</sup> Bruno Romeda (1933-2017) was a sculptor born in Brescia. He worked between Italy, France and New York and exhibited worldwide. Over time his works have become part of important international museums' collections (Metropolitan Museum of New York, Contemporary Art Museum in Nice, Kasama Nichido Museum of Art in Kasama, Robert College of Istanbul).

<sup>103</sup> Fixed asset coverage shows how much the equity finance long-term investments.

<sup>104</sup> Debt/equity ratio compares the total debt with the equity and their respective weights in the operations of the organization.

<sup>105</sup> The equity ratio compares the total assets on the equity, therefore the relations between the total investments and the internal resources of the organization.

The results of the fixed asset coverage are satisfactory as more of the 50% of the investments are covered by internal resources (Figure 2.9).

Debt/equity ratios in the period 2015-2018 measure that debts were higher than the equity; the situation changed completely in 2019 and 2020 with drops in the results to 0,3. The drop is justified by the legacy which determined the increase on the equity above mentioned, rather than a decrease in the total debt. Nevertheless, the ratios for the period 2015-2018 show that the trend was already towards a reduction of the index (Figure 2.9).

The results of the equity ratios over the period 2015-2020 are coherent with the previous indicators. From 2015 to 2018 the equity could cover less than half of the investments made in the period, while in 2019 and 2020 results are satisfactory (Figure 2.9).

Although Fondazione Brescia Musei's operative structure is not capable of generating profit, therefore a positive cashflow, the legacy received in 2019 had substantially changed the ratios expressed from the balance sheets and income statements' data. This confirms once again the fundamental role that donations and other forms of support play for cultural organizations.

For a more in-depth analysis of the ordinary operations of the Foundation, the following should be noted (Table 2.3).

	Santa Giulia Museum	Archaeological Area	Arms Museum	Risorgimento Museum <sup>106</sup>	Tosio Martinengo Gallery <sup>107</sup>	Total
2015	108.276	29.092	11.113	7.038	/	57.519
2016	85.323	42.547	14.021	884	/	142.775
2017	91.478	47.676	24.292	/	/	163.446
2018	94.122	45.904	43.110	/	30.159	213.295
2019	93.665	51.544	40.311	/	34.924	220.444
2020	22.699	3.604	6.321	/	9.404	42.028

**Table 2.3: Number of Tickets Sold in the Five Museums over the Period 2015-2020**

The number of tickets sold highlight a stable influx in the period 2015-2019 for the Santa Giulia Museum and for the Archaeological Area (2016-2019). In the two years 2018-2019 the Arms Museum doubled its tickets sale compared to the previous three years, while the Tosio Martinengo Gallery generated the sale of more than 30.000 tickets per year. Excluding the year 2020, the number of tickets sold for the permanent exhibitions of museums increased over the period 2015-2020.

<sup>106</sup> The Risorgimento Museum was closed in 2017 for renovation works. It will be open again in 2023.

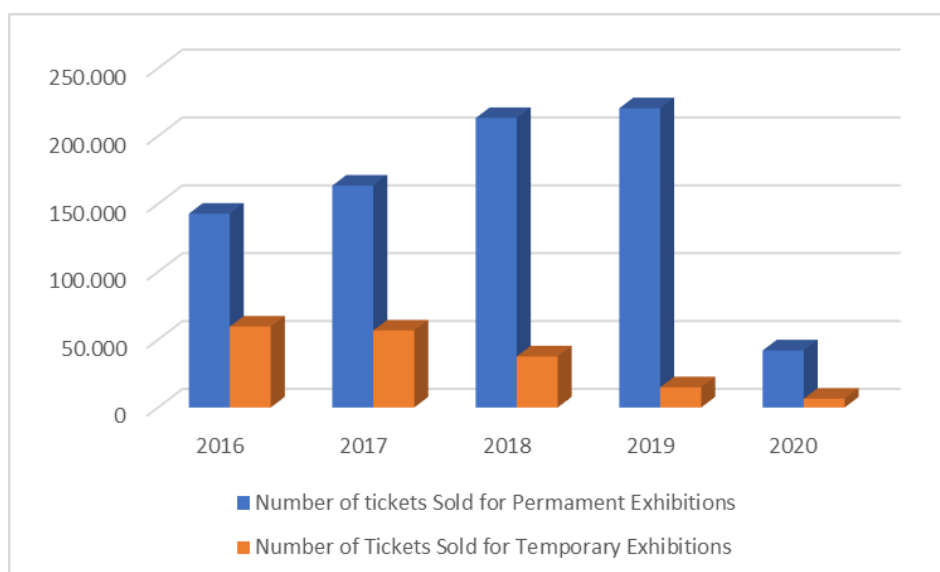
<sup>107</sup> Due to renovation works the Tosio Martinengo Gallery was closed until 2018.

In addition to the ordinary ticket sales, Fondazione Brescia Musei organizes several temporary exhibitions of both well-known and specific themes. The first are generally widely appealing, the second one attracts mainly experts. The sale of tickets connected to these events are equal to:

2015	/
<b>2016</b>	<b>59.623</b>
2017	56.706
2018	37.612
2019	14.841
2020	6.433

*Table 2.4: Number of Tickets Sold for Temporary Exhibitions over the Period 2015-2020<sup>108</sup>*

The progressive reduction shown by the data is linked to the choice of the Fondazione Brescia Musei's board to pursue the promotion of the local cultural heritage, rather than well-known blockbusters exhibitions (Table 2.4).



*Figure 2.10: Number of Tickets Sold for Permanent and Temporary Exhibitions over the period 2016-2020*

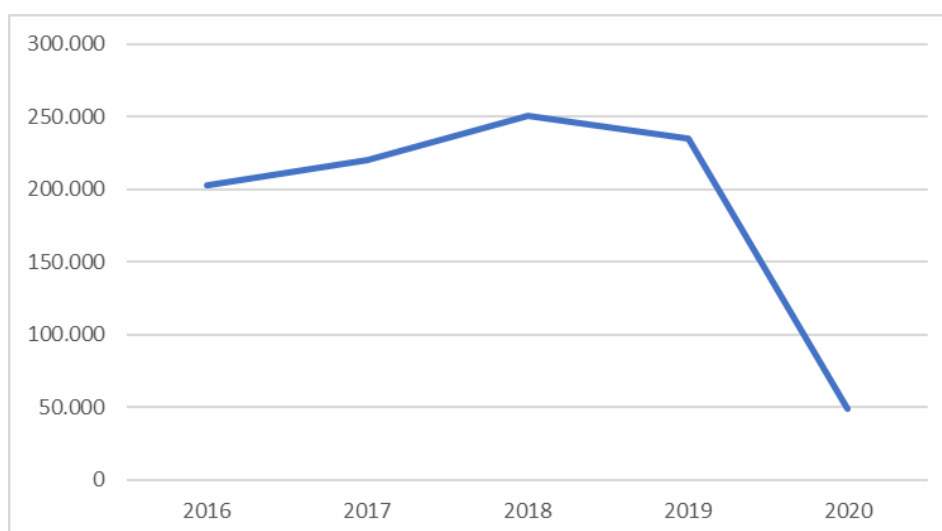
Figure 2.10 highlights the content of Table 2.3 and Table 2.4 showing the increment of the number of tickets sold for the five museums and the decrement of the number of visitors for temporary exhibitions. The year 2020 is excluded from the analysis.

<sup>108</sup> Data for the tickets sold for temporary exhibitions in 2015 is uncertain. Therefore, it is excluded from the following analysis.

Thus, the number of tickets sold for temporary exhibitions led to the overall sale of the following number of tickets (Table 2.5):

2015	/
2016	202.398
2017	220.152
<b>2018</b>	<b>250.907</b>
2019	235.285
2020	48.461

*Table 2.5: Number of Tickets Sold (Permanent and Temporary Exhibitions) over the Period 2015-2020<sup>109</sup>*



*Figure 2.11: Variations in the Number of Tickets Sold (Permanent and Temporary Exhibitions) over the Period 2016-2020*

Excluding the drop of tickets sold in 2020, the overall number increased over the period 2016-2019 showing that the better appeal of the local heritage was capable of attracting audience despite the lack of blockbusters exhibitions (Figure 2.11).

<sup>109</sup> Data for the tickets sold for temporary exhibitions in 2015 is uncertain (see note 100). Therefore, it is excluded from the following analysis.



The following Table 2.6 reports the revenues generated from the sale of the overall tickets, that have always been stable enough in time, and the average intake for ticket sold, obtained comparing the overall income to the number of tickets sold over the year.

	Revenues from Tickets <sup>110</sup>	Average Intake for Ticket Sold
2015	/	/
2016	1.096.000	5.4
2017	<b>1.147.000</b>	5.2
2018	1.175.000	4.7
2019	1.016.000	4.3
2020	366.000	7.6

*Table 2.6: Revenues from the Tickets Sold Number and their Average Intake<sup>111</sup>*

Excluding the revenues and the average intake for ticket connected to the year 2020, not significant and irregular, it is understandable that the three years period 2016-2017 signed an average income of 5,3, that decreased in 2018 and 2019 setting on about 4,5.

To make a statistical evaluation<sup>112</sup>, hereafter there is a reconstruction of the total income of 2019 related to the sales of tickets, if they were all sold without reductions (Table 2.7).

Santa Giulia Museum	93.665 * 10 = 936.650
Archaeological Area	51.544 * 8 = 412.352
Arms Museum	40.311 * 5 = 201.555
Tosio Martinengo Gallery	34.924 * 8 = 279.392
Temporary exhibitions	14.841 * 13 = 192.933
TOTAL	2.022.882

*Table 2.7: 2019 Museums' Tickets Sales without Reductions<sup>113</sup>.*

Comparing the resulting theoretical revenues (2.022.882 Euro) to the actual ones of 1.016.000 Euro (Table 2.6), it is notable the significant anomalies of the data and the presence of strong reductions for entering in the museums. As it is clear from the above,

<sup>110</sup> Data are rounded off to the thousand.

<sup>111</sup> Data for the tickets sold for temporary exhibitions in 2015 is uncertain (see note 100). Therefore, it is excluded from the following analysis.

<sup>112</sup> Data in the Table represent an estimation as individual specific data could not be collected.

<sup>113</sup> The Risorgimento Museum is excluded from as it was closed in 2019 for renovation works.

the total reduction has been of the 50%. It follows that a great influx of visitors benefits of important concessions and that a huge number of free entrances are “sold”.

The reductions granted for the entrance to the museums are defined as below (Table 2.8).

Affiliations, groups partner and sponsors	-25%
University students, teenagers and over 65	-45%
Children 6-14	-70%
Free entrance	-100%

**Table 2.8: Reductions**

The number of tickets sold in the period 2015-2019 is essentially stable, varying from 200.000 to 250.000. Hypothesizing the possibility of covering the overall costs with tickets sale, the average costs of the tickets should be for each year<sup>114</sup>:

2015	$4.253.000/155.510 = 27,3$
2016	$4.628.000/202.398 = 22,9$
2017	$5.356.000/220.152 = 24,3$
2018	$6.148.000/250.907 = 24,5$
2019	$5.712.000/235.285 = 24,3$
2020	$5.266.000/48.461 = 108,7$

**Table 2.9: Average Ticket Price to Cover Full Costs**

Comparing these values (Table 2.9), that averagely around 24, with the average revenues previously analysed of approximately 5 (Table 2.8), it is deducible that:

1. Keeping the same sales mix, the average price of tickets should quintupled, or;
2. It is necessary not only to increase the price of tickets but also to cancel the reductions proposed to the market, or;
3. Do both the operations at point 2, effectively cancelling the free tickets.

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<sup>114</sup> Values are rounded upwards.

All these hypotheses are not realistically practicable, in fact keeping the same reductions and free tickets, the average price for a full ticket should become around of 50 Euro, which is totally unrealistic to the market itself and would be socially unfair.

It is evident that Fondazione Brescia Musei provides a service that, by its nature, has operating costs that cannot be completely covered by revenues from tickets and related activities<sup>115</sup>. Therefore, public fundings will always be necessary to cover most of the fixed costs of the structure. Alternatively, in order to receive fundings, the Foundation should turn to external sponsorships and partnerships. These should not be based only on direct advertising to increase sales but on the strong cultural return on the firms' image and on their stakeholders, and on the principles of social responsibility and of cultural growth for the city. Moreover, financing a cultural organization can leverage the personal pride of entrepreneurs, who identify themselves in the brand of their firm. In the case of spread ownership, the support can also become a source of prestige and sensitivity of the managers who propose these initiatives<sup>116</sup>.

### 2.3.2 *General Considerations about Fondazione Brescia Musei's Areas of Competency*

Some general considerations about the different areas of competency of Fondazione Brescia Musei are listed below. They regard the educational, promotion, and communication area, as well as the services to the public and the renovations undertaken.

#### 2.3.2.1 *Educational Activities*

Following the imprinting given by Emiliani, Fondazione Brescia Musei has been characterized since its establishment by an educational office that enlarged in time predominantly through the operations of the former Director Luigi Di Corato. The educational activities increased in number and quality in order to create a wide and varied offer tailored on the different events of the Foundation and on its audiences of

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<sup>115</sup> See Chapter I "Corporate Support for the Arts".

<sup>116</sup> See Chapter I "Corporate Support for the Arts" and Chapter III "*Alleanza per la Cultura. A Model of Strategic Partnership*".

students and adults. The numbers reflect the development: before the Covid-19 pandemic, for example, participating students only were about 55.000<sup>117</sup>.

With respect to other cultural realities of the kind, Fondazione Brescia Musei has its own internal office dedicated to educational purposes. The choice could be considered consuming in time and resources, but successful for the performance of the operations proposed. Educational scopes have become part of the organic and durable programmes of the organizations, and they have developed a high-quality standard deriving from the continuous training of the same staff. The results are appreciated by the public, according to the museum operators of Fondazione Brescia Musei<sup>118</sup>.

The educational activities are conducted with on and offline supports. The digital channels have become increasingly important with a peak during the period of Covid-19<sup>119</sup>. Finally, several activities and conferences result from the synergic collaboration with several cultural organizations of the territory.

#### *2.3.2.2 Promotion and Communication*

The promotion and communication area has been shaped by a deeper change over time. It has been implemented exponentially since the beginning of the century when Brescia Musei first supported the activities of the Civici Musei di Arte e Storia di Brescia. At the time and furtherly afterwards, promotion and communication activities gained a significant relevance in the budget. Over the years they have comprised, for example, interviews on newspapers, posters, and flyers, aiming to make the museums' activities better known, to attract visitors and to increase their user base. Press reviews implemented shifting from 2.632 articles published in 2016 to 3.995 in 2017 (Fondazione Brescia Musei, 2018). The increasing phenomenon is part of a strategic planning of communication aimed at enhancing the Foundation's operations and reaching a broader audience, and it is a reflection of the strong impacts that social media have on everyday

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<sup>117</sup> See Appendix II 2.4. The data refers to the school year 2018-2019.

<sup>118</sup> See Appendix II 2.4.

<sup>119</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.2 "Contemporary times: Covid pandemic (2020-2021)".

life, too. It also has a general website, that will be improved shortly, and specific sites dedicated to the most important events offered.

Fondazione Brescia Musei (2018) states that their social media channels have improved with an increased number of followers for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube. Through social media they propose contents both informative and engaging (launching contests, sharing curiosities and opinions) related to exhibitions, conferences and to other cultural events in programme. Instagram, in particular, has the largest user base and it is increasingly in expansion. Fondazione Brescia Musei then have been cooperating with tv channels in order to create informative contents and documentaries and collaborated with the project *Google Arts and Culture*.

A recent promotional campaign that achieved resounding success was addressed to the return of the Vittoria Alata to Brescia in 2020, after two years of restoration works at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence. The Vittoria Alata is one of the most important pieces of the museums' collections of Brescia, as it represents one of the few examples of a Roman bronze statue of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. found in Northern Italy. The huge project involved a reorganization of the museums too, that brought to the rearrangement of the statue in the Capitolium<sup>120</sup> in a new setting created *ad hoc* by the architect Juan Navarro Baldeweg<sup>121</sup>. Given the importance of the event, a rich palimpsest of events was created and promoted both during the absence of the statue and afterwards, with a dedicated website, conferences, flyers and a social media campaign to make the Vittoria Alata waited and the local people aware of its return.

### 2.3.2.3 Events

Other activities that have become central in the operations of the Foundation are the cultural-related or collateral festivals and events organized by Fondazione Brescia Musei in its spaces. Among the collateral ones, it is possible to count an increase of weddings

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<sup>120</sup> The Vittoria Alata is now in its original place, while before it had place in the Santa Giulia Museum.

<sup>121</sup> Juan Navarro Baldeweg (1939-) is a Spanish architect, artist, and professor. For the renovation of the Capitolium cell and for the setup of the Vittoria Alata statue, Fondazione Brescia Musei dedicated to him the temporary exhibition "Juan Navarro Baldeweg. Architettura, Pittura, Scultura in un campo di energia e processo".

and of corporate support events<sup>122</sup>. In this way, the Foundation could reach a larger user base, increase loyalty to local visitors and requalify some areas of the city (Fondazione Brescia Musei, 2018).

#### 2.3.2.4 *Collections and Exhibitions*

Regarding the collections, their management has remained constant over the years being not affected by the change of administration of the Foundation. The temporary exhibitions that have been proposed present a mix of important or more specific themes and artists, targeted to local visitors or aimed to attract a wider public<sup>123</sup>. The choice of one of the two possibilities depends on many factors and can vary over time, according to the different tendencies and beliefs of the founding partners, on the necessities of the Foundation and on the image Fondazione Brescia Musei wants to give of itself. Currently, the exhibitions offered focus on enhancing the local cultural heritage of the city and its artists, rather than the already worldwide known ones.

#### 2.3.2.5 *Opening Hours and Prices*

Throughout the years Fondazione Brescia Musei has become bigger in dimensions, in number of staff members and in influence. In 2017 and mainly in 2018, the Foundation extended the opening hours of the museums. The financial statements account 2014-2017 reveals that the opening hours in May 2018 already exceed the ones of the previous years, for each of the five museums<sup>124</sup> (Fondazione Brescia Musei, 2018).

For what it concerns ticket sales, the price of tickets has modified too. Differently from twenty years ago, the museums are not free anymore. They have a price to enter, which is regulated by reductions granted to different categories of visitors<sup>125</sup>. There is also the

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<sup>122</sup> See Chapter III “*Alleanza per la Cultura. A model of Strategic Partnership*”.

<sup>123</sup> From 2004 to 2009 Marco Goldin collaborated with Fondazione Brescia Musei.

<sup>124</sup> The analysis refers to the Santa Giulia Museum, the Archaeological Are and the Arms Museum. The Risorgimento Museum and the Tosio Martinengo Gallery are excluded for reasons of maintenance and renovations.

<sup>125</sup> See Table 2.10 “Reductions”.

possibility to acquire cumulative tickets to visit all or combinations of the museums of the Foundation.

### 2.3.3 *An Outcome-based Management Model*

In 2016 Fondazione Brescia Musei and Politecnico di Milano began a collaboration to ideate a new management model, tailored to the museums of Brescia. The project, funded by Fondazione Cariplo for the total amount of 300.000 Euro, was publicly announced in November 2020 (Fondazione Brescia Musei, 2018). Respecting the initial assumptions, the research shows that the project concretized in a management model capable of analysing the pool of stakeholders of Fondazione Brescia Musei and to identify the nature of their relationship. Moreover, the model is set to plan activities based on their possible outcomes and to support them with the necessary expected resources to reach sustainability in an economic, financial, social, and cultural way. Lastly, it is thought to co-create value and collaborative synergies with other realities by measuring and sharing the results obtained.

Fondazione Brescia Musei and Politecnico di Milano developed the model in four phases. At first, they elaborated a map of the stakeholders of the Foundation<sup>126</sup> to best suit the offering, and to better plan their engagement and the potential active co-creation of value. The results obtained from this first analysis demonstrated the activities of the foundation to be varied and to attract a heterogenous, mainly local, public. Moreover, the evidence shows that the audience is characterised by a strong operational purpose and that it is available to sustain on the long-term the cultural mission of the organization. This willingness is furtherly strengthened by the recent project *Alleanza per la Cultura*, better explained in the next paragraph<sup>127</sup>. The second issue of the research regarded the analysis of the value created and shared by Fondazione Brescia Musei. This is depicted as cultural, social, educational and identity related. As follows, Fondazione Brescia Musei “[...] emerges as promoter of cultural value for the richness and for the activities of enhancement of its own heritage, but also

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<sup>126</sup> The stakeholders are identified on geographical and contractual indicators (coproduction, collaboration and convention), the nature of the different targets and on the sustainability in time.

<sup>127</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.4 “Strategic Partnerships. Case study *Alleanza per la Cultura*”.

as a vehicle of identity value and of link between citizens, firms and institutions with the territory of Brescia” (Fondazione Brescia Musei, Fondazione Cariplo, Politecnico di Milano, 2016:17)<sup>128</sup>. The research project then proceeded in identifying a system for controlling the network of stakeholders and the efficacy and efficiency of the organization’s internal operations. The aim is to analyse both the external and the internal context in which Fondazione Brescia Musei operates. The identified areas to be monitored are the economic sustainability, and the human, technological and digital<sup>129</sup> resources. In addition, the project wants to control the different targets and the engagement of the public, and also the development of the network of the Foundation’s stakeholders in terms of cultural offering and forms of agreement. Finally, the last step of the project regarded the creation of a map of the co-created value by the cultural organization and its stakeholders. The typologies of possible synergies that can result could be of completion (economic fundings transferred from firms to the foundation), of amplification (education value deriving from the engagement of universities), of reinforcement (mutual help and sharing of artistic heritage between cultural organizations), and of diversification (Fondazione Brescia Musei, Fondazione Cariplo, Politecnico di Milano, 2016).

The project shaped the new-adopted relational and outcome-based management model of Fondazione Brescia Musei. This strategy has given importance to the relationship with stakeholders, either institutional, local and non-local, and to the identification of the outputs and outcomes desired. The final report of the project illustrates the possibility of the model to increase links with the territory and the sense of belonging. It also shows how to exploit synergies of different nature in order to create social, educational and identity values, how to implement an economic sustainability on the medium-long run through the collaboration and agreements between public and private firms (Fondazione Brescia Musei, Fondazione Cariplo, Politecnico di Milano, 2016). It is planned to be a system of programming and control conceived for a plural

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<sup>128</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] emerge come promotore di valore culturale, per la ricchezza e le attività di valorizzazione del proprio patrimonio, ma anche veicolo di valore identitario e di un legame dei cittadini, delle aziende e delle istituzioni, con il territorio bresciano.”

<sup>129</sup> Digital resources become increasingly important for the promotion of cultural heritage and for the engagement of visitors in the museums. The study reveals that Fondazione Brescia Musei has gained a privileged position in the benchmarking for this field.



reality, open to external influences and embedded in a specific and peculiar environment, whose characteristics and actors need to be evaluated in order to be strategic and effective. In this way “The stakeholders, institutional and not, have an active and determinant role in “making the museum”” (Fondazione Brescia Musei, Fondazione Cariplo, Politecnico di Milano, 2016:4)<sup>130</sup>.

Fondazione Brescia Musei operates the model at different levels. It could be exploited:

- “To elaborate and implement new strategies of collaboration between Fondazione Brescia Musei and its stakeholders;
- To monitor the effectiveness, the efficiency and the impact of Fondazione Brescia Musei’s actions in relation to its network size;
- As a tool for Fondazione Brescia Musei to compare with other realities of the cultural sector, from a benchmark perspective;
- As a relational tool to foster dialogue and direct communications between Fondazione Brescia Musei and its stakeholders.” (Fondazione Brescia Musei, Fondazione Cariplo, Politecnico di Milano, 2016:29-30)<sup>131</sup>

The model was publicly announced in November 2020. Its results and effectiveness will be better judged in the next future, hoping that the pandemic situation will fade making the art and cultural scene retaking its natural rhythm or stabilizing new standards. The effectiveness of the model is then strictly related to the strategic planning of the activities elaborated by the Foundation and to how they can attract stakeholders, at different levels and strengths, impacting on the results of the model.

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<sup>130</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “Gli stakeholder, istituzionali e non, hanno un ruolo attivo e determinante nel “fare museo”.”

<sup>131</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “Per elaborare o implementare nuove strategie collaborative tra FBM e i propri stakeholder; per monitorare l’efficacia, l’efficienza e l’impatto delle azioni di FBM in relazione alla dimensione di rete; come mezzo per FBM per confrontarsi con le altre realtà del settore culturale, in ottica di benchmark; come strumento relazionale che favorisca il dialogo e la comunicazione diretta tra FBM e i propri stakeholder.”

#### 2.3.4 *Strategic Partnerships. Case study Alleanza per la Cultura*

Coherently with its relational and outcome-based management model<sup>132</sup>, Fondazione Brescia Musei designed *Alleanza per la Cultura*, a public-private agreement with companies of the local territory. It was first launched in 2019 and then publicly announced the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 for the reopening of museums after the period of pandemic Covid-19, as an innovative plan to establish partnerships in support to the Foundation's activities and as a tool overcoming traditional strategies of fundraising. The aim of the project is to constitute a community between the realities at stake, in an involving and bidirectional way, in order to guarantee a continuity in action to enhance and promote the cultural heritage of the city of Brescia. Marking a step from the traditional sponsorship agreements, the Foundation conceives *Alleanza per la Cultura* on the criteria of openness, communication, sharing capacity and creation of experiences. This shall allow every actor to be involved in the fulfilment of the social mission of the cultural organization and in the achievement of the expected return.

The new fundraising strategy is explained by both the President of the Foundation, Francesca Bazoli, and the Director, Stefano Karadjov, in three clear points. It is

- “A strategic cultural project that works on the great identity axes of the cultural history of the city (*in primis* Roman and Langobard ages, Renaissance of Brescia, 20<sup>th</sup> century transformations) able to stimulate the adhesion of the stakeholders around a common goal. The strategic objectives of Fondazione Brescia Musei are developed with annual palimpsests that involve all venues, not proposing spot events rather a series of projects, all connected with an editorial approach, which makes the flow of attention constant;
- A strong vocation for temporary events around some of the cultural “totems” of the city that combine national communication and international partners, with the creation of travelling exhibitions promoted abroad;

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<sup>132</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.3 “An Outcome-based Management Model”.

- Real and effective involvement of all partners in every phase of the cultural endorsement project, through constant activation of their respective relational networks, that also enlarge the user base.” (Bazoli, Karadjov, 2020:163)<sup>133</sup>

The agreement presents a durability of three years in order to guarantee a continuity of action for the Foundation’s operations. The project was first launched in 2020 until 2022, nonetheless each year the Foundation creates three-years agreements through a public annual announcement. In this way the search of potential partners is constant, and new firms can become partners every year. Still, Fondazione Brescia Musei proposes to former partners to renew their agreement at the end of the first three years period of collaboration. The agreement is a medium-long term partnership aimed at financing extraordinary activities of the Foundation, while ordinary ones are duty of Fondazione Brescia Musei’s co-founding partners.<sup>134</sup> Such extraordinary activities consist, among the others, in temporary exhibitions, cultural installations, communication projects and further services to the public, as well as operations aimed at renovation of museums and improvement of their accessibility. Before signing the agreement, potential partners can choose between three different fixed financial provisions that they will annually supply for the whole period of collaboration.

*Alleanza per la Cultura* includes private firms, institutions and foundations. According to their involvement, they could be gathered in three groups: a board of institutional partners, the pool of private firms, and the group of the co-founding partners. The partners are estimated to be 36 realities, listed here in alphabetic order: A2A, ABP Nocivelli, Accademia di Belle Arti di Brescia SantaGiulia, AIB – Associazione Industriale Bresciana, Antares Vision, Asonext, Beretta Holding, Camera di Commercio di Brescia,

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<sup>133</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “Progetto culturale strategico che lavora sui grandi assi identitari della storia della cultura cittadina (età romana e longobarda, Rinascimento bresciano, trasformazione novecentesca in primis) capace di stimolare l’adesione degli *stakeholder* intorno a un obiettivo comune. Gli obiettivi strategici di Fondazione Brescia Musei si sviluppano infatti su palinsesti annuali, che coinvolgono tutte e sedi espositive e non propongono eventi *spot* quanto piuttosto una collana di progetti, tutti collegati, con un approccio editoriale, che rende costante il flusso d’attenzione; spiccata vocazione del progetto a eventi temporanei che intorno ad alcuni dei “totem” culturali cittadini aggregano una comunicazione nazionale e partner internazionali, con creazione di *traveling exhibition* promosse all’estero; coinvolgimento reale ed effettivo in ogni fase del progetti di *endorsement* culturale di tutti i partner, con costante attivazione delle rispettive reti relazionali, anche per allargare il bacino di aderenti.”

<sup>134</sup> Fondazione Brescia Musei co-founding partners are the Municipality of Brescia as the major shareholder, Fondazione CAB, Fondazione ASM, and the Chamber of Commerce.

Clerici (Afis, Idras, Unicom), Coldiretti Brescia, Davide Pedersoli & C., Fondazione ASM, Fondazione Banca del Monte di Lombardia, Fondazione della Comunità Bresciana, Fondazione Paolo e Carolina Zani, Fondazione Lucchini, Fonderie Ariotti, Gefran, Gruppo Ambrosi, Gruppo Camozzi, Gruppo Feralpi, Gruppo OMR, Guber Banca, Gruppo Intesa San Paolo, Imbal Carton, Inblu, LABA -Libera Accademia Belle Arti, Olimpia Splendid, OMR S.p.a., Ori Martin, Silmar Group (Raffmetal, Fondital), Saef, Tamburini, UBI Fondazione CAB, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Università degli Studi di Brescia.

Funding partners could contribute either financially or participating in the operations when a specific know-how is requested. An example is the collaboration with the University of Brescia in developing educational and research programs.

In the belief that the cultural and artistic heritage is a fundamental asset for the social and economic development of the city, Fondazione Brescia Musei clearly shares its strategic planning with potential partners. According to the founders, the benefits of the partnerships are mutual and could change and settle in time according to the reciprocal necessities of the parts, in an innovative and unprecedented way.

#### 2.3.4.1 *Financial Contributions and Benefits*

The number of benefits offered to firms varies on the financial contribution chosen. In order to engage firms with different financial powers, Fondazione Brescia Musei proposes three different categories of annual contributions: 10.000, 25.000 or 50.000 Euro. Moreover, potential partners could propose to finance amounts different from the aforesaid ones. In this case, the Foundation will decide whether they are eligible or not. It is likely however that contributions of the kind do not become part of *Alleanza per la Cultura* given their diversity.

The benefits consist in a return on image with the firms' logo exposed on the communication materials of the events, in the possibility to participate or organize private meetings in the spaces of the Foundation, and in the distribution of catalogues, annual reports and materials related to the cultural events organised. The Foundation could also offer discounts for tickets, rent of spaces and further museums' gifts, the possibility to participate to private guided tours, and welfare advantages for the firms'

stakeholders. An example of the latter is the possibility for employees' children to participate in the educational activities and cultural summer camps organized by the Foundation. Besides, the offering could also be customized on the firms' necessities and desires, strengthening specific benefits or designing new ones. An explicatory example of benefits with the standard offering for 2021 new partners can be found in Appendix I.

## **Chapter III: *Alleanza per la Cultura*. A Model of Strategic Partnership**

Chapter III discusses Fondazione Brescia Musei's project *Alleanza per la Cultura* from a strategic point of view. At first the environment of reference and an overview of several Italian museums and foundations' partnerships programmes are presented. Clarified these aspects and taken into consideration interviews to partners and staff of the Foundation, its aim is to identify the efficacy of the project and the positive long-term effects for all parties.

### **3.1 The Context**

#### **3.1.1 *An Overview of the Italian Corporate Support for Cultural Organizations***

The efficacy of Fondazione Brescia Musei's *Alleanza per la Cultura* needs to be evaluated in relation to the general corporate support programs for cultural organizations located in Italy. The analysis is non-exhaustive but meaningful as it takes into consideration a sample of some of the most important cultural foundations and museums of the Nation, including the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Fondazione Musei Civici of Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia of Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Museo Antonio Canova, Museo Egizio, Fondazione Torino Musei, Museo del Novecento, Pinacoteca di Brera, Gallerie d'Italia, Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo (GAMEC), Fondazione Accademia Carrara, Madre – museo d'arte contemporanea Donnaregina, Pompeii Sites, MACRO – Museum of Contemporary Art of Rome, MAXXI, Galleria Borghese Museum, Galleria dell'Accademia of Florence and the Bargello Museums.

The realities analysed are 20, mainly from northern Italy: 6 from Venice and surroundings, 3 from Milan, 3 from Rome, 2 from Bergamo, 2 from Turin, 2 from Florence, 2 from Naples. The geographical variety reflects also on their different juridical nature (foundations, museums, academies and archaeological sites) and on their size and importance. This sampling has made possible to have an overview of the different strategies adopted by those realities in relation to the topic researched. Indeed, observing the major national museums and foundations' operations is important to understand the main trends of the sector, assessing its homogeneity or discrepancy, and

to reconnect Fondazione Brescia Musei with it. In this way, the positioning of Fondazione Brescia Musei can be evaluated, according to its own characteristics, context and strategy. The information reported refers to programs promoted on the organizations' websites, available for the general public, addressed both to individuals and companies.

Focusing on individuals, every main museum offers different kind of proposals, which may extend also to families' or limited groups' contributions. They can be presented as forms of memberships – under the statement of *Amici dei Musei*, cards and clubs – or donations, generally addressed to the organization or related to specific projects and events. The benefits often consist in price discounts and could be offered or without any distinction or could be tailored to different targets. The latter are usually diversified between young under 26 years old, seniors, families/friends, individual contributions, international patrons or between silver, gold and platinum members according to the financial support offered. Moreover, other two standard forms of contribution are represented by donations through 5x1000<sup>135</sup> and Art Bonus<sup>136</sup> with its consequent tax deductions and financial benefits.

Concerning corporate support for Italian cultural organizations, it is possible to assess that the majority of them adopt fundraising programs. Equally to individuals' forms of support, firms could take advantage of the Art Bonus or could undertake sponsorship and partnership programs<sup>137</sup>. However, the sample shows discrepancies on the strategies adopted. On the one hand, part of these organizations offers to the public only traditional forms of support; on the other hand, the others present more structured ways to participate to the institutional life and goals. The first group focuses their fundraising on the offering of financial or technical sponsorships, as well as location rents for private events and further concessions. These activities are often addressed to spot events that bring short-term impacts on cultural organizations. Coming to long-term partnerships, they are often not considered or not properly promoted on the

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<sup>135</sup> 5x1000 is a contribution that the Italian State make to associations that have a social relevance, including museums. In particular, it is a share (5 per thousand) of the Italian tax IRPEF (tax on personal income) that individuals can address to a specific institution. <https://www.lavoro.gov.it/temi-e-priorita/Terzo-settore-e-responsabilita-sociale-imprese/focus-on/Cinque-per-mille/Pagine/default.aspx>

<sup>136</sup> See Chapter 1.4.2.1.1 "Tax Concessions. Focus on the Art Bonus".

<sup>137</sup> See Chapter 1 "Corporate Support for the Arts".

museums' communication channels. This do not exclude the presence of partners, however it diminishes the possibility to reach a broader audience and to expand the contributor base. This tendency could be ascribed to different possible reasons. Museums could require, due to specific necessities, only short-term *ad hoc* programs of support or they could not have an implemented fundraising sector, stressing on their other areas of competence. Motivations could relate to the lack of financial and/or technical resources or, on the other end, to the phenomenon that grants to well-acknowledged museums support from renown firms that have already operated in the world of cultural sponsorships<sup>138</sup>.

Other cultural realities, instead, have implemented annual membership programs and more specific partnership plans to create a stable financing support and a deeper relationship with their stakeholders, managing the impacts on their organizations. Hereafter are reported two examples notable for their medium-long term structure on a three-year period. They are the Peggy Guggenheim Foundation's project *Guggenheim Intrapresae*, pioneer in the Italian panorama after its launch in 1992, and *Quota 15000* by Accademia Carrara in Bergamo. They similarly require support on the long-term, *Guggenheim Intrapresae* addressing to a wider and international public, *Quota 15000*, instead, to a more local one. *Alleanza per la Cultura* shares with the Accademia Carrara's project this aspect, as they are both located in similar cities. A description of the city of Brescia is provided in the further paragraphs<sup>139</sup>. It is important to remember, in fact, that partnership programs required to be targeted to their own specific realities and to the breadth of their network of stakeholders.

In partnership programs, firms could finance cultural institutions in variable amounts set by each organization and depending on the context they are embedded in. According to the available data related to the organizations analysed, in order to attract firms with different financial availability, museums and foundations generally offer three possibilities of contributions ranging from 1.500 Euro (generally for medium size cities;

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<sup>138</sup> For example, Lavazza, Louis Vuitton, and Piaget have been, among the others, partners of Fondazione Musei Civici Venezia.

<sup>139</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.3 "The City of Brescia".



5.000 Euro for more touristic ones) to 50.000<sup>140</sup> Euro. The common benefits in return can be reconducted to the following categories:

- Develop communication strategies and, among them, the possibility for firms to have their logos on the communication channels of the organizations;
- Be considered bearer of social, cultural and educational responsibility;
- Implement networks for both firms and their employees to share competencies and enhance connections;
- Corporate welfare for employees: free entrance, dedicated activities, guided tours and laboratories<sup>141</sup>;
- Benefits for managers, clients and guests: private guided tours, special opening hours, use of locations for private events, possibility to implement dedicated projects, free tickets, discounts and gifts;
- Tax deductions, mainly through the sponsoring of Art Bonus' projects;
- Further benefits that could be found: access or discounts to affiliated museums and locations, priority tickets, exclusive merchandise, right of first refusal for projects, consultation for the realisation of private cultural projects.

### 3.1.2 *Contemporary times: Covid pandemic (2020-2021)*

The years 2020 and 2021 have been signed by the Covid-19 pandemic with impacts on the sanitary, social and economic sectors. Considering its economic repercussions and its closing days, the cultural field is one of the most damaged areas, especially for live shows and exhibitions characterised by a direct relationship between artists and public. Federculture estimated a drop of public of more than 75% for nearly half of exhibitions, more than 50% for live performances and under 50% for other cultural events. This assessment is directly correlated to the closing days of the organizations. In general, the longer the interruptions, the higher the decrease of public (Di Blasi, Sbianchi, 2021).

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<sup>140</sup> The most part, however, presents a less important higher financial contribution, that could range from 10.000 to 30.000 Euro. This demonstrates the variety in the offerings, and the different goals and strategies adopted by organizations.

<sup>141</sup> As Accademia Carrara states in its report *L'impresa che sostiene la bellezza. Quota 15000. Il mecenatismo 4.0*: "Working in an environment where the individual is valued has a strong impact on his health and improves his work performance".

These impacts have affected a sector already fragile and uncertain even before the Covid pandemic (Capozucca, Pirrelli, 2020; Causi, Spada, Valentino, 2021; Andria, Bocci, 2021). The cultural industry, in fact, is characterized at the same time by a minor volume with respect to other markets and “[...] by the spread of small dimension firms and self-employed, often part-time, workers with multiple cultural jobs” (Causi, Spada, Valentino, 2021:100)<sup>142</sup>.

The shutdown, necessary to prevent the spread of the virus, has been prescribed by containment measures at the national level<sup>143</sup>.

- February 2020 could be considered the starting point for the spread of Covid-19 in Italy. The Legislative Decree 23 February 2020 n.6 (Law 13/2020)<sup>144</sup> established that all institutions and events, including cultural ones, must be suspended in the presence of individuals positive to the virus with unknown source of infection. Further laws confirmed closures for the next months.
- May 2020 signed the first attempts of restart through the Legislative Decree 33/2020<sup>145</sup>. A procedure anticipated by the Legislative Decree 19/2020<sup>146</sup> established in March 2020 that allowed regions to adopt, in agreement with the Ministry of Health, derogatory actions of restrictions or loosening in relation to the contemporary epidemiological situation. The same was established in October 2020 by the following Legislative Decree 125/2020<sup>147</sup>. Cultural organizations, museums and foundations reopened, in compliance with the necessary sanitary conditions. From the 15<sup>th</sup> of June, the Ministry Decree 11 June 2020<sup>148</sup> allowed open air exhibitions, performances in theatres, concert halls and cinemas, and activities in cultural centres, too. Considering the international panorama, reports by UNESCO and ICOM reveal, however, that globally more

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<sup>142</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] la diffusa presenza di imprese di piccole dimensioni e di lavoratori *self-employed* spesso impegnati *part-time* e contemporaneamente su più attività culturali.”

<sup>143</sup> For further information see Federculture (2021), “Le misure adottate a seguito dell’emergenza Coronavirus (COVID-19) per il settore dei beni e delle attività culturali”, in Federculture (2021), *Impresa Cultura – progettare e ripartire*, Roma, Gangemi, pp. 124-148.

<sup>144</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/02/23/20G00020/sg>

<sup>145</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/05/16/20G00051/sg>

<sup>146</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/03/25/20G00035/sg>

<sup>147</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/10/07/20G00144/sg>

<sup>148</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/06/11/20A03194/sg>

than 10% of museums could not open again, especially private ones supporting themselves through incomes generated by visitors (Giraud, 2020).

- Loosening containment actions lasted until October 2020. New laws, prescribed by the Ministry Decree 24 October 2020<sup>149</sup> and the Ministry Decree 3 November 2020<sup>150</sup>, suspended at first performances in open and closed locations and then, few weeks later, museums and cultural centres too. All cultural sectors remained closed few months at least, with the exception of libraries and archives, accessible under prior reservation from the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2020 in accordance with the Ministry Decree 3 December 2020<sup>151</sup>.
- January 2021 revealed renewed possibilities for re-openings. In parallel with the introduction of the four different areas of emergency – red, orange, yellow, and white – the Decree Law 14 January 2021<sup>152</sup> established openings during weekdays in the yellow areas for exhibitions, museums and other cultural places. The law, that later extended these possibilities to weekends, lasted until the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2021. The access to buildings and events needed previous reservation in compliance with the restricted maximum capacity of spaces – 25%, then increased to 50% – in order to respect the necessary interpersonal distance to avoid infection. Every cultural activity remained suspended in red zones instead. Exceptions on the Decree Law 14 January 2021 were made in specific periods of time, particularly during national holidays, and in limited areas, such as autonomous provinces, with the application of containment measures generally addressed to red zones. On the balance, the period launched a positive signal for the re-opening of cultural institutions, nevertheless there were limitations and difficulties on the managerial side.

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<sup>149</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/10/25/20A05861/sg>

<sup>150</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/11/04/20A06109/sg>

<sup>151</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/12/03/20A06767/sg>

<sup>152</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2021/01/14/21G00002/sg>

- Cultural organizations' activities resumed more regularly in summer 2021. The access to buildings and open-air sites, preferably upon reservation<sup>153</sup>, still required precautions such as the Covid certificate.
- Up to now, at the end of 2021, the situation is still evolving. Entrances require the Covid certificate, reservations are desirable, and the capacity has returned to normal parameters. Besides future developments, it is difficult to make a trustworthy assessment of the economic status of cultural organizations during the pandemic period (Croppi, 2021). As Molendini<sup>154</sup> states: "The risk is that, at the end, we have to deal with a couple of years of paralysis" (Molendini, 2021:189)<sup>155</sup>.

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<sup>153</sup> Reservations were demanded for cultural institutions with more than 1.000.000 visitors (Decree Law 65/2021 <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legge:2021-05-18;65>)

<sup>154</sup> Marco Molendini is a professor, journalist and music critic. It is the chairperson of the Italian Jazz Platform.

<sup>155</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: "Il rischio è che, alla fine, ci sia da fare i conti con quasi un paio di anni di paralisi".

### 3.1.2.1 Impacts of the Pandemic

According to the research conducted in the 17<sup>th</sup> annual report by Federculture 2021 *Impresa Cultura – progettare e ripartire*, 51,7% of museums remained closed from 4 to 8 months (Table 3.1).

		Field of predominant activity				
		Museum exhibitions	Live performances	Cultural services	Other	Total
Closing days	Up to 4 months	6 20,7%	19 41,3%	10 66,7%	11 78,6%	46 44,2%
	Between 4 and 8 months	15 51,7%	14 30,4%	4 26,7%	3 21,4%	36 34,6%
	Over 8 months	8 27,6%	13 28,3%	1 6,7%	0 0,0%	22 21,2%
	Total	29 100,0%	46 100,0%	15 100,0%	14 100,0%	104 100,0%

**Table 3.1 Closing Days during Covid-19 in Relation to Fields of Activities**

Source: Di Blasi Chiara, Sbianchi Giulia, “Le imprese culturali nell’anno della pandemia: effetti e prospettive di rilancio. Un’indagine sul campo”, in Federculture (2021), *Impresa Cultura - progettare e ripartire*, Roma, Gangemi Editore, p.59.

The average families’ expenses for cultural goods and services reduced by half in one year, from 113 Euro monthly expense in December 2019 to nearly 60 Euro in December 2020 (Pirrelli, 2021). Other significant data indicates a missed turnover of nearly 19 million of visitors and a lack of 78.000.000 Euro flow between March and May 2020 (ISTAT 2020). The aforesaid negative impacts are illustrative of the damages that the cultural sector has faced, especially museums and live exhibitions organizations. The publishing and tv industry, instead, were not affected by repercussions (Osservatorio Impresa Cultura Italia-Confcommercio e Swg, 2021).

The urge of a strategic reorganisation for museums and cultural institutions was needed during the period of forced closure, in order to overcome the long physical separation with the public. New ways of interaction emerged and, as the digital tool became the main channel of the offering<sup>156</sup>, new skills were required to operators. Reorganizational

<sup>156</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.2.3 “New Digital Tools and Skills”.

issues concerned a 57% reduction of goods and services proposed. 60% of the entities needed to readapt the employees' tasks. 70% of employees made use of the smart working modality, while the remaining 30% resort to payroll subsidies (CIG, among the others) and subsidies fund (FIS) (Di Blasi, Sbianchi, 2021). The fund was especially employed by cultural organizations closed for a long period of time. Strong negative impacts were experienced by museums operators with temporary contracts and freelance professionals (ICOM, 2020). Finally, repercussions also affected financial statements and the economic equilibrium of cultural organizations, in particular to the ones that could not rely on a strong public and private support. In a global view, ICOM and UNESCO underlined the possibility of total closure for 10% of worldwide museums. (Giraud, 2020). This data clearly underlines the necessity of external funding both for cultural organizations and for their operators.

#### *3.1.2.2 Public interventions*

In the two years of pandemic, the government increasingly introduced containment measures aimed to reduce negative impacts on the sector and to maintain strong relationships with institutions, private funders and public. Even though public aids were often criticized for the modalities and for the uneven and unstable level of protection given (Cancellato, 2021), these interventions have been important for an uncertain sector as the cultural one (Capozucca, Pirrelli, 2020; Causi, Spada, Valentino, 2021) and they become the key for a new starting point of development in the future (Andria, Bocci, 2021).

Public interventions to reduce negative impacts on the cultural sector were introduced at first with the earliest measurements to contain the spread of Covid-19. During the two years of pandemic, they multiplied and addressed to the different fields of the sector. For reasons of clarity, hereafter the actions listed are limited to the measurements adopted for museums and exhibition venues.

- **Public Aids for Private and Semi-Private Entities**

Decree Law 34/2020<sup>157</sup> established the distribution of vouchers for the purchase of tickets for museums and cultural events and settled a 171.500.000 Euro fund of emergency for the year 2020. The support is addressed to private and semi-private museums, book shops, publishing companies and as restoration for the events, exhibitions, fairs and congresses cancelled. In 2020 further funds for non-state museums, related cultural institutions and operators were established in June by the Ministerial Decrees 297<sup>158</sup>, in October by the Decree 448<sup>159</sup>, in November by the Decree 517<sup>160</sup> and in December by the Ministerial Decree 568<sup>161</sup> for a further total amount of 103.100.000 Euro.

- **Public Aids for State Museums**

In the period 2020-2022 State Museums received funds for nearly 200.000.000 Euro, beginning with the Ministerial Decree 34/2020<sup>162</sup>, afterwards modified with Law 77/2020<sup>163</sup>. Between its scopes, the measurement established a 50.000.000 Euro fund for conservation, restoration, preservation, promotion and digitalization for cultural heritage to be conducted in 2020. Further 10.000.000 Euro were allocated for digitalisation aimed at the design of a platform for the fruition of the material and immaterial national cultural heritage.

- **Further Public Aids**

Law Decree 104/2020<sup>164</sup> (Law 126/2020<sup>165</sup>) settled additional 10.000.000 Euro for the 2020 restoration, conservation and promotion of property assets and 5.000.000 Euro, later increased, to all the ICOM's members.

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<sup>157</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/05/19/20G00052/sg>

<sup>158</sup> <https://cultura.gov.it/comunicato/dm-297-26062020>

<sup>159</sup> <https://cultura.gov.it/comunicato/dm-448-07102020>

<sup>160</sup> <https://www.beniculturali.it/comunicato/dm-517-13112020>

<sup>161</sup> <https://cultura.gov.it/comunicato/dm-568-07122020>

<sup>162</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/05/19/20G00052/sg>

<sup>163</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/07/18/20G00095/sg>

<sup>164</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/08/14/20G00122/sg>

<sup>165</sup> <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2020/10/13/20G00145/sg>

Ministerial Decree 372<sup>166</sup> of August 2020 provided 20.000.000 Euro as compensation for those cultural organizations who cancelled or suspended at least one exhibition during the year. Further amendments were added next.

Other notable measurements regard collateral activities of the museum sector. In particular, Decree Law 533<sup>167</sup> of November 2020 assigned 12.000.000 Euro for the touristic and artistic publishing industry, tour guides and museum didactics.

### 3.1.2.3 *New Digital Tools and Skills*

As previously mentioned, to overcome the forced physical distance with the public, the digital channel became the main tool for the fruition of the museums' offering. Cultural institutions were forced to reorganise themselves to attract the interest of their audiences. Online conferences and performances, podcasts, virtual tours, supplementary information about artworks and their contexts, interactive activities and the use of social networks are examples of the arrangements adopted by organizations. The Federculture report conducted on the last two years of activities revealed the huge impact of the digital means to maintain stable relationships with old customers, attract potential new ones and engage the public in the most communicative way. The aim cannot be reconnected to an economic return, at least not on the short-term, indeed "Even though the number of those who did not use digital channels is very small, [...] a clear positive connection between the adoption of digital solutions and a minor impact on the financial statements is not deducible" (Di Blasi, Sbianchi, 2021:64)<sup>168</sup>. The use of social media and the implementation of *ad hoc* online activities has been made mainly in big cities and regional administrative centres, where museums with more resources are located (Di Blasi, Sbianchi, 2021). Besides, it is important to remember that the most significant positive operations were made by institutions that consider the relationship with their publics as their central aim (Rosati, 2020). A tendency not always expected

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<sup>166</sup> <https://cultura.gov.it/comunicato/dm-372-03082020>

<sup>167</sup> <https://cultura.gov.it/comunicato/dm-533-24112020>

<sup>168</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: "Sebbene le numerosità di coloro che non hanno fatto ricorso al digitale siano molto esigue, [...] non si evince una chiara relazione tra l'adozione di soluzioni digitali e un minore impatto della crisi sul bilancio".



given some criticism about the purposes of the activities conducted online. Actually, activities have to be successfully addressed to the targeted audience and not for their own sake. In this sense, it is noticeable the difference between cultural institutions implementing their digital skills prior to Covid-19 and the efforts of those caught unaware<sup>169</sup>.

The last two years made clear the crucial role of the digital tool to continue museums' activities addressed to the audience, nonetheless online activities should not be considered a substitute of the real physical offer. According to several museums' operators and to the Fondazione Brescia Musei's staff interviewed<sup>170</sup>, the use of digital channels and media and the diversified modes of interactions should and will be partially maintained at the end of the pandemic period. Moreover, there is a consistent possibility of a "[...] progressive interaction of live and online activities, with the latter aimed at amplify and promote furtherly contents and modalities of the cultural offering." (Pittèri, 2021:177)<sup>171</sup> A fruition that becomes "[...] different, enriched, universal" (Andria, Bocci, 2021:210)<sup>172</sup> and not a faded and evanescent replica of its physical copy. Pittèri<sup>173</sup> adds that "[...] the data is really interesting, the digital could become, on the one hand, a tool to complete the physical fruition, enhancing, integrating and enriching it; and, on the other hand, it could become a customary form of fruition in addition to the traditional physical one, increasing its user base." (Pittèri, 2021:178)<sup>174</sup> Similar statements are illustrated in the ICOM's recommendations for museums during the period of pandemic<sup>175</sup>.

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<sup>169</sup> See Appendix II 2.5.

<sup>170</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>171</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: "[...] in una logica di progressiva integrazione di live e remoto, con quest'ultimo deputato ad ampliare e valorizzare ulteriormente i contenuti e le modalità di offerta culturale".

<sup>172</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: "[...] diversa, potenziata, universale".

<sup>173</sup> Daniele Pittèri currently is the CEO of Fondazione Musica per Roma.

<sup>174</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: "[...] il segnale è davvero molto interessante, il digitale può diventare da un lato un elemento di integrazione della fruizione in presenza, valorizzandola, completandola e arricchendola; dall'altro una forma abituale di fruizione che si aggiunge a quella tradizionale dal vivo, aumentando la platea complessiva dei fruitori."

<sup>175</sup> Mottola Molfino Alessandra (2020), "Riflessioni teoriche e pratiche di Alessandra Mottola Molfino (e qualche consiglio) per i musei al tempo del Covid-19", Milano, ICOM.

<https://www.icom-italia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/MottolaMolfino.pdf>

Digital Fruition	
Strong points	Weak points
Accessibility (where, when you want, cheaper)	Partial detachment (minor emotional intensity)
Democratization (wide offer for all publics)	Less involvement of senses
Expansion of the offering, possibility to see again events, enjoying details	Minor experiential values (absence of "atmosphere" and "contour")
Family sharing and "educational" function	Attenuation of the public/artist "communion"
Incentive to interactive participation without feeling uncomfortable	Excess supply that could make the choice difficult

**Table 3.2 Digital Fruition During Covid-19**

Source: Pittèri Daniele, "Fruizione live e fruizione remota: due facce della stessa medaglia", in Federculture (2021), *Impresa Cultura - progettare e ripartire*, Roma, Gangemi Editore, p.178.

The importance of the digital technologies for cultural institutions relies also in its higher inclusivity and active engagement of wider publics, especially the youngest and the international ones. In addition, the occasion to enjoy cultural offerings whenever and wherever possible contributes to reduce economic and place disparities (Table 3.2). If properly designed, the digital means become an instrument to better understand visitors' needs and it could be used for the organizations' strategic management. Museums could ask visitors for proposals, engage them in a more active way, activate new skills and methods of learning, show them the backstage of exhibitions and further events and even collect financial aids. The physical distance, in effect, seems to have increased social proximity (Mottola Molino, 2020). Furthermore, contrary to their past trends, the period of pandemic and the massive exploit of the internet permitted cultural organizations to keep up with other economic sectors in the use of technology and innovation (ISTAT, 2018; Ghilardi, Lanzillo, Ripa, Tagliaferri, 2020). According to an analysis conducted by Federculture in 2021, 70% of cultural institutions will develop this area of competence. In this sense, managerial costs and specific skills are required to design successful contents and to manage the issue of reproductions and licence of use (Andria, Bocci, 2021).

To conclude, the development of a proper use of the digital channels is desirable to keep up with contemporary times and necessities. Fondazione Brescia Musei, for example, is implementing its website and it is better organising its online materials, to actively engage visitors and to encourage them to return to its museums.

### 3.1.3 *The City of Brescia*

Brescia is a strong industrial city whose economic power relies on the entrepreneurial and secondary sector, generally aimed at the industrial production of intermediate goods distributed abroad. The city presents a medium sized centre, however it is the first province in Lombardy for dimension (4.785,48 km<sup>2</sup>), and the second regionally and fifth nationally for number of inhabitants (1.255.709)<sup>176</sup>.

The city is historically considered mainly as an economic power, despite its rich cultural past. In the last twenty-five years more precise efforts have been made by the Municipality to implement the cultural sector. A first important signal was made by the opening of the Santa Giulia Museum at the turn of the millennium, the consequent restoration works of the cultural sites and the foundation of Fondazione Brescia Musei<sup>177</sup>. In this way, it was provided a strong service for the community, promotion of the rich cultural heritage of the city with the overlapping of its past cultures and traditions, as well as exploitation of the cultural sector as an asset for the social, identity and economic local development. Over time many operations of requalification, pedestrianisation and “musealisation” have been made by the Municipality to better conserve, promote and create culture itineraries highlighting the historical stratification of the city. All the cultural implementations undertaken brought to the inclusion in 2011 of the Santa Giulia Museum and the Capitolium Area<sup>178</sup> inside the Unesco World Heritage List for the serial site *I Longobardi in Italia. I luoghi del potere (568-774 d.C.)* and to the recent proclamation of Brescia as Capital of Culture for the year 2023 together with the city of Bergamo.

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<sup>176</sup> <https://www.tuttitalia.it/lombardia/20-province/superficie/>

<sup>177</sup> See Chapter 2 “Fondazione Brescia Musei”.

<sup>178</sup> See Chapter 2 “Fondazione Brescia Musei”.

Moreover, Brescia is a strategic place to develop tourism, too. Its natural places, lakes and mountains, nearby the city centre, are well-liked by a great amount of national and international tourism. The Municipality has made efforts to increase tourism in the city centre itself, as well<sup>179</sup>. Furthermore, the closeness with cultural and economic cities nearby could be exploited creating positive connections between different realities, as the link that is going to be established between Brescia and Bergamo Capitals of Culture in 2023.

### **3.2 Discussion: *Alleanza per la Cultura***

The aim of this paper questions whether Fondazione Brescia Musei's project *Alleanza per la Cultura* is incisive for the strategic administration of the organization. Before analysing the different aspects of the project in relation to their internal and external context, it is necessary to define the meaning of the strategic dimension. Bollo<sup>180</sup> asserts that the strategic dimension is “[...] a mid-term course upon which goals, results and resources are aligned in a non-dogmatic way and in close attention to the internal and external conditions of change of the operating area and to the increasing need of measurement and of communication of the generated value” (Bollo, 2019:195)<sup>181</sup>. For cultural organizations the above-cited strategic dimension should be “[...] (even) higher contextualised and specified in the broad ecosystem where direct and indirect benefits, more than revenues, are the size to set the comparison between the resources used and to relate the nature of the results expected” (Bollo, 2019:195-196)<sup>182</sup>. Fondazione Brescia Musei aligns with the description, as it is a non-profit organization with a strong social mission.

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<sup>179</sup> See Appendix II 1.1.

<sup>180</sup> Alessandro Bollo currently is the Director of Fondazione Polo del '900 in Turin.

<sup>181</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] un percorso di medio termine in cui allineare, in modo non dogmatico, obiettivi, risultati e risorse ponendo forte attenzione alle condizioni di cambiamento sia interne sia esterne al perimetro organizzativo e alle crescenti esigenze di misurazione e comunicazione del valore generato.”

<sup>182</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] attentamente contestualizzato e specificato nell'ambito di un ecosistema ampio in cui saranno i benefici diretti e indiretti, più che i ricavi, la dimensione su cui impostare il confronto con le risorse impiegate e a cui collegare la natura dei risultati che si attendono.”

### 3.2.1 *The Enlargement of the Pool of Partners of Fondazione Brescia Musei*

*Alleanza per la Cultura* has involved three categories of organizations:

- Public and private Universities and Academies of Fine Arts;
- Entities with non-prevalent commercial scopes: Federation of Italian Employers, Chamber of Commerce, Trade Union Associations, and Foundations of different nature;
- Private companies

More than the first two categories, whose interest in the *Alleanza per la Cultura* is inherent to their nature, the attention of the research is mostly addressed to private companies, whose operational aims are usually very distant from the cultural ones of the Foundation.

The private companies involved are of different nature and size. Grouping by categories, it is possible to assess that a large part of them dedicates to the metallurgical industry (Asonext, Fonderie Ariotti, Gruppo Feralpi, Gruppo OMR, Ori Martin, Silmar Group, Tamburini), several to the electronic industry for the industrial sector (Antares Vision, Gefran, Gruppo Camozzi) and a smaller part to the production of contemporary and historical arms (Beretta Holding, Davide Pedersoli & C.). The other firms act in further different industries: energetical (A2A), systems engineering (ABP Nocivelli), corporate consulting (SAEF), air-conditioning and heating systems (Olimpia Splendid), bathroom furnitures (Clerici (Afis, Idras, Unicum), food (Gruppo Ambrosi). Therefore, with few exceptions, they are activities related to the entrepreneurial and secondary sector, generally aimed at the industrial production of finished and intermediate products distributed abroad. The tendency reflects the historical past of Brescia<sup>183</sup> and its common perception of industrial city. These firms' customers are mainly foreign companies, therefore they do not usually have a developed business to consumer (B2C) communication, nor marketing and efforts of visibility for individuals residing in the province of Brescia. According to the actual Director of Fondazione Brescia Musei Stefano Karadjov this is the reason why those firms, who represent a portion of businesses not negligible in the local area, did not take part in partnership or

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<sup>183</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.3 "The City of Brescia".

sponsorship programmes before *Alleanza per la Cultura*. However, as it emerges from the interviews conducted, partners and, indirectly, their stakeholders show a strong cultural interest, even though their sector of origin could appear very distant from the cultural one. Several of these firms had never supported the Foundation before, others established financial and technical sponsorships in the past, and some have been supporting other local cultural organizations. Other ones recently started a collaboration for the first time prompted either by their cultural spirit and by the financial benefits obtained, especially deriving from the Art Bonus. Some of these companies already participated to the Vittoria Alata<sup>184</sup> renovation. The project with its related events, occupied a huge part of the Foundation's planning in the last couple of years, and its operations should have been accomplished before the outbreak of the pandemic. Part of these companies, in the wake of the visibility granted to the return of the Vittoria Alata, decided then to become partners of *Alleanza per la Cultura*. In this sense, there could be a correlation between the two projects even though they were not tied together at the moment of their conception. They both reflect the latest managerial direction taken by the Foundation's administration<sup>185</sup> and its willingness to find a broad panel of supporters, giving them benefits of image and making them part of a greater project addressed to the wealth of the local territory. The restoration works for the Vittoria Alata through the Art Bonus engaged, as a matter of fact, local actors, companies, institutions and physical individuals, with both known and unknown identities, for the great total amount of 613.996,58 Euro of contributions. For the occasion the Foundation organised a strong communication and marketing campaign, contributing to promote the image of the sponsors. As anticipated, in some cases promoters of the Vittoria Alata statue agreed to participate to the pact *Alleanza per la Cultura*. The decision could be reconducted to the cultural passion of sponsors, to the benefits derived from the operations or to the wide appeal and return on image offered by the Foundation's latest communication campaigns. Moreover, both projects regard not a sponsorship per se but a deeper connection with the local territory, given the

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<sup>184</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.2 "General Considerations about Fondazione Brescia Musei's Area of Competence".

<sup>185</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.3 "An Outcome-based Management Model".

significance that the Vittoria Alata statue and the whole Foundation's heritage represent for the city of Brescia.

Considering the commercial nature of the companies, most of the cultural interest they have shown for these projects suggest the presence of deeper motivations and symbols, rather than a general interest in culture. Fondazione Brescia Musei has focused on their sense of belonging to the local territory, fueling the belief that this has to be exploited and encouraged. Indeed, the current Director of the Foundation, Stefano Karadjov, explains that it is not usual for secondary industry multinational firms to participate in sponsorship programs since they do not have a real return on image as the majority of their clientele is abroad in Germany, Russia and China. This is one of the reasons for the necessary strengthening of the fundraising area of the organization, in order to better shape supporting programs and to research potential new stakeholders, providing in this way a good turnout of firms interested in the Foundation.

### 3.2.2 *Implementation of the Managerial Approach and of the Fundraising Area*

Over the last three years Fondazione Brescia Musei has enlarged its areas of competence<sup>186</sup>. The structural growth of the organization followed the development of its activities and visibility and brought positive impacts and quality from the stakeholders' points of view. The staff states, indeed, that the process of expansion has been combined with the improvement of their skills "[...] in quality and in control of the processes of the operations"<sup>187</sup>. This implementation was possible thanks to both the operation on the equity done in 2019<sup>188</sup> and the widespread inclusion of economic subjects in museum realities. The unification of economic and humanities subjects is an ongoing process that over the last years has become predominant, and that has found its application in various realities. Fondazione Brescia Musei experienced the phenomenon at different levels, from its first establishment with public-private co-founders to the recent appointments of a Director and of a President with strong

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<sup>186</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.2 "General Considerations about Fondazione Brescia Musei's Area of Competence".

<sup>187</sup> See Appendix II 2.3.

<sup>188</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.1 "Financial Statements Data Analysis for the Period 2015-2020".

managerial approaches and the greater involvement of companies in its network of supporters. The trend has been led by the willingness of the Municipality. Even though it acts completely like a private firm, Fondazione Brescia Musei is, as a matter of fact, a “fondazione di partecipazione” having the Municipality as main associate. This means that the public administration has a strong decision making power on the Foundation’s operations.

Thanks to the juridical form of Fondazione Brescia Musei establishing that administrative decisions are taken *ex ante* by co-founding members and that the scientific project is made by a designated committee, partner members of *Alleanza per la Cultura* cannot influence the decision making processes of the cultural organization. Actually, employees declared that this systematic private support is highly functional for the success of operations. Managers, in fact, demand the necessary resources for their area of competence, receiving them from the *Alleanza per la Cultura* fund. The simplification and optimization of operations, together with a sharp profile and a clear mission are pivotal for cultural organizations to maintain the interest of all citizens and not only the one of partners (Andria, Bocci, 2021). The influential power of the private party in the activities of cultural organizations is more likely, even though undesirable, when planning fundraising for spot events. In this case, it could happen that well-known artists and themes are more probable to be sponsored with respect to more specific ones<sup>189</sup>. This issue presents even more when a museum decide not to organize blockbuster exhibitions that could attract more easily the general public. In the past, further complications arised when the necessity of support pertained to the restorations of artworks from the deposits, thus minor artworks generally not exhibited even after the intervention. Given the insufficient benefits of image from these initiatives, such operations are not appealing for potential sponsors and are not likely to receive the necessary amount to sustain the renewal costs<sup>190</sup>. In this sense, it has been crucial that *Alleanza per la Cultura* offers a generic and fixed annual support that the Foundation manages at its own discretion. The project however does not exclude the possibility of using more traditional fundraising techniques and tools both for business

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<sup>189</sup> See Appendix II 2.1 and Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>190</sup> See Appendix II 2.3.



to consumer (B2C) and for business to business (B2B) communication, such as vertical operations of sponsorships to targeted initiatives and rent of spaces for accessory events not strictly culturally related.

The managerial approach adopted by Fondazione Brescia Musei is included in the willingness of the administration to promote the entire local territory and to reposition the Foundation, making it autonomous from a governance point of view<sup>191</sup>. To achieve this strategic approach it is required a solid change both at an administrative and managerial level with cultural, procedural and human resources interventions (Bollo, 2019). This shift should permit a better development of the management of the vast cultural heritage in charge of the Foundation (four museums and one cinema). Interviews reveal the positive perception that the partners have of the phenomenon, compared to the general feeling of inefficiency towards public interventions to guarantee a complete support for Fondazione Brescia Musei and for cultural organizations in general (Di Blasi, Sbianchi, 2021).

Still, it is crucial that this managerial approach has to be truly functional for organization's goals and its benefits should be addressed to exhibitions and events for all stakeholders and visitors in order to satisfy the social aim proper of museums. As a matter of facts, successful fundraising operations, especially the ones involving local entrepreneurships, occur when the necessities of cultural institutions and the ones of companies reach a common ground and are satisfied, in total respect of the scientific project of museums<sup>192</sup>.

### 3.2.3 *Key Characteristics of the Project*

As illustrated, Brescia is a medium sized city generally recalled for its strong industrial vocation<sup>193</sup>. For these reasons, it cannot rely on the possibility to have a spontaneous recurrent support from the private sector. To reverse the tendency, *Alleanza per la Cultura* relies on two key elements, creating a virtuous circle of activities and a deep connection between companies and the local environment.

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<sup>191</sup> See Appendix II 2.1.

<sup>192</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>193</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.3 "The City of Brescia".

### 3.2.3.1 A Virtuous Circle

The continuative long-term partnership *Alleanza per la Cultura* transformed the operations of the Foundation into a “virtuous circle”, as defined by members of the Foundation themselves<sup>194</sup>. Having a solid plan of concrete activities on the long-term is the best starting point to persuade potential partners to support the Foundation and, at the same time, it is through the partners’ support on the long-term that it is possible to plan activities multi-yearly. Continuity in time is also important to show results to stakeholders and to increase trust in partners.

This virtuous circle is reported to have unloads the work usually attributed to collections managers. In the past, the Foundation did not have a fundraising sector and there were no projects of systematic support. Therefore, the formation of a network of sponsors took recurrently time and resources. In the past it could happen that benefits could be more specific and interventions could be designed *ad hoc*, but they were not durable and their settlement implied a major use of resources for the Foundation. *Alleanza per la Cultura* and partnership projects strategically planned demonstrate instead the possibility to bring synergy of interventions, guaranteeing and preserving resources for the realization of the Foundation’s scientific program and mission.

### 3.2.3.2 A Deep Connection with the Environment

The other strength that makes *Alleanza per la Cultura* a strategic asset for Fondazione Brescia Musei regards the meaning of the relationship established between companies and the institution. Overcoming the concept of sponsorships and their support for specific spot events, partnerships function on the idea of making joint efforts to fulfill the museums’ mission or long-term projects. Fondazione Brescia Musei took a step forward, creating for the first time in Brescia the possibility for local companies to support the majority of its cultural heritage. This means not just a single museum but four of them plus a cinema and all the related numerous activities managed by the main local cultural foundation of the city<sup>195</sup>. Fondazione Brescia Musei’s willingness has been to create an identity project based on strong cultural roots to make firms feel like

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<sup>194</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>195</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

sharing and contributing to a mission, greater than in usual fundraising operations. Exhibitions and events organised are, as a matter of fact, connected with the local territory at different levels<sup>196</sup>: from collaborations with international museums, to the exhibition of local historicized and contemporary artists, to the project of connecting the Archaeological Area with the Santa Giulia Complex for engaging future visitors in a more immersive experience.

The project revealed to be successful to persuade companies, generally strongly attached to their local roots, as confirmed by the partners interviewed<sup>197</sup>. The success was furtherly testified by the impossibility for most of them to take advantage of the benefits offered by the Foundation due to Covid pandemic restrictions. Nonetheless, they seem enthusiastic about the collaboration: “[...] I did not have a return, the most important thing is that the Foundation did, as it seems they have done everything they said”<sup>198</sup>. Additionally, pushing the concept forward, one of the interviewed companies did not even consider benefits as a fundamental prerequisite to participate, maintaining cultural interest as the main reason for support.

The common vision of partners towards the promotion of the city’s cultural heritage reflects the characteristic of the project of being non competitive. Companies cannot gain commodity exclusiveness as they join in an alliance for the conservation and promotion of their territory. The importance of relationships is highlighted by the *modus operandi* of Fondazione Brescia Musei in searching for new funders. This happens at two levels. To create a good and personal relationship the Director or the fundraising manager present the project directly to potential partners. Furthermore, an annual announcement for becoming partner is presented by the Foundation online on its website at the beginning of every year.

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<sup>196</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.2 “General Considerations about Fondazione Brescia Musei’s Area of Competence”.

<sup>197</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>198</sup> See Appendix II 1.2.

### 3.2.3.3 *Further Motivations and Benefits for Firms*

Further reasons for firms to become partners of Fondazione Brescia Musei relate to their social corporate responsibility and benefits received. Hereafter a few testimonies from partners of the Foundation, indicating their strong sensibility towards the local social and cultural heritage. “[...] I believe the rightfulness of the participation of local companies for the cultural development of Brescia. After having collected profits, they need to return something. I believe this is a right and proper operation to do [...]”<sup>199</sup>, “[...] we sustain culture as it is at the base of our company, so we believe that enhancing it is fundamental”<sup>200</sup>, “[...] the collaboration with Fondazione Brescia Musei was established following the common mission of enhancing and of promoting the image of Brescia [...]”<sup>201</sup>.

Another motivation are the benefits offered and the possibility to customize them. The more customized the offering is, the more successful the relationship between the parties becomes. Partnerships become virtuous when the exchange grants a rich value added for both parties<sup>202</sup>. From the interviews conducted it can be assessed that benefits are perceived differently by companies. The recipient can search mainly for a return on image from communication operations, for financial and further benefits, or for operations on the stakeholders’ welfare. Testimonies also reveal the satisfaction and interest of the local and non-local firms’ stakeholders both for the cultural heritage supported and for the benefits received (free tickets, private guided tours, events). Companies are enthusiastic by this result and by the possibility to be engaged and kept informed on the Foundation’s operations<sup>203</sup>.

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<sup>199</sup> See Appendix II 1.3.

<sup>200</sup> See Appendix II 1.4.

<sup>201</sup> See Appendix II 1.1.

<sup>202</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>203</sup> See Appendix II.

#### 3.2.3.4 *Further Benefits for Fondazione Brescia Musei*

Benefits for Fondazione Brescia Musei are multiple. Firstly, having a regular financial funding system on the medium-long term permits to plan and realize exhibitions, events, promotional and educational campaigns to maintain the museums “alive” and active. Otherwise, with public support only the Foundation could maintain just ordinary operations for the opening and closure of the permanent exhibitions, including staff expenses<sup>204</sup>. The current Director’s project to develop Fondazione Brescia Musei relies on the design of temporary exhibitions. However, these events result to be highly expensive and not sustainable by public support and ticket sales only<sup>205206</sup>. Here comes the necessity of a higher level of support, to expand and design further projects, especially during the Covid-19 period. Differently from several cultural realities that closed in the last two years, Fondazione Brescia Musei, thanks to the support received, continued to plan activities, to rearrange itself and to prepare for several intermittent re-openings. The financial support has permitted continuity in the Foundation’s activities, as well as the preservation of the pre-pandemic levels of employment.

This does not mean that in the past there were no sponsorships nor fundraising actions, but rather small and addressed to spot events, tied to few recurrent sponsors or sometimes even not sufficient<sup>207</sup>. In this sense it has been very useful the exploitation of the Art Bonus financial benefits<sup>208</sup>.

The involvement of companies and the engagement of stakeholders amplify the user base of the Foundation and its reputation. Operations aspire to reach the national and international scene to make them discover the cultural heritage of Brescia. For this reason, great efforts are evident in communication operations.

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<sup>204</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>205</sup> See Paragraph 2.3.1 “Financial Statements Data Analysis for the Period 2015-2020”.

<sup>206</sup> See Appendix II 2.1.

<sup>207</sup> See Appendix II 2.1.

<sup>208</sup> See Appendix II 2.3.

The strategic application of *Alleanza per la Cultura* made Fondazione Brescia Musei one of the VIII edition *CULTURA+IMPRESA Prize*<sup>209</sup> 2020-2021 winners for its project of sustainability on the long-term, with the special mention “Networking in Arts”.

#### 3.2.4 *Positive Impacts for the City*

The continuity of activities permits the Foundation to organise exhibitions and events, in complete respect of the scientific project, giving prestige to the city and indirectly to the supporting firms. A direct consequence of this is the increased interest towards the city from a local and national point of view. This reflects the willingness of the Municipality and of the entities of the city, that aspire to make Brescia more attractive to tourism in the belief that culture is an increasingly fundamental driver for the development of the local economy and of its industries. Actually, the province of Brescia, rather than the city itself, is characterised by a high level of tourism, mainly clustered on lake Garda and nearby natural areas<sup>210</sup>. The enhancement of Fondazione Brescia Musei and, through it, of the city’s cultural heritage can help Brescia in becoming more attractive to tourists and in creating synergies with the cities nearby. Following this line, it is important to recall the nomination of Brescia as future Italian Capital of Culture 2023 together with Bergamo. The event will permit further opportunities for the city to obtain more visibility and reputation on a national level and probably to reshape its idea of industrial centre towards a more cultural oriented one. Therefore, the presence of local entities believing in this common vision and giving their support is fundamental for the success of the project. Likewise, it is a strong signal that culture could become a fundamental asset of development and cohesion<sup>211</sup> (Andria, Bocci, 2021; Sacco, 2021).

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<sup>209</sup> Founded by Federculture and The Round Table in 2013, *CULTURA+IMPRESA Prize* is a major recognition for projects involving cultural entities and business communication. Its aim is to promote professional culture and to set a constant benchmark of the sector.

<sup>210</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.3 “The City of Brescia”.

<sup>211</sup> See Appendix II 2.4.

### 3.2.5 *Looking Forward to the Future: Aspects to Improve*

In this paragraph are listed potential implementations for the project *Alleanza per la Cultura*, suggested by the partners interviewed and by Fondazione Brescia Musei itself. The Foundation is, in fact, aware that every project could be improved and has declared its willingness to design further corporate support options in order to include every potential reality interested in participating<sup>212</sup>. The sample of partners interviewed is not exhaustive therefore data provided on the topic do not offer an in-depth analysis of the whole range of suggestions companies could give to the Foundation. Hereafter, however, what emerges from the collected data is:

- The necessity to provide more exhibitions and performances addressed to the contemporary artworld, revealing connections with the local cultural heritage. In this way, it could be possible to offer more varied projects and to attract a broader audience.
- The will to deliver more benefits, to implement more communication campaigns and events in order to promote firms' brand and to engage firms' stakeholders.
- To increase the number of potential partners, designing smaller participations' shares to involve firms with reduced financial power. In particular, this last suggestion relates to the observation that the three categories of contribution settled by the Foundation's management are financially more demanding than the average retrieved in the sample analysed in previous paragraphs<sup>213</sup>.

### **3.3 Culture as a Strategic Asset**

As reported in the previous paragraphs, the cultural sector has been one of the most damaged by the pandemic. However, consumers reveal to research, whenever possible<sup>214</sup>, cultural goods and services for their beauty, comfort, diversion, leisure and for the idea of freedom outside the boundaries of the past lockdowns (Cancellato, 2021; Croci, 2020). As Sacchi<sup>215</sup> states culture could be considered "[...] as a lighthouse that

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<sup>212</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>213</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.1 "An Overview of the Italian Corporate Support for Cultural Organizations".

<sup>214</sup> Here consumption refers to online activities, tv and publishing sectors.

<sup>215</sup> Former Deputy-Mayor for Culture, Fashion and Design of the city of Florence, currently Council member for Culture of the city of Milan

brightens up the horizon after the dark of the pandemic, culture that invites us to resistance and that, as it often happens, makes us remember its unavoidability just when we missed it.” (Sacchi, 2021:195)<sup>216</sup> The typologies of consumes have changed over the period of pandemic due to the contingencies, with a stronger individual fruition of books, tv and online performances and events; while museums and other cultural organizations remained closed and physical activities forcibly suspended<sup>217</sup>. The analysis conducted by Federculture about cultural consumption during the pandemic period illustrates that, in general, positive impacts are more easily traceable in the presence of shortest closing periods and superior exploitation of the digital channels (Di Blasi, Sbianchi, 2021). The use of digital tools has been of extreme importance to reach a broader user base and to receive more funds, as it heightened general consciousness about local cultural heritage (Broccardi, Sanesi, 2019). Indeed, the use of social networks permits to directly reach potential visitors every day, especially the youngest audience<sup>218</sup>. The awareness about the importance of conservation and promotion of the cultural heritage relates, as well, to the physical impossibility for people to access and experience it<sup>219</sup> (Mottola Molfino, 2020). To conclude, the changes brought by the pandemic are still ongoing but have raised a different consciousness, new ways of fruition and research for cultural heritage. These changes are already visible in the transformation of museums: as cultural institutions, they are the reflection of the society in which they are embedded. Renovation is surely practical and generally regards the services offered, commonly actuated through the improvement of the technological tools. Moreover, it could reach a deeper sphere stimulating a self-analysis of the entity at a significance level. A different definition of “museum” could be considered in the future. In this sense, it is noteworthy the reflection made by Claudio Rosati<sup>220</sup> during the first pandemic wave of Covid-19, recalling the ICOM’s statement about the fundamental importance of museums for a new departure in the post-Covid period: “(museums) will

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<sup>216</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] come faro che rischiera l’orizzonte dopo il buio della pandemia, la cultura che ci invita alla resistenza e che, come spesso accade, ci ha fatto ricordare la sua imprescindibilità proprio quando ci è mancata.”

<sup>217</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.2.1 “Impacts of the Pandemic”.

<sup>218</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.2.3 “New Digital Tools and Skills”.

<sup>219</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>220</sup> Claudio Rosati is councillor member of Fondazione Musei Senesi. He deals with museums, promotion and communication for the cultural heritage.



have an important role for the restoration and the reinforcement of the social composition of the communities involved”<sup>221</sup> (Rosati, 2020:5). He continues hypothesizing a potential and necessary transformation of the museum’s definition, shaped more on people cooperation, participation and creativity. It is meaningful that the concept of alliance is recalled in this context granting to *Alleanza per la Cultura* a concept even more up to date with latest evolutions in the cultural sector.

From these considerations, it is possible to assess that culture, together with sustainability, is increasingly considered a fundamental strategic asset for the economic and social development<sup>222</sup> (Fumagalli, Pirovano, Trenti, 2019; Andria, Bocci, 2021). For these reasons supporting and efficiently managing cultural institutions is crucial, and this is why they are increasingly open to the private sector. In Italy this phenomenon reflects a universal trend developing in the last decades, and especially in the last years, at different levels<sup>223224</sup> (Broccardi, Sanesi, 2019; Cancellato 2021). In 2021 Federculture states that more than 70% of organizations expect an increase of external sources of financing for cultural institutions and a stronger cooperation with national or local entities, relying on the idea of development through alliances with people and with the entrepreneur world. In accordance, nowadays companies believe that public interventions can only partially reduce the negative impacts of the pandemic in the sector and the results will be effective only in the short period, and exclusively for a segment of organizations (Di Blasi, Sbianchi, 2021). In the case of Fondazione Brescia Musei, the willingness of *Alleanza per la Cultura* partners to reaffirm their presence for a further three-year period after the end of their contracts testifies this positive tendency. In addition, the Foundation continues to receive membership requests every year by new potential supporters, despite the last two years of crisis. In this sense, it is predictable that Brescia will be provided with additional support in the occasion of Brescia and Bergamo Capitals of Culture in 2023.

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<sup>221</sup> Translated by the author. Original text: “[...] avrà un ruolo importante nella riparazione e nel rafforzamento del tessuto sociale delle comunità coinvolte.” Here Rosati refers to the declaration of the ICOM about the Covid-19 crisis.

<sup>222</sup> See Appendix II 2.2.

<sup>223</sup> See Paragraph 1.3 “Towards Corporate Support for the Arts. Variations in the Italian Funding System”.

<sup>224</sup> See Appendix II 1.1 and Appendix II 2.1.

Corporate support on the long-term is therefore a potential universal system of support and sustainability that has to be exploited in a strategic and innovative way (Andria, Bocci, 2021; Fondazione Brescia Musei, Fondazione Cariplo, Politecnico di Milano, 2020; Fumagalli, Pirovano, Trenti, 2021). Actually, the most intense period for cultural strategic planning happened during the Covid-19 pandemic (Gobbi, Moneta, 2021), when the operators of the sector looked forward for future efficient developments, differently from past periods when strategic visions in Italy were generally fell under<sup>225</sup> (Bollo, 2019).

*Alleanza per la Cultura* appears to be successful for Brescia. The project could be a replicable model in its principal guidelines for similar contexts (young cultural institutions in middle sized realities)<sup>226</sup> (Bazoli, Karadjov, 2020). However, establishing a standard model for partnerships programs for all cultural organizations is not possible<sup>227</sup>.

The core of strategic partnerships is the creation of added value for all the parties involved. At first, museums must fulfil their social mission being democratic, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for the preservation and enhancement of the cultural heritage for the wellbeing of all humans without transforming themselves into profit-oriented companies<sup>228</sup> (ICOM, 2019; Mottola Molfino; 2020). Settled this, having then a grounded profile and a solid planning, they will be able to front potential external influences on operations coming from the private sector (Andria, Bocci, 2021). At the same time, museums have to consume resources to find partners and understand their economic aims, offering them advantageous benefits and a strong motivation for their participation in order to obtain consent and appreciation<sup>229</sup>. The fundraiser profile, in this sense, will be increasingly present in museums' operations.

On the other hand, companies must understand the potentiality of cultural partnerships either to fulfil their social responsibility, also recalled as "cultural responsibility" (Botti,

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<sup>225</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.1 "An Overview of the Italian Corporate Support for Cultural Organizations".

<sup>226</sup> See Appendix II 1.1.

<sup>227</sup> See Paragraph 3.1.1 "An Overview of the Italian Corporate Support for Cultural Organizations".

<sup>228</sup> See Appendix II 2.4.

<sup>229</sup> See Appendix II 1.4.

2019:255<sup>230</sup>; Broccardi, Sanesi, 2019:208) and to receive different kind of benefits and to acquire competitive advantage on the market<sup>231</sup>. Culture, in fact, can create deeper relationships with stakeholders increasing the “welfare branding” (Botti, 2019:255) and the reputation of firms on the local, national and international level.

Furthermore, partnership programs need to develop around the specific context of reference, time and space, and according to the peculiarities of each organization. Museums, in fact, require different types and amounts of support. Several already generate high incomes from the ticket office or from the existing financial support by companies without the necessity of a structured partnership plan. Smaller dimensions museums, instead, usually employ more resources to receive support, especially by firms that apparently do not share common interests with them.

Cultural organizations, through partnerships, could reach a “[...] collective planning” (Andria, Bocci, 2021:206)<sup>232</sup>, satisfying their mission of plural and polyphonic institutions<sup>233</sup>. These agreements can initiate tighter interactions between public and private dimensions, deeper relationships and mutual exchanges of benefits and satisfaction. In this way, the cultural sector could experience an increasing turnover and a development of relational skills to implement networks with other realities, especially in the Covid-19 post-pandemic situation, in order to develop mutual skills and “cross fertilization” (Andria, Bocci, 2021; Bonisoli, 2021).

Territories, as well, could become drivers for strategic partnerships, in particular for communities permeated by a strong sense of belonging to their land. In this case, territories could perform as “relational medium around which it is possible to generate planning and identity convergence”<sup>234</sup> (Andria, Bocci, 2021:206). *Alleanza per la Cultura*, as illustrated, relies on this aspect.

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<sup>230</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “responsabilità culturale”.

<sup>231</sup> See Paragraph 1.4.3.1 “The Porter Model and the Search for Competitive Advantage”. *Alleanza per la Cultura* is a non-competitive agreement without commodity exclusiveness, anyway it permits to acquire a competitive advantage with other companies in the market.

<sup>232</sup> Translation by the author. Original Text: “[...] progettualità collettiva.” Here, a collective planning means the aim to fulfil a common goal, without the partners’ possibility to have decision making powers in the Foundation’s administrative management.

<sup>233</sup> See Claudio Rosati’s statements (note 188).

<sup>234</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] medium relazionale attorno al quale può generarsi convergenza progettuale e identitaria [...]”.

Public and private investments, in order to result successful, need the partnerships and fundraising programs, shaped by the organizations, to be flanked by a national regulation, that shall provide homogeneity and facilitations of actions (Andria, Bocci, 2021). Propositions to implement and reinterpreting existing laws is often preferable than introducing new ones, as Broccardi<sup>235</sup> and Sanesi<sup>236</sup> suggest. For example, they state that the Art Bonus should cover not only the conservation but also the promotion, mainly through investments, of the cultural heritage in order to create a sustainable and durable support (Broccardi, Sanesi, 2019).

To conclude, corporate support in Italy has risen increasingly in the last decades. Besides forms of donations, cause-related marketing and sponsorships, great incentives in this sense have been made firstly by the Art Bonus and then by strategic partnerships. The latter, if well strategized, potentially creates deeper relationships between cultural and economic organizations, bringing exchanged benefits and added value to both of them (Moneta, 2019). Companies could gain “[...] improved financial performances, value brand and reputation strengthening, sustainability on the long-term [...], a stronger risks and crisis management, (and) investments return on the long-term [...]” (Broccardi, Sanesi, 2019:211)<sup>237</sup>. Likewise, through durable partnership programs, they could contribute to improve the society and community’ wellbeing. Furthermore, as Fumagalli<sup>238</sup>, Pirovano<sup>239</sup> and Trenti<sup>240</sup> states supporting culture permits the implementation of competitive assets as “[...] creative and innovative skills, social cohesion, sense of belonging and reciprocal trust” (Fumagalli, Pirovano, Trenti, 2019:215)<sup>241</sup>.

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<sup>235</sup> Franco Broccardi is advisor and auditor for, among several cultural institutions, ANGAMC, Federculture and ICOM.

<sup>236</sup> Irene Sanesi is an accountant and auditor, specialist in fundraising, mentoring and consulting for cultural organizations.

<sup>237</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] migliori performance finanziarie, il rafforzamento del valore dei brand e della reputazione, una sostenibilità di lungo termine [...], una migliore gestione del rischio e della crisi, e ritorni di lungo periodo sugli investimenti [...]”.

<sup>238</sup> Serena Fumagalli is an economist member of Direzione Studi e Ricerche Intesa Sanpaolo.

<sup>239</sup> Carlo Luigi Pirovano is an advisor for media and culture for Intesa Sanpaolo.

<sup>240</sup> Stefania Trenti is manager of the Industry Office of the Direzione Studi e Ricerche di Intesa Sanpaolo.

<sup>241</sup> Translation by the author. Original text: “[...] la capacità innovativa e creativa, la coesione sociale, il senso di appartenenza e la fiducia reciproca.”

## Conclusion

In consideration of its characteristics and environment, *Alleanza per la Cultura* reveals to be efficient for the administration of Fondazione Brescia Musei. The partnership has attracted nearly 40 companies of different natures: public and private universities and academies, entities with non-prevalent commercial scopes, and private companies. The 21 for-profit companies involved present mainly non-local targets and operational aims distant from the cultural ones of the Foundation. For these reasons, for-profit local companies are the focus of the research as they generally had never undertaken cultural sponsorships and partnerships due to their perception of a lack of real return in terms of image and, consequently, of profits. Fondazione Brescia Musei understood and used these peculiar aspects of the territory of Brescia to shape *Alleanza per la Cultura* for encouraging the engagement of firms and enterprises.

*Alleanza per la Cultura*, as a source of external financial support, presents operational aspects common to other partnership programs. The three years agreement requires an annual participation share to be chosen between three possibilities, in exchange of benefits that can be customized depending on the supporters' necessities. However, what makes this agreement successful is the message it transmits to its partners, making companies part of the common mission of enhancing the local cultural heritage of Brescia, thus promoting the city itself. The partners of *Alleanza per la Cultura* give a general contribution to Fondazione Brescia Musei supporting all the museums and the cinema it manages, hence most of the cultural heritage of Brescia. The research revealed that the companies' participation is based in first place on a sense of identity, of belonging and of responsibility towards the city and its society; secondly, on the deriving return on image and on the events offered. Companies perceive their return differently, demonstrating the importance of customization, especially of the further benefits they receive. Personalizing secondary outcomes for the supporting partners, does not touch the motivation that leads them to support the cultural entity but empowers their perception of efficacy of their effort and helps the creation of more successful agreements, tighter interactions, and mutual exchanges of skills.

In this sense, *Alleanza per la Cultura* is shaped on the peculiar aspects of Brescia, a city generally considered predominantly industrial with strong identity roots. Fondazione

Brescia Musei understood the importance of exploiting the peculiarities of the city, adjusting its message on its specific target, and finding strategic common aspects to encourage the establishment of new partnerships.

Further considerations originated from the research reveal, first of all, the importance of programs tailor-made on the society of reference. The operational scheme, as a matter of fact, could be similar for different cultural organizations however the drivers used to attract stakeholders and to enhance their motivations could be different. Strategic plans vary on the diverse needs to satisfy and on the resonance the cultural organizations have. Only for similar environments – size and characteristics – parallel solutions could be successful. In this sense, *Alleanza per la Cultura* is an interesting case of study that, in its main features, could be applied to other realities.

Secondly, marketing skills are central to shape fundraising programs. This discipline applied to the cultural sector has been increasingly involved since the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Colbert, Nantel, Bilodeau, Rich, Bacchella, 2000), permitting to understand the needs of the supporters, and offering proposals to satisfy them. An appropriate choice of the marketing tools and of the communication channels, as part of the marketing mix, permit to vehiculate messages in an efficient way. The success of *Alleanza per la Cultura* also relies on these methods of communicating values, targeted on the local reality. This is enhanced in consideration of the competition cultural organizations face for attracting both the audience and the investors. For this reason, in total respect of the museums' missions, targeting the offerings and effectively communicate them grant advantages to all the stakeholders.

*Alleanza per la Cultura* represents the first systematic fundraising program applied by Fondazione Brescia Musei, for reasons concerning its different past availability of resources and set of priorities. In the past, the Foundation created sponsorship agreements however in a sporadic way and usually with the same set of firms, that had a strong financial power. Now, Fondazione Brescia Musei allows the local realities to be more involved in a general plan of protection and of enhancement of its entire heritage. According to the interviews conducted, the three years duration of the partnerships are foreseen to be easily repeatable transforming the alliance from a medium to a long-term agreement. The change brought by *Alleanza per la Cultura* is part of a general

transformation of the Italian funding system for cultural organizations that, since the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, increasingly addressed towards the private sector.

This is the reason why the topic of corporate support and strategic partnerships, thus the efficacy of Fondazione Brescia Musei's *Alleanza per la Cultura*, has been researched on both a theoretical and practical level. The Italian model, generally counterposed to the USA one or to the mixed one of Canada, Australia and UK, is traditionally characterised by a strong public support that could be justified by the presence of a great pre-existent cultural heritage to protect. On the contrary, the other models do not present such a strong antique heritage, therefore their managerial choices could be related more to the promotional and commercial scopes, rather than to the conservative one. After the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, the Italian cultural support has increasingly become a more mixed model, opening its public-dominated system towards private interventions. Given the recent adoption of these kinds of operations, the Italian corporate support system is still far behind the international ones, and thus it should embed in its model the positive example they have to offer. The literature reported in the first Chapter highlights the possibility of creating successful agreements between commercial and cultural entities producing benefits, competitive advantages and added values for both parties, as testified by the partnership *Alleanza per la Cultura*. These outcomes are discussed through the analysis of the context and of the peculiarities of Fondazione Brescia Musei, as well as through interviews that permitted to acknowledge the general impressions of the partners and of the Foundation's members about the project.

Successful partnerships bring benefits in a bidirectional way to allow all the parties involved to achieve their goals. *Alleanza per la Cultura* has granted benefits for companies mainly through returns on image, positive social corporate responsibility and increased corporate welfare. Conversely, Fondazione Brescia Musei has received support for its extraordinary activities, necessary to reach a broader user base, and to enhance in number and quality its activities. The virtuous circle created has guaranteed the possibility to make plans on the medium-long term, creating more organic operations.

The research highlights the long-term positive impacts that partnerships can bring for both cultural and commercial companies. In this paper, the topic is circumscribed to relations of support only, excluding other levels of partnerships implying a greater involvement of companies in the decision-making processes of the cultural organizations. *Alleanza per la Cultura* stands on a support level without influencing the independence of Fondazione Brescia Musei's administration and its scientific programs. In this sense, the decision-making process of the Foundation did not change. On the contrary, up to now, *Alleanza per la Cultura* has meaningfully simplified the other sectors' work – among them, the research, the collection, and the educational ones – releasing them from the fundraising activities by ensuring the resources required. The access to further funds allows the Foundation to better achieve its goals. Among them, to increase its cultural offering, to potentially enlarge its user base, to deal with unexpected crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, and to respond to the needs requested by contemporary society. Moreover, the partnership may bring indirect positive impacts to the city itself that could attract further external investments and a positive return on image. In this sense, fundraising is expected to be an increasingly present function in cultural organizations, in order to facilitate operations, and to guarantee the successful provision of their cultural offering. Implementing efficient corporate forms of support requires a strategic management, communication channels, and a strong organizational and operational profile.

Strategic operations of fundraising are increasingly present in cultural organizations. Culture, as a matter of fact, is progressively considered a strategic asset of cohesion and of economic and social development and, for this reason, it should attract the interest of commercial companies. The plans of support have intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic period, as museums and cultural institutions needed additional aid for their sustainability. Partnerships, in particular, are the privileged forms of support for their durability in time and strength of relation. The plans to involve corporate aid are continuously evolving and they adjust depending on the different realities considered, that could need strategic planning to attract funds. For these reasons, it is important to cover the next follow-ups to understand how wide and innovative the phenomenon will become in Italy. Moreover, Fondazione Brescia Musei's *Alleanza per la Cultura* will be



better analysed in the future in light of the financial reports of the project. Their analysis will be able to better assess the efficacy of the strategy for the Foundation and the results for the partners. In this way, financiers will be encouraged to continue supporting the local cultural heritage.

## Appendix I

Benefits for 50.000 Euro contributions
Association between the company's brand and the communication materials of the initiatives planned in the three-years program
Nominal "Desiderio Card" for top managers or designated people (the Cards provide free entrance to permanent and temporary collections of all the museums of the Foundation for the whole duration of the membership)
Invitation to the annual event dedicated to sponsors
Fast lane to access the museums' box office
Invitations to inaugurations and previews of the Foundation's exhibitions
Reserved invitations to all public events of the Foundation
Annual report for the press with the description of all the activities supported by the Club of Donors and the names of participants
Mention of partners in the Museums' spaces and on the dedicated page on the Foundation's website (bresciamusei.com)
Reserved guided tours, after opening hours, to one temporary exhibition or to one of the permanent collections of the museums, with the curator of the project and/or someone acting on his/her behalf
Free use of the Foundation's spaces for the organization of one private event, with the possibility of convivial moments and visits to the collections (up to the maximum number of people allowed in the chosen location. Catering and out-of-pocket costs are chargeable to the Donor)
Reductions on costs for renting spaces in case of further events (to be organized during the duration of the membership)
Free catalogues of the Foundation's exhibitions
Free tickets for customers or employees for the Foundation's collections and temporary exhibitions
Possibility for firms to promote themselves in their communication materials as part of the "Club dei Donors di Alleanza per la Cultura di Fondazione Brescia Musei" or with similar mentions

**Table 2.10: Benefits for 50.000 Euro contributions**

Source: Fondazione Brescia Musei's announcement for new partners (2021)

[https://www.bresciamusei.com/public/UserFiles/File/Ipotesi%20benefit\\_club\\_sponsor%202021\\_2023.pdf](https://www.bresciamusei.com/public/UserFiles/File/Ipotesi%20benefit_club_sponsor%202021_2023.pdf)

Benefits for 25.000 Euro contributions
Visibility of the firms' logo on the communication materials related to the initiatives sponsored by members of <i>Alleanza per la Cultura</i> . The disposition is hierarchical, starting from the Fondazione Brescia Musei's logo to the ones of the Municipality of Brescia and of the institutional partners. In the special section dedicated to members of <i>Alleanza per la Cultura</i> , the criterion followed is <i>in primis</i> economic, in a decreasing order, and then alphabetical, in an increasing succession
8 nominal "Desiderio Card" for top managers or designated people (the Cards provide free entrance to permanent and temporary collections of all the museums of the Foundation for the whole duration of the membership)
Invitation to private events dedicated to the members of <i>Alleanza per la Cultura</i> (up to a maximum of 4 nominal invitations)
Fast lane to access the Museums' box office
Invitations to inaugurations and previews of the Foundation's exhibitions (up to a maximum of 4 invitations valid for 2 persons)
Reserved invitations to all public events of the Foundation (extra exhibitions) (up to a maximum of 5 invitations valid for 2 persons)
Annual report for the press with the description of all the activities supported by the Club of Donors and the names of participants
Mention of partners in the Museums' spaces and in the dedicated page on the Foundation's website ( <a href="http://bresciamusei.com">bresciamusei.com</a> )
2 reserved guided tours, after opening hours, to one temporary exhibition or to one of the permanent collections of the museums, with the curator of the project and/or someone acting on his/her behalf (up to a maximum of 25 persons each)
1 free use of the Foundation's spaces for the organization of a private event, with the possibility of convivial moments and visits to the collections (up to the maximum number of people allowed in the chosen location. Catering and out-of-pocket costs are chargeable to the Donor)
25% reduction on costs for renting spaces in case of further events (to be organized during the duration of the membership)
3 free catalogues of the Foundation's exhibitions
50 free tickets for customers or employees for the Foundation's collections and temporary exhibitions
Possibility for firms to promote themselves in their communication materials as part of the "Club dei Donors di Alleanza per la Cultura di Fondazione Brescia Musei" or with similar mentions

**Table 2.11: Benefits for 25.000 Euro contributions**

Source: Fondazione Brescia Musei's announcement for new partners (2021)

<https://www.bresciamusei.com/public/UserFiles/File/Ipotesi%20benefit%20club%20sponsor%202021%202023.pdf>

Benefits for 10.000 Euro contributions
Visibility of the firms' logo on the communication materials related to the initiatives sponsored by members of <i>Alleanza per la Cultura</i> . The disposition is hierarchically, starting from Fondazione Brescia Musei's logo to the ones of the Municipality of Brescia and of the institutional partners. In the special section dedicated to members of <i>Alleanza per la Cultura</i> , the criterion followed is <i>in primis</i> economic, in a decreasing order, and then alphabetical, in an increasing succession
3 nominal "Desiderio Card" for top managers or designated people (the Cards provide free entrance to permanent and temporary collections of all the museums of the Foundation for the whole duration of the membership)
Invitation to private events dedicated to members of <i>Alleanza per la Cultura</i> (up to a maximum of 3 nominal invitations)
Fast lane to access the Museums' box office
Invitations to inaugurations and previews of the Foundation's exhibitions (up to a maximum of 3 invitations valid for 2 persons)
Reserved invitations to all public events of the Foundation (extra exhibitions) (up to a maximum of 5 invitations valid for 2 persons)
Annual report for the press with the description of all the activities supported by the Club of Donors and the names of participants
Mention of partners in the Museums' spaces and in the dedicated page on the Foundation's website (bresciamusei.com)
1 reserved guided tour, after opening hours, to one temporary exhibition or to one of the permanent collections of the museums, with the curator of the project and/or someone acting on his/her behalf (up to a maximum of 25 persons each)
1 free use of the Foundation's spaces for the organization of a private event, with the possibility of convivial moments and visits to the collections (up to the maximum number of people allowed in the chosen location. Catering and out-of-pocket costs are chargeable to the Donor)
3 free catalogues of the Foundation's exhibitions
20 free tickets for customers or employees for the Foundation's collections and temporary exhibitions
Possibility for firms to promote themselves in their communication materials as part of the "Club dei Donors di Alleanza per la Cultura di Fondazione Brescia Musei" or with similar mentions

**Table 2.12: Benefits for 10.000 Euro contributions**

Source: Fondazione Brescia Musei's announcement for new partners (2021)

[https://www.bresciamusei.com/public/UserFiles/File/Ipotesi%20benefit\\_club\\_sponsor%202021\\_2023.pdf](https://www.bresciamusei.com/public/UserFiles/File/Ipotesi%20benefit_club_sponsor%202021_2023.pdf)

## Appendix II

### I) Interviews with the partners of *Alleanza per la Cultura*

#### 1.1 Roberto Saccone

President of the Chamber of Commerce of Brescia and of the Olimpia Splendid enterprise.

**1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start? What prompted you to begin a partnership with the Foundation?**

The Chamber of Commerce of Brescia confers to the promotion of culture and of cultural tourism an important role for the development of the entire provincial economic system. Therefore, the collaboration with Fondazione Brescia Musei was established following the common mission of enhancing and of promoting the image of Brescia, that is one of the richest Italian cities for its highly valuable historical monuments, its artworks and its cultural exhibitions and shows.

**2. What is the importance of *Alleanza per la Cultura* for the image of Brescia? Is it a leading initiative for the other local companies?**

The initiatives and the projects that the Chamber of Commerce realized in collaboration with Fondazione Brescia Musei have the credit to bring to the attention of the general public aspects, not always enhanced, of the presence on the local territory of a high valuable cultural and historic heritage, that deserves to be enhanced on the international scale. Surely, the promotional touristic activities undertaken by the Chamber of Commerce – in its role of collector of companies – in collaboration with Brescia Musei and with other entities could become a driver and could guide the involvement of other private subjects. Anyway, we could say that the virtuous collaboration between public and private subjects has an increasingly important role to succeed in the touristic promotional activities for the local territory.

**3. What do you expect as the return on image? Are you satisfied with respect to the benefits obtained?**

The touristic image of a territory is an important credit for its whole economic system. Therefore, promoting the one of our province means contributing to affirm the “brand Brescia” through which it is possible to strengthen, from the audience point of view, the value of our firms, of the territory and of the local economy in its complexity.

Considering Olimpia Splendid, we expect a strong return on image and a strengthening of our corporate social responsibility.

**4. In your opinion, has the Foundation changed its way of engaging local companies?**

Over the last years, there has been an increasing attention of the entrepreneurial sector towards the activities of the Foundation. As a matter of fact, some of the most prestigious industrial local groups began to sponsor the Foundation. In this way, they fulfilled their social corporate responsibility and obtained a return on image.

**5. Would you like to continue this partnership in the future? Considering the Covid-19 post-crisis current situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy?**

Considering the Chamber of Commerce as a public entity, we cannot talk about sponsorships in a strict sense. For what it concerns the planning of partnerships, instead, we will continue our promotional activities for culture and tourism through the participation in Bresciatourism, through communication campaigns, and through our solid method of creating networks of collaborations between entities, trade unions and further realities, including private ones. Our aim is to create the necessary synergies indispensable today to optimize the processes and to not consume resources.

These operations are even more valid considering that Brescia will become the new Italian Capital of Culture in 2023 together with Bergamo and that there will be the winter Olympics Games Milano/Cortina in 2026. From this point of view,

it will be significant to work in a coordinated way on the territory, in order to attract important fundings available through the PNRR.

Moreover, these partnerships are fundamental to attract tourists to the city centre. Brescia, as a matter of fact, attracts visitors mainly on the lake Garda, therefore we would like to encourage them to visit the city centre too.

The local companies are increasingly more sensitive about the issue of sustaining the territory and about their social responsibility. I am optimistic on the future relationships between the private and the public sector in this sense.

I believe that Fondazione Brescia Musei should intensify those activities able to promote the brands of the companies' they are partnering with, in order to easily renew their collaboration at the end of the agreement.

## 1.2 Carlo Clerici

Art collector and partner of Clerici (AFIS, IDRAS, UNICOM)

### 1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start?

I am a collector, and I have been passionate about art since a long time ago. My relationship with the museums of Brescia started in the 1960s. Before *Alleanza per la Cultura*, my approach to the Foundation had always been on an artistic level only, visiting the exhibitions and meeting its staff and employees. Over the years my interests have shifted to the contemporary art field. In Brescia there were two important contemporary art galleries: the Massimo Minini's (still) and the Piero Cavellini's ones. When Massimo Minini became the President of Fondazione Brescia Musei, my relationship with the Foundation got tighter. Moreover, being so passionate about art, I have always lived with, met, and involved artists in my projects.

### 2. What prompted you to begin a partnership with the Foundation?

Involving me was easy and, as a matter of fact, the Clerici (Afis, Idras, Unicom) was one of the first companies to be part of the project. However, generally speaking, entrepreneurs are not easily persuadable to give a financial support to what is traditionally considered as a pure leisure activity. On the contrary, they should understand that art is fundamental.

The improved managerial approach introduced for the Foundation's administration by Francesca Bazoli and Stefano Karadjov was needed. This helped the Foundation in finding external financial support, as the municipal one was not sufficient. In this sense, Fondazione Brescia Musei planned activities that are suitable and give interesting returns to investors.

To achieve this, the administration shaped a solid multi-year plan with concrete activities and benefits for the companies. Among them, tax benefits play a fundamental role. The Art Bonus, for example, permits to start important interventions on the cultural heritage, not related to exhibitions only.

Therefore, a fundraising project needs to be well presented and to have adequate advantages for the companies. Further benefits that *Alleanza per la*



*Cultura* offers are the possibility to organise corporate parties and dinners inside the spaces of the Santa Giulia Museum, to visit the museum, to have free tickets and memberships, and to receive assistance in booking activities. Furthermore, it gives promotional return on image through communication and advertisement that could be useful to attract new customers.

The benefits are an essential feature prompted to engage the industrialists who are not strictly passionate about art.

The agreement of partnership lasts for three years.

**3. Do you think that the strategy adopted by Fondazione Brescia Musei is effective?**

I believe it is a fundamental strategy. During the period of pandemic crisis due to the Covid-19, the Foundation has had fewer overall costs but, still, the public support is not sufficient to sustain organizations, in particular the cultural sector ones.

Moreover, Brescia will be the Capital of Culture in 2023 therefore receiving external support has become even more essential. Before *Alleanza per la Cultura*, engaging industrialists to support cultural organizations was not common. This is the beginning; the Foundation needs to continuously increase its pool of partners to have enough resources because there is much of the cultural heritage of Brescia to enhance even more.

**4. What do you expect as a return? Are you satisfied with the benefits obtained?**

I am satisfied because I was glad to participate in the Alliance. The benefits received over these years have been few due to the Covid-19 situation. Even though I did not have a return, the most important thing is that the Foundation did, as it seems they have done everything they said.

In Brescia the contemporary art scene is limited and, differently from the past, there is not a great vivacity anymore. For this reason, a cultural organization should take care of the contemporary art scene. Fondazione Brescia Musei is

asked to oversee it in synergy with its past cultural heritage. Even more considering the good profit originated from the last exhibitions organized.

Involving contemporary artists in the Foundation's museums is successful because local contemporary art galleries hardly compete with the ones in Milan. To overcome the competition, Brescia needs to propose a different offering that is linked to the local territory and that presents interesting fusions between the past and the contemporary art and cultural heritage. Currently, the spaces of the museums are suitable for artists granting places where they can operate.

**5. Did you take part in sponsorship programs in the past?**

I did it personally, not as an enterprise. Before *Alleanza per la Cultura* there had never been structured partnerships like this one, but sponsorships for spot events only. Therefore, even if we wanted, we did not have a chance.

As an individual, instead, I met and collaborated with several artists living in Brescia. As a matter of fact, I believe that art can unite and speak a universal language. In my experience and considering the increasing multicultural population of Brescia, art can unite children with different languages and can create bonds with the territory.

**6. Will you continue to support cultural institutions in the future?**

It is likely so.

As an individual, I have had for 30 years in the city centre of Brescia a space for contemporary art at the disposal of artists. In my opinion, the public sector does not grant enough support for the culture, in particular for artists whose works do not enter in museums and galleries.

Excluding some sectors, in this historical moment, big companies do not have financial problems. Some lucky sectors even enhanced their positions; at first, they suffered but they did not worsen. For this reason, firms and enterprises should invest in culture.

This is possible in the presence of a structured and solid plan offered by the cultural organization able to engage a large pool of people usually not interested.

**7. Considering the ongoing Covid-19 post-crisis situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy?**

Fondazione Brescia Musei does not need to improve its strategy. It needs to continuously plan good projects in order to actively involve stakeholders. Therefore, the direction undertaken by the Foundation is right, however stakeholders that could become potential partners must have the right attitude to understand the importance of the Foundation's activities. Now that Fondazione Brescia Musei has adopted a managerial approach this has become easier, before, instead, there was not this focus making the finding of external support harder.

Fondazione Brescia Musei needs to propose new projects, some that will be appreciated by the general audience and others that could be more specific, in order to present always different events. Moreover, it should collaborate with other cultural organizations, and it should include contemporary artworks and exhibitions in its offering.

### **1.3 Pierangelo Pedersoli**

Manager of the Davide Pedersoli's enterprise and President of the Italian Arms Dealer Consortium.

#### **1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start? What prompted you to begin a partnership with the Foundation?**

The company started the partnership agreement with Fondazione Brescia Musei nearly 3 years ago.

We are an enterprise that produces replicas of antique arms. The company was at first established as a producer of modern arms (shotguns). Then, since 1960, it started producing replicas of historical arms. I entered in the company in 1975 and in 1978-1979 we definitively abandoned the modern arms sector to focus on the antique ones. The shift in the production meant to change the recipient of the offering, addressing it to collectors and museums. We offered both arms with interesting backgrounds and arms with a ballistic interest for the new-born sport of shooting with historical arms. Parallely, over the period, another phenomenon increased: the historical re-enactments. Therefore, shooting, re-enactments, and collecting required products not always available in original, thus needed to be reproduced. At the end of the 1970s, as a matter of fact, this became a productive field and we remained even after, when many businesses abandoned. I then became passionate about history. The arms narrate the story of the states, of their relationships, and of the entire world.

At the beginning of the 1980s, my interest in culture brought me closer to the activities of the Musei Civici di Brescia. This happened when Luigi Marzoli gave his arms collection to the Municipality of Brescia, that asked me to be the main sponsor for the occasion. In those years, I became the President of the Arms Dealer Consortium of Brescia, later of Italy, and, in order to make the historical arms known to the general public, I proposed to my colleagues to create an association to promote these products. Therefore, through the establishment of the Arms Museum in the Castle of Brescia, I first started my collaboration with the city and with the Municipality of Brescia, repeatedly offering the availability of collaboration with the consortium.

The “Luigi Marzoli” Arms Museum is the first museum in Brescia of its kind. It has been important to show the origins of the arms sector of Brescia and of Valtrompia and to create awareness of the local citizens’ traditional economic activities. This shows an aspect of the city of Brescia that is important to know and, for this reason, we gave our support to sustain the museum. Moreover, 15 years ago, in parallel to the Santa Giulia exhibition “America” about the history of the USA, I organized an exhibition in Sarezzo related to the Far West with the reproduction of the typical Far West arms. We showcased arms and renown Italian comic strips attracting journalists and artists (for example, the artist Bonelli of the comic strip “Tex Willer”).

So, we are known as an enterprise with a strong cultural interest as well. For this reason, we became partners when we were proposed the project *Alleanza per la Cultura*.

As a matter of fact, I believe the rightfulness of the participation of local companies for the cultural development of Brescia. After having collected profits, they need to return something. I believe this is a right and proper operation to do; even more considering that the museums managed by the Foundation have the great cultural and economic importance of attracting tourists to the city.

**2. Do you currently have other sponsorship or ongoing partnership programs?**

No, probably in the future. Up to now, Santa Giulia is the only recipient of our investments.

I was also asked to become supervisor of a museum in Gardone Valtrompia. I would like to spread the knowledge of the arms sector history to the public. Unfortunately, the arm sector is not popular to the general public therefore its history and artistic background is generally ignored. On the contrary, arms should be in museums for their fine decorations engraved. Arms should be works of art for their artistic aesthetic and for their significance in our economic history.

**3. Does the partnership bring any benefits for your company?**

We do not have any benefits.

I would like to exhibit some arms one day. We export the 95% of our production, while the remaining 5% is mainly sold in Brescia. For this reason, I would like to make our reality better known.

**4. Would you like to have any of the benefits offered to partners?**

My main goal is to make the arms sector better known, but I don't think this could be realized through the Santa Giulia Museum's operations. I am doing this partnership because I believe in culture.

**5. In your opinion, has the Foundation changed its way of engaging the local companies?**

I believe that Fondazione Brescia Musei did a great job. Engaging companies to receive support is extremely important in any operation, not only for the cultural and museums related activities. Companies can do more.

For these reasons, I believe that Brescia Musei's operations have been efficient and that they need to continue in this direction. Moreover, it is important to shape minor categories of contribution to involve more firms and enterprises.

**6. Would you like to continue this partnership in the future?**

I think so, considering our dimensions and possibilities. Obviously, this also depends by the Covid-19 pandemic situation.

**7. Do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy?**

Yes, I think it could. I have several ideas about the promotion of the arms sector through tourism and I would like to collaborate with museums and with the Ministry of Culture in order to implement them.

#### **1.4 Elena Tamburini**

Chief Financial Officer of the Tamburini Group.

**1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start? What prompted you to begin a partnership with the Foundation?**

Our relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei firstly started with the financial support we gave for the Vittoria Alata's restoration, symbol of the city of Brescia. Afterwards, the Foundation proposed us to join the *Alleanza per la Cultura* pact that we immediately accepted. Indeed, we have always sustained our territory and its activities in a sporadic way, upon requests or by necessities. Therefore, we really enjoyed the proposal of a durable agreement because it permits the Foundation to have a pool of stable partners and a continuous support. In addition, we sustain culture as it is at the base of our company, so we believe that enhancing it is fundamental. As a consequence, considering our business and our family past, we immediately accepted the Foundation's request. *Alleanza per la Cultura* has been really important for the city.

Therefore, our relationship with the Foundation started in 2020 and it will last until 2023 as the agreement is three-years long. Afterwards we are definitely going to renew it. We are a metalworker company. Traditionally, mechanical engineering and culture do not usually conciliate themselves. However, this partnership has been truly appreciated by our co-workers and partners. In addition, our partnership includes benefits, among them free ticket entrances, that we give to our employees. The partnership has been really appreciated and the feedback we received has been definitively positive.

**2. Are you satisfied with respect to the benefits obtained?**

Absolutely. The partnership with Fondazione Brescia Musei is an important credit for our company. It has an effect on our return on image and our marketing strategy, and we received positive feedbacks and interest either from the suppliers, from the clients in Brescia and from the ones outside the province. Indeed, the opportunity to involve the clients is essential. However, due to the

Covid-19 pandemic, we could not use many of our benefits. For example, we could not organize our private events in the spaces of the Foundation.

**3. In your opinion, has the Foundation changed its way of engaging local companies?**

Definitely yes. I believe that this partnership has been truly revolutionary for the relationships it created.

Our link with the Foundation started with a spot support, as it usually happens. In the past, Fondazione Brescia Musei launched some sponsorship agreements without, however, creating a real bond with its investors. The shift in its strategy has permitted to create connections and sharing through agreements that before were only of support. In the past, the aid was not a matter of patronage because companies expected a return. In this case, instead, we really have a sharing relationship.

**4. Are the benefits received different from the past ones?**

Absolutely yes. The benefits offered in the *Alleanza per la Cultura* partnership are on a different level. Before, the sponsorships consisted in supporting a single event having in return free tickets and a catalogue. Now, instead, we are involved in all the shows, the exhibitions, and the activities the Foundation organizes. The events of the Foundation are not always promoted in the most effective way, but now, instead, we are informed on its whole planning program. *Alleanza per la Cultura* permits to be always kept informed and to be actively participative.

**5. So, the Foundation decides how to use the financial support received, am I right?**

Yes, it is like that. *Alleanza per la Cultura* is a general financial contribution to Fondazione Brescia Musei. Partners grant a financial support to the Foundation that decides how to employ the money received.

In addition, we sustain other activities of the Foundation that we believe in. For example, we can address our financial support to specific projects, however this is additional to the contribution granted to *Alleanza per la Cultura*.



**6. Have you planned further support in the future?**

We absolutely want to continue our partnership with Fondazione Brescia Musei.

**7. Considering the Covid-19 post-crisis current situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy? Do you think there has been a change in the corporate support role?**

Every sector has been affected, with varied intensities, by the Covid-19 pandemic crisis; the arts and cultural sector has been one of the most damaged. As a matter of fact, summing together all the intermittent periods of lockdown, museums faced nearly one year of closure. One year without incomes is not viable. For this reason, without the partnership program *Alleanza per la Cultura*, the Foundation could not have implemented its operations and now it would consequently deal with a complicated situation. On the contrary, however, Fondazione Brescia Musei continued organizing exhibitions and important events such as, among the others, the palimpsest for the return of the Vittoria Alata statue, the *Festival della Pace*, and the photography exhibition about Alfred Seiland. Despite the crisis, the Foundation has continued the planning and the organizing of activities over the whole period, thanks to the support they received from the local companies. The presence of cultural events during the Covid-19 period revealed to be truly important because they satisfied the desire of the audiences to do something different and the one of investors to be involved in the cultural aspects of Brescia. As a matter of fact, the museums were “sold out” when they reopened.

**8. Has the Covid-19 period of crisis affected the corporate support for the arts, from a company’s perspective?**

Generally speaking, I do not believe that corporate support will decrease in the next future.

Considering *Alleanza per la Cultura*, I believe it is, in a certain way, a new and peculiar form of corporate support. It does not merely represent a financial investment, but it requires companies to believe in the importance of culture. A

company that decides to participate in this partnership program has to embrace a cause and it has to truly appreciate what Fondazione Brescia Musei does for the city of Brescia. The partners of Fondazione Brescia Musei are indeed all local companies embedded in the local reality. Obviously, this discourse has a validity considering an economic recovery after the Covid-19 crisis.

**9. Do you think that *Alleanza per la Cultura* should be improved?**

I think that the Foundation could furtherly involve the partners by targeting their offer on more precise groups of the companies' stakeholders. For example, the Foundation could organize several events *ad hoc* for partners and for their stakeholders, granting a greater involvement. Currently, instead, the involvement of companies' stakeholders happens indirectly and just on a certain level. Therefore, I hope it will be enhanced more by the Foundation itself. Moreover, I wish the Foundation to enlarge its pool of partners.

## II) Interviews with the Director and with the personnel of Fondazione Brescia Musei

### 2.1 Stefano Karadjov

Director of Fondazione Brescia Musei

#### 1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start?

I arrived at Fondazione Brescia Musei after the temporary management of a new President (from October 2018, a few months before my arrival). The new President substituted a gallerist, while I replaced the former Director who is an art historian. Therefore, there had been a significant shift in the governance that broadened the managerial scopes of the organization. The former President and Director, as a matter of fact, had a strong interest in the curatorship of exhibitions, while the current President and I have a perspective much more addressed to the overall vision of the institution in its several aspects. The Foundation, from a juridical point of view, is not a traditional museum but it is a social cultural firm of private character backed by the public. Moreover, it is strongly dependent on the Municipality of Brescia that affirms its public-law fiscal regime, thus its necessity to operate in transparency through, among them, public announcements. The administration over these years has started a process of transformation and repositioning with the aim to make the Foundation strongly autonomous from a governance point of view. Foundations strive for this.

Fondazione Brescia Musei is indeed a “fondazione di partecipazione” including 3 private partners. Our contribution wants to bring a physiognomy and an institutional identity to the Foundation in order to separate it from the municipal public administration to whom it had been overlapping for several reasons. The Foundation, as a matter of fact, is universally considered by the community as a service company managing the civic cultural heritage. However, in reality, it has an enhancement concession and therefore a strong margin in the planning of activities aimed at giving added value to all the museums. This is the aspect that permits the Foundation to have a strong solidity.

We achieved our aim, abandoning spot projects (a single exhibition externally offered, approved by the administration, and managed by us), and realizing

instead an elaborate multi-year strategic plan. This outlines the development on the long-term of the Foundation's cultural program, which responds to specific several goals.

From a statutory point of view, the Foundation's autonomy depends on the decisions of its partners, in particular of the Municipality that is the supervising authority. It is possible to use different strategies of diverse caliber to achieve the managerial autonomy; in this case, we adopted a multi-year project approved by the controlling authorities (scientific committee and board committee). Therefore, we launched and realised this plan both with exhibitions and monumental projects.

Afterwards, we shaped a public-private pact with the aim of involving a stable pool of companies inside a club of membership. This is a club always open to new participants that allows us to collect financial resources on a three-year basis. In this way, we know the extent of the Foundation's financial resources for future projects. In the past, instead, we did not have this modality of approach to the private sector.

Sponsorships are often difficult to obtain, they need to be constantly repeated, and they usually involve the same few sponsors linked to a single exhibition. Differently from the past, we do not organize exhibitions only, and we want to be independent from the external conditioning that sponsorships usually have. Moreover, sponsorships often arrive at the last minute, and they are related generally to a few months project only. On the contrary, we wanted a multi-year support planning on our strategic extraordinary initiatives. Clearly, our project needed to create a different perception of the museum system from the private sector's point of view. Therefore, we started opening our museums to corporate events and, in general, we increased our relations with the privates. This has been a fundamental action to make the private sector comprehend that museums live, in some way, with the local territory. This last aspect is part of my strategic project, also from the point of view of the contents and of the exhibitions offered.

The project was shaped taking into consideration the financial statements' analysis of the museums: in order to grow we needed temporary events.

Temporary events, however, had unbearable costs for our financial statements analysis based on the historical financial support received and from the incomes generated by the tickets' sale.

Therefore, in that situation, we could organize the events and then after 6-12 months go in deficit because we did not have the sufficient financial coverage to support the exhibitions. Temporary exhibitions, as a matter of fact, do not usually have the desired results and, even if they are sold out, the profit generated by the ticket sales does not grant the viability of the event.

Another possible direction we could follow was to avoid doing temporary events in order to overcome the risk of deficit. However, the museums could not grow, and Brescia could not be seen as an active city, as it is today thanks to our current projects.

In the past we lacked the necessary resources, therefore we shaped a public-private pact with the local companies in the belief that they could give their contributions in realizing our extraordinary projects. These events give visibility, received by Fondazione Brescia Musei itself and indirectly by the partnering companies as well.

Before *Alleanza per la Cultura*, the Foundation has been establishing sponsorships for specific cultural projects. Back then, an exhibition had a main sponsor but, still, it usually lacked funds so, after 3-4 months, it was necessary to research again the financial support necessary, from the same sponsor or somewhere else. On the contrary, *Alleanza per la Cultura* addresses to a wider and extended pool of companies, including firms and enterprises usually not using a B2C communication. Brescia and the nearby area are full of businesses and entrepreneurs, thus companies that usually have a specific vocation for the intermediate transformation production, less for the finished products. The latter have their market, their distribution, and their marketing targeted to specific clients and therefore they need visibility and exposure, that are the main reasons leading companies to start sponsorship agreements. The lack of perceived return for companies with non-local targets, instead, have often prevented them to become sponsors. Excluding pure patronage, friendships or particular interests, there was not a real advantage for companies to become

sponsors of Fondazione Brescia Musei, considering that the 80% of their clients are from Germany, Russia and China. Through *Alleanza per la Cultura* we shaped a strategic project based on identity values that offers to the partnering companies several proposals to discover the local places and artists, and the redevelopment of our great local cultural heritage. In this way, we engaged companies that, still not conducting communication to local customers, comprehend their deep bond with the heritage and with their local origins. Moreover, even though they are not cultural firms but they belong to completely different sectors, partnering companies understand that their skills derive from the cultural ecosystem embedded in the city, that we manage, conserve and promote. Therefore, companies comprehend the advantages to become partners of this club of membership. There are other benefits associated with the offering: companies and their employees could participate in a series of sophisticated cultural activities that normally they could not access into. Moreover, they could receive several options of corporate welfare, and they become players in the conservation and enhancement of the main local cultural institution, exploiting this title in their worldwide businesses. These operations involving the private companies do not affect the managerial decisions of the Foundation, depending on the decision-making power of its founding partners only.

**2. Do you consider the corporate support a widespread phenomenon in Italy? In your opinion, does *Alleanza per la Cultura* differentiate from other partnership programs and why?**

I consider the corporate support for the cultural sector a widespread tendency that can distinguish itself in different ways. Other realities may be less in need of the flexibility granted us by *Alleanza per la Cultura* because either they have minor constraints in establishing agreements with private realities or because their number of visitors, mainly tourists, guarantee them viability. Other entities, instead, are too little to result attractive for companies.

Therefore, the model that we shaped, that is not a model but a sort of case or practice, does not always apply for other contexts. It is surely shaped on a

medium dimensioned environment, on the characteristics of its territory and on the youth of its cultural institution. Culture, as a matter of fact, has gained a prominent role in the city over the last decades only.

In Italy there are many cultural environments presenting similarities to Fondazione Brescia Musei – medium dimensions and important satellite activities offered – and, for this reason, they could implement fundraising actions similar to ours. Even though some realities cannot be comparable to Fondazione Brescia Musei, they have membership programs, *Amici dei Musei* subscriptions, and other types of fundraising.

We created a more grounded structure that is not usually present elsewhere, giving a fiscal and managerial physiognomy to the project. Notwithstanding, there are many other ways of engaging the private sector, such as corporate events inside the museums' spaces, sponsorships of projects, use of the spaces to create brand communication activities, and *Amici dei Musei* subscriptions. Therefore, corporate support for the arts in its many facets is an unstoppable scenery.

**3. Considering the post-crisis current situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy? Do you think there has been a change in the corporate support role?**

Considering the consumptions, I believe that we will gradually return to a precedent situation. Moreover, I think that there will be a transformation in terms of digitalization in the fruition modalities, from online bookings to the absence of physical supports in the ticket offices. These indeed will probably disappear substituted by totems or simply by online sales. In this way, there will be additional resources for implementing activities with higher added value. Gradually, over the next future, temporary exhibition projects will be resumed. These big exhibitions will be organized with an increased attention on sustainability, in light of the fact the Covid-19 experience has downsized the sector with many operators that changed their business, with others that disappeared and with some that will stop in the future. In the next years, there will be closer collaborations between those who have resisted to the period of

crisis. Indeed, there will probably be tighter connections between provincial and international museums through stable agreements, rather than spots ones only. For example, renowned museums in Italy, in France and in Germany could repeatedly exchange artworks to realize co-productive exhibitions. In this way, a better arrangement and strengthening of cultural institutions could be possible. This could be positive to the Italian cultural sector as well, as it is mainly composed of many little realities often working on spot projects.



## 2.2 Francesca Belli

Event Specialist and Fundraiser for Fondazione Brescia Musei

### 1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start?

I arrived at Fondazione Brescia Musei in the mid-2019, right after the assignment of the new Director. My arrival responded to the idea of the Director of changing the general direction of the Foundation from a managerial point of view and of enhancing as much as possible the relationship of the Foundation with the local territory, beyond traditional visitors. On the one hand, a great ton of the work done was related to the B2C area, competence mainly of the communication department. On the other hand, the Director wanted to create durable relationships with the local companies.

I have 12 years' experience in 24Ore Cultura, a firm that arranges exhibitions in Milan and on a national level, and that currently manages the Mudec – Museo delle Culture di Milano. I have always worked in this area. At first, I collaborated with the supervisor of the fundraising sector, then I became in charge, and I supervised a team of people. In 24Ore Cultura our job was strictly related to the core business of the organization because fundraising has become over the years a fundamental condition for the sustainability of every exhibition project.

As a matter of fact, a private firm needs to be viable from the revenues of its ticket sales. However, this is increasingly becoming a minor tendency of firms. Moreover, the more the project is ambitious the more it costs and less the revenues from tickets are able to stabilize it and to reach the breakeven point. Consequently, it is even more difficult to make a profit. The issue is different in a foundation as, by its nature, it does not produce any profit. In this case, the involvement of external support is not aimed to obtain a profit and a marginality on the projects but to permit the realization of them and to guarantee a strategic planning for the organization.

Fondazione Brescia Musei is a foundation with the Municipality of Brescia as main shareholder. The Municipality gives funds, however they cannot cover all the costs of the museums and of the cinema. They permit solely to open and close the museums every day (paying employees, permitting everyday activities).

The Director, instead, wanted to achieve more for the museums, planning additional activities and events to enhance the local cultural heritage. In order to achieve this, we needed funds, so we addressed our offering to companies. Therefore, we acted in two ways. On the one hand, we re-elaborated and better tailored our proposals of offering locations for corporate events to permit companies to rent the museums' spaces for their communication events with their stakeholders and network. This has been representing an important source of revenue for the Foundation. On the other hand, we wanted to involve the local companies on a durable scale, guaranteeing them benefits and a return on image.

In order to achieve this, we reshaped the fundraising area, before almost nonexistent, and we built different offerings for involving firms and enterprises. Our main proposal has been the possibility to support, in a horizontal way, all the activities of the Foundation through the three-years pact *Alleanza per la Cultura*. The other proposal addressed to companies that wanted to give vertical contributions to the activities of the Foundation, becoming, for example, sponsors of single projects. This second typology of support is largely addressed to single exhibitions, that are spot and limited in time. *Alleanza per la Cultura*, on the contrary, makes a step forward. The project relies on the idea that partners do not only sustain one museum nor a single exhibition, but they support all the activities of the four museums and of the cinema, continuously for 3 years. As single entities, their engagement is not exaggerated but together the fund received becomes significant.

The strength of the project derives from the alliance between many local players. Partners do not have exclusive merchandise, differently from the other traditional sponsorship programs. Indeed, several companies, generally in competition on the market, are participating in the same project. The return given to businesses derives from the territory itself. The message the Foundation communicates to its partners concerns the pride to sustain the entire heritage of the Foundation, and consequently the majority of the cultural heritage of Brescia.

The Foundation proposes several projects, both exhibitions and cultural events, for example the theatrical show *Calma Musa Immortale* conducted in the spaces of the museums. As aforementioned, companies support the Foundation with a multi-year contribution. The idea of maintaining continuity over time is essential for the plan of activities. Before, it was not possible to create a program on the medium term because every extra project needed to be financially covered but the Foundation hardly ever knew its financial and technical resources for the next two years. *Alleanza per la Cultura* has broken this vicious circle, turning it into a virtuous one. We launched the project with the idea to create a durable program of support that could permit to plan and realize activities tailored to the local companies in order to involve them in a non-competitive alliance. This has been our main goal over the last years. *Alleanza per la Cultura* addresses a great number of benefits to the local companies, ranging from their involvement in the events of the Foundation to free tickets and targeted guided tours.

**2. So, the main strength that makes this project strategic relies on the idea that companies do not finance a single museum nor an exhibition, but they support the foundation in its entirety. Am I right?**

Exactly. Through the generic support given by companies, the Foundation could implement and realize its strategic planning on the long term. *Alleanza per la Cultura* does not affect the choice of the events organized as the museums' scientific program is exclusive competence of the executive board and of the scientific committee. Even though Fondazione Brescia Musei does not realize blockbuster exhibitions as in the past, its program includes ambitious projects. The events planned are chosen to enhance as much as possible the local heritage and the territory of Brescia, for example we are currently undertaking large-scale operations such as the one of the Velazquez to the Hermitage. These are ambitious projects but still they are aimed to enhance the local territory. This link to the city helped us to persuade companies to invest in *Alleanza per la Cultura*.

**3. In your opinion, does *Alleanza per la Cultura* differentiate from other Italian cultural partnership programs and why?**

Yes, I believe that *Alleanza per la Cultura* is an innovative program. During my work experience in Milan, I had always seen small sized museums with programs like *Amici dei Musei* that permits individuals to support their activities through annual financial support. Here, instead, the situation is different. *Alleanza per la Cultura* resembles a sponsorship program but it is improved at its maximum capacity and tailored to a medium sized city like Brescia. In addition, the city does not present projects in competition among them as, for example, in Milan where there are multiple similar cultural realities. We believe that our project is different because it is not addressed to a single person giving an annual support but to the local entrepreneurship of Brescia. In this way, even companies working steel become aware of the importance to support culture. This has always been our goal and now we are proud about what we have achieved. Over the past two years, despite the Covid-19 pandemic, *Alleanza per la Cultura* has been collecting adhesions and new members every year.

**4. Does the project collect new members every year?**

The project has a three-year basis, however every year we launch a promotional campaign to attract new partners. At the end of the initial three years the campaign is more intense as we need the adhesions of our initial partners. Obviously, new partners start their three-years agreement independently from the year the project was launched.

**5. Are the contributions that partners give standard?**

Every year we open an announcement on our website to attract new companies interested in participating. Here, we indicate the possible contributions required to participate. These are three: 10.000, 25.000 and 50.000 Euro. Each one brings a particular series of benefits addressed to the supporting company.

Every company can respond to the announcement with a free show of interest according to their financial possibility. The Foundation then evaluates the proposals as eligible or not. Since the launch of the alliance, we have received

proposals for small contributions like 1.000 or 2.000 Euro that we refused because not suitable for the *Alleanza per la Cultura* program. To overcome this, we are now shaping a new program of membership addressed to smaller contributions that can involve a larger number of companies. Smaller contributions cannot be associated with *Alleanza per la Cultura* because, according to the different three amounts of financial support that companies could give, we offer specific benefits. Therefore, there has to be a homogeneity in the contributions accepted. The benefits in return can be customized based on the companies' needs. Some prefer the possibility to participate more in the events of the Foundation, others to organize private events inside the museums' spaces. Likewise, some request more advantages related to the corporate welfare and thus more contents and activities for their employees. In light of each one's specific necessities, it is possible to increment particular benefits, renouncing to others. In this way, starting from a standard base, companies customize the offer according to their necessities. The more a company customizes its offering, the better the benefits received are and the more virtuous the partnership becomes. *Alleanza per la Cultura* can indeed overcome traditional benefits, bringing a real added value to the local companies. For this reason, some relationships established have resulted to be particularly successful. Some players have given higher financial support participating less to the activities of the Foundation; others, according to their financial power, have granted a minor support, participating more in the organization, thus creating a rich and successful exchange that have brought benefit to both the two parties.

**6. Considering the Covid-19 post-crisis current situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy? Do you think there has been a change in the corporate support role?**

I believe that opportunities arise from every crisis.

We are lucky to have been selected together with Bergamo as Capital of Culture 2023. This occasion amplifies our opportunities to increase the visibility for our city. Beyond the Covid-19 emergency situation that encouraged the private sector to support the medical research and the healthcare system, culture is now

considered a fundamental and strategic asset upon which companies want to invest in. Our market research makes us believe that, in the next future, this tendency will not change, that we will continue to collect funds from companies and that there will be a widespread consciousness that culture must always be sustained. This discourse is enhanced in the local territory, considering Brescia as Capital of Culture in 2023. I'm not worried about the future because, up to now, we don't have any evidence that companies will stop investing in culture. The pandemic situation made people understand that culture is not entertainment only but, on the contrary, it is an essential aspect of their lives, more that they originally thought. The museums and cinemas have been often considered as pure leisure however, in their absence, people understood their importance and their positive effects in the society. We believe that in the next years culture will continue to be an asset upon which companies will invest.

#### **7. Will *Alleanza per la Cultura* be improved?**

*Alleanza per la Cultura* is a winning but uncompleted model. As a matter of fact, there are a pool of small-medium companies and associations that would support the activities of the Foundation but whose contribution cannot be included in *Alleanza per la Cultura*. For this reason, at the beginning of the new year, we are going to launch a further level of membership in order to include the support of that pool of potential supporters currently out of the market.

Up to now we believe that *Alleanza per la Cultura* is working well. As said, it is not a complete project, but we have worked to cover that niche of B2B relationships not considered before. Every fundraising project is always improvable but the union between *Alleanza per la Cultura*, the new future membership, the Art Bonus for the restoration works, and the vertical actions of sponsorship on our projects and activities, offers a good coverage of support.

**8. The support received has been fundamental to face the Covid-19 pandemic period, am I right?**

Absolutely yes, this is true both for us and for every other institution with a similar corporate structure (non-public).

We are a private foundation with the Municipality as main shareholder. Differently from many other realities that are facing difficulties in their ordinary administration since the starting of the pandemic in 2020, Fondazione Brescia Musei could count on the *Alleanza per la Cultura* fund. This has permitted us to plan and to conduct our operations without stopping. Physical access to the Fondazione Brescia Musei's facilities, planned for the year 2020, was suspended until the next openings. Having the museums and the cinema closed, revenues from the ticket sales were null however we could count on the inflows derived from *Alleanza per la Cultura*.

This source of support has been fundamental for the employees of the Foundation as well, in order to continue working without accessing, excluding a minor part, to payroll subsidies and to other typologies of aid. The *Alleanza per la Cultura* fund gives us the possibility to never stop working, to be ready for every eventuality, and to continuously plan future activities. We were indeed the firsts to open at the end of every lockdown.

**9. Which are the benefits offered to the companies?**

Generally speaking, the benefits offered to partners regard visibility with the companies' logo exposed inside our museums and on our communication materials. Companies can organise corporate events or can participate in events organized by the Foundation. In this way, they are actively engaged in the organization's activities. Further benefits regard the distribution of catalogues edited by Skira with their logo on it, discounts, and other forms of welfare. We offer, for example, the possibility for the companies' employees' children to participate in the educational activities organised by the Foundation (Summer Camp etc.). Other benefits could be defined in a second phase, and they could be customized at the companies' requests.

**10. Does *Alleanza per la Cultura* relate to the new management model adopted by the Foundation?**

Finding a club of investors has been fundamental for the museums. For sure the project started from the willingness of the new Director to adopt a managerial approach different from the past in order to effectively manage the complex heritage of Fondazione Brescia Musei, which includes four museums and one cinema. The underlying idea was to change the managerial approach in order to remodel the museums' offering. In order to shape important exhibition projects and communication campaigns promoting them, as it happened for the Vittoria Alata statue, funds are necessary.

The Italian public sector struggles to understand the essential co-existence of a public-private mix, which is fundamental since public museums cannot survive without the involvement of private investors. The Italian State does not pay enough attention to the cultural heritage from an economic and financial point of view. For this reason, it is necessary that every public institution acknowledge that the involvement of the private sector is the key.

The private needs to be managed and this is one of the main skills of my job. Fundraisers must understand the meeting point between the necessities of the museum and the requirements of the supporting partners, in the maximum respect of the scientific project and of the collections. My job requires to understand how far partners can go with their demands; some institutions exceed in their concessions, while others anachronistically still believe in the figure of the patron. However, patrons unwilling to have any return do not exist from a long time.

The profile of the fundraiser has become increasingly important over the last decades, and I believe that in the next future all public institutions will request it. Cultural institutions need employees able to manage these operations of support, to inform partners of the advantages of their agreements and, at the same time, of their limits in order to avoid them to have too much decision-making power on the organizations' activities. Only in this way, it is possible to find the right meeting point between cultural organizations and companies and to create successful partnerships that could help museums to fulfil their mission,



making private funds indispensable for the management of the public cultural heritage.

Since its launch in 2020, the adhesions to *Alleanza per la Cultura* have increased. This testifies the entrepreneurs' sensitivity towards a city that is not merely productive but full of culture as well. The more the local cultural heritage will be known, the increased added value the city and the commercial activities will gain on every aspect.

Corporate support creates a virtuous circle that, over the next years, in particular in 2023, I believe it could change the image of Brescia from an industrial productive city to a city with a wide and interesting cultural offering. In this way, Brescia will be a city where there are entrepreneurs, belonging to different sectors, that show a sensitivity for culture by reinvesting a portion of their wealth in their territory. I would like to think about Brescia as a model and as an example in the future for other cities similar in dimension and characteristics.

### 2.3 Roberta D'Adda

Curator at Fondazione Brescia Musei

#### 1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start?

I have worked here for 20 years. Before I was a consultant collaborator of the Municipality and then, in 2015, I became an employee of Fondazione Brescia Musei. Now we are in 3 curators: I manage the artistic collections, Francesca Morandini the archaeological heritage and the Unesco site, and Marco Merlo the Arms Museum. Working in the Foundation there are also, among them, people developing contents, handling the photographic archive, and occupying the role of registrars (Natania Arici for exit loans; Ilaria Turri, for entering loans).

Formally, we are doing what we did before, as the new management model fortunately did not affect nor change our specific jobs. Likewise, the feared involvement of the private sector in the Foundation's processes did not influence our jobs of safeguarding and conserving the cultural heritage. On the contrary, now we have more opportunities to develop projects, to collaborate with new partners, and to enhance the local heritage as the involvement of private partners grant important financial inflows allowing us to fulfil our aims. Therefore, we are working following the same criteria of the past, but with more financial resources.

Before *Alleanza per la Cultura*, Fondazione Brescia Musei had always searched for sponsors. On many occasions, the curators undertook this task. I followed the project for the reopening of the Tosio Martinengo Gallery in 2018, after 9 years of renovation works. In order to obtain funds, we contacted through various channels, private entities like the Chamber of Commerce, firms and enterprises, as well as individuals, proposing them restorations more or less demanding. In this case, the involvement, through the Art Bonus, was based on a financially not impressive project. Still, to convince companies we tried to establish a new typology of dialogue with them: we invited them in the restoration laboratories, and we offered them a guided tour, often conducted by me, inside the brand-new opened gallery. Afterwards, we showed them slides explaining the Art

Bonus, and we commissioned newspaper articles to promote the initiative. This has been an experiment to find improved new ways to involve sponsors.

Another way for engaging sponsors was the organization of a gala dinner inside the Tosio Martinengo Gallery's spaces. In this case, we collected funds for a big restoration work that we could not had restored before, in absence of the required support. Moreover, we involved sponsors in evening events, such as the initiative inside the museums' storages.

One of the problems about the collection sector is that it is easy to find patrons for the restoration of artworks exhibited inside the permanent or temporary collections. More difficult, however, is to collect funds for the seriously damaged artworks preserved in the storages, that worsen their condition the more they are left there. These artworks are difficult to move, they need special attentions, and they occupy space in the storages. Moreover, after their restorations, they are often not exhibited anyway. For all these reasons, there are no patrons financing these artworks. Nonetheless, we have the moral obligation to restore them. In order to solve this problem, once we organized the event *La camera del Tesoro* inviting hosts, mainly companies, to visit the Gallery's storage. We selected nearly ten artworks that needed restoration works and, for each one, we prepared a little brochure containing the image of the artwork, its information, and the price for the restoration. We tried, in this way, to captivate patrons. Unfortunately, the initiative did not have all the success that we hoped, with just a few artworks sponsored.

Now we have *Alleanza per la Cultura* therefore we do not have to find sponsors for every new operation of the Foundation. Moreover, this project advantageously transforms sponsors into a sort of patrons because visibility is not their first driving force for being involved. Their loyalty is not on a single captivating "product" but on a wider choral project. This aspect is similar to the involvement of a pool of companies, through the Art Bonus, for the Vittoria Alata restoration works. The engagement of companies for the Vittoria Alata project at first and then for the *Alleanza per la Cultura* partnership, offered more than the presence of the companies' logo on the communications' materials of the

exhibitions and the distribution of free tickets. The idea behind these events was different.

**2. Are the actual partners the same of the past sponsorships?**

No, they are not. This could be reconnected to the change of Director and of President in 2018. In the past, there was the Chamber of Commerce, some physical individuals, the Ordine dei Notai, the Azienda ALMAG S.p.A (that supported 3 restorations), one restorer, the Amici dei Musei association, the Inner Wheel, and other smaller and informal companies. In this case, the only big company involved was ALMAG S.p.A.

In addition to what beforehand mentioned, for the reopening of the Tosio Martinengo Gallery we involved private entities through other channels as well. From UBI Fondazione CAB, for example, we obtained several safekeeping artworks to include them on the long-term in the gallery's collection. Therefore, stakeholders could be engaged also through loans of artworks to enrich our collections, and not only through financial contributions.

The large funds obtained through *Alleanza per la Cultura* and the transformation from sponsors to partners making supporters feel part of a common mission have been important for the collection and for the research department. We were not anymore in charge of the duty to find sponsors. Moreover, thanks to the general fund obtained by *Alleanza per la Cultura* we were not pressed anymore to find captivating offerings, as restoration works could not be charming sometimes (renovations for artworks in the storages or resources for filing documents). Therefore, our efforts were to engage stakeholders in little projects, express them our gratitude and make them feel part of a greater mission. In the past, this task was upon the managers, while now the process is indirect. We express our needs, and, through the *Alleanza per la Cultura* fund, we obtain the necessary resources to support them. This is not a repeated effort anymore, but a general plan to help the organization to fulfil its goals.

**3. How do you judge the Fondazione Brescia Musei's strategy?**

In a very positive way. *Alleanza per la Cultura* has simplified our job.

**4. Considering the Covid-19 post-crisis current situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy? Do you think there has been a change in the corporate support role?**

The digital tools saved museums in a period of crisis, but they cannot be considered a permanent solution. People need to physically enter museums. The facilities are, as a matter of fact, a particular and perfect dimension to enjoy culture through experiential components, that cannot be undermined: there are silence, big spaces, the right atmosphere, the possibility to choose what to look at, how to move, and to actively participate. Every one of these aspects cannot be substituted by the digital tool. So, the digital means have some benefits but exclude the direct encounter of people with artworks.

From the Covid-19 situation I hope that the collaboration and the mutual assistance between institutions will remain. In addition, I hope that blockbuster exhibitions will be downsized and seldom realised. These projects, as a matter of fact, remove the audience from the other cities and organizations, afflicting in particular small museums. I hope that there will not be a deregulation of the exhibition system with further postponements, openings, and closings because this has led to unpredictable and disorganized developments for the management of exhibitions that are hard to follow and dispiriting.

**5. In your opinion, what identifies Fondazione Brescia Musei?**

Fondazione Brescia Musei has a complex and wide heritage.

The Foundation has experienced a growth, in particular over the last three years. Consequently, the Foundation has increased its visibility, the number of activities offered and its attractiveness. Our skills have improved in quality and in control of the processes of the operations.

## 2.4 Federica Novali

Coordinator of the Educational Services of Fondazione Brescia Musei

### 1. How did your relationship with Fondazione Brescia Musei start?

I have been working with the Foundation for many years. I started as a cultural operator on call, conducting the guided tours and the laboratories planned by the educational sector of the Foundation.

When I began, the educational services were smaller than today. They were already present for a long time in the museums as the reality of Brescia was characterized by a very early interest towards the educational sphere. Indeed, the first “educational office” was founded in 1984 inside the Settore Musei del Comune di Brescia and it was a true novelty in the field for the times. Angela Bersotti was its founder and supervisor. She participated in the laboratory *Giocare con l’Arte*, founded by Bruno Munari in Milan, and later transferred the model to Brescia. The first educational experimentations involved nearly 20 schools per year. When I arrived, instead, in 2016, a more structured program existed with activities covering the four civic museums of Brescia, already managed by Fondazione Brescia Musei. Over the years, I became qualified in conducting the activities for children and the guided tours for adults. Then the educational services increased, and I started flanking the supervisor. As the request for these activities had a huge increment in the following few years, the Foundation decided to invest in this sector and to structure a real office. Up to now we are 6 people overseeing the ideation, the planning and the management of the activities; we organize and prepare the related materials and we train the staff that will conduct them.

We offer educational activities to schools (we involved 55.000 students in the school year 2018/2019) and we plan activities addressed to adults. We organize conferences, we collaborate with the other offices of the Foundation, mainly the communication and the collections ones, we organize activities for families and several camps for children during the school break period. We organize, for example, the Summer Camp that lasts 13 weeks for all the summer with the aim

to both entertain children and to teach them the history of our rich cultural heritage.

**2. Which were the main goals and areas developed, and which the main difficulties?**

When I first arrived, the Foundation was different than today. Over the years, Fondazione Brescia Musei has expanded and now it manages the civic museums of Brescia. Fondazione Brescia Musei manages them with the aim to keep them open and to make them “live”. The Foundation’s mission is to create events, exhibitions, and propose activities for its existing and potential audience. Therefore, our sector, related to the public engagement activities, has become increasingly important.

The educational area has been a privileged developed area. This even more as Fondazione Brescia Musei is one of the few museums having an internal educational sector; most museums rely instead on external cooperatives. In Brescia we have made a different choice. We have an internal staff with the advantage of providing high quality proposals to the users. The activities are planned by people dedicated to them only, by people that have been working in the field for many years and thus have gained an important know-how. The quality of our offering is rewarded by the users as they continue to return and join our activities. In addition, an internal educational service permits to give homogeneity to the didactical offerings thanks to its unique control and to grant high quality through the constant training and confrontation between the employees of the educational sector and the museum operators. In this way, they learn the methodology of our work and deepen their knowledge of the collections reaching a higher level of specialization.

Moreover, over the last couple of years, the area B2B has developed engaging a large pool of local companies. This led to the foundation of *Alleanza per la Cultura*, the efficient and innovative fundraising model that Fondazione Brescia Musei launched in 2020. Through the project, the Foundation has established strategic relationships with more than 30 companies of Brescia in order to support the local cultural heritage and to realize the triennial cultural project

proposed by the Foundation. The companies, in exchange, receive visibility advantages and further benefits such as the possibility to organize several events per year with their clients, to arrange meetings and convivial moments inside the spaces of the Foundation, and to participate in exclusive events such as exhibitions' previews and evening tours.

Over the last years the Foundation has invested many resources in the creation of a wide network of collaborations with many cultural realities of the city and of the nearby territory. Its next goal is becoming better known on a national and international level. In this sense, it has been developing and using on a wide extent its communication channels.

**3. Considering the post-crisis current situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy? Do you think there has been a change in the corporate support role?**

The healthcare emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic forced us to work mainly with the digital tools in order to maintain our relationship with the audience. This helps us understand to which extent the digital means are fundamental nowadays in this field. Therefore, this is another sphere upon which the organization has made a significant investment. In the next future, we will launch a completely new site, easier to consult, with a better organization of information, with the possibility to surf the artworks' database, and with a virtual tour addressed to the one who wants to know our collections but could not come to Brescia.

**4. Were the ideas to implement the activities of the museums through the technology born after the Covid-19 pandemic? Or were they present before and have been improved during the period?**

After the beginning of the pandemic period, Fondazione Brescia Musei reviewed and intensified its social media marketing strategy in order to enhance the accessibility to the cultural heritage of the city and to involve a wider public. The data from the digital strategy showed an active participation of the users, confirming the central role of social networks in the corporate communication



plan. Therefore, the pandemic period has been an important occasion for the Foundation to intensify the investments addressed to this sector. This tendency is still ongoing after the reopening of the museums.

**5. In your opinion, what identifies Fondazione Brescia Musei?**

Brescia Musei was established as a joint stock company in 2003 with the Municipality of Brescia as main shareholder, and with Fondazione CAB, Fondazione ASM and Chamber of Commerce as co-founding partners. It then became, in 2007, a “fondazione di partecipazione” in order to give continuity to the innovative public-private partnership that permitted the reopening of the Santa Giulia Museum and the increasingly transformation of Brescia into a cultural city. This happened through a complex program of cultural activities and exhibitions. The Foundation represents in Italy an experimental project for management and for enhancement of its artistic and monumental heritage.

Over the last 20 years the external investments towards the Foundation strongly increased. In 2015 the Archaeological Area opened after important renovations. Over those years the works for the Tosio Martinengo Gallery resumed and in 2018 the gallery reopened in its renewed form. Afterwards, we focused on the restoration of the Vittoria Alata and on its new set up designed by Juan Navarro Baldeweg. Finally, new renovation works for the museums of the Castle started, and they will finish in 2023. Moreover, Brescia and Bergamo will become Capitals of Culture in that same year.

Therefore, the relationship between the private and the public sector is winning and permits to receive important financial support to undertake renovation works. This has positive impacts for the economy and for the tourism of the city as well.

**6. Has the relationship between public and private realities changed with respect to the past?**

Yes, it does. *Alleanza per la Cultura* has brought a change of direction, creating a more systematic program of fundraising. Before, the Foundation undertook spot agreements with companies sponsoring specific projects, today instead we have a pool of partners sustaining all the initiatives included in our well-structured triennial cultural plan. We do not share a single project anymore, but a common vision.

**7. How do you consider the activities conducted by the Foundation?**

Winning. The continuous restoration and enhancement of the cultural heritage, and the investments in the communication to make the museums of Brescia known on a national and international level revealed to be successful. The New York Times, for example, recently dedicated an article on the Vittoria Alata. Therefore, we will be ready to 2023 (Brescia Capital of Culture).

## 2.5 Elena Lucchesi Ragni

Former Director of the Musei Civici di Arte e Storia di Brescia

### 1. How did your relationship with the Civici Musei di Arte e Storia di Brescia start?

I worked for the Civici Musei di Arte e Storia di Brescia, not for Fondazione Brescia Musei. The passage into Brescia Musei S.p.A. was difficult, as it was a work in progress. At first, we were against the introduction of the private sector inside the museums as we felt its aims distant from ours oriented to organize important exhibitions of research. The Municipality asked us to pay more attention to the economic aspects of the management of the museums, while we were more focused on the training of teachers and on implementing activities for schools and for the local audience. We knew the rightfulness of a greater opening of the museums, nonetheless we felt like there was a greater attention towards the economic and financial aspects. As an example, when it was founded, the joint stock company Brescia Musei S.p.A., the 50% of the budget was addressed to the promotional activities. Before, our promotional operations regarded the preparation of activities for schools, for our general audience and for teachers; afterwards, they were addressed to advertisement, interviews, flyers, and posters. These efforts were positive for the museums, but they could not be our main scope, on the contrary our main goals were to research and to implement the motivated participation of the audience. We did not consider numbers the most important aspect of our operations, on the contrary we believed were more important the activities for the audience organized inside the museums' spaces.

After the inclusion of the Musei Civici to Fondazione Brescia Musei, the situation stabilized. The Municipality maintained a strong participation inside the Foundation's administration but, still, the process had been difficult. The next issue to face was to whom attributing the management of the heritage and, over time the Foundation took it (the heritage is not alienable because it is under the protection of the public sector).

The aforesaid transformation was combined to the universal merging of culture and economy. This positive tendency should not influence however the core mission of the museums that is related, on the contrary, to the conservation and the promotion of the cultural heritage, and to the participation of the audience in the museums' activities. Therefore, the transition was not easy.

Moreover, the personnel as well was affected by this change. Once we were just a few therefore we had a smaller influence. There was no hiring or turnover, however many members were against the passage from a public to a private regime.

Fondazione Brescia Musei includes the Municipality of Brescia as its main shareholder (90%), while the remaining 10% is divided between the private partnerships, among them, with UBI and with the Chamber of Commerce. Generally speaking, in the past, the private intervention of banks permitted to collect the necessary budget to start our activities. Therefore, the private partners who had a minor influence with respect to the Municipality, were essential to collect the funds required. As a matter of fact, in such important projects as the Santa Giulia one, some funds always lacked. The FIO<sup>242</sup> gave a major support to the Santa Giulia project. The 95% of the costs was covered by the State and the remaining 5% by the partners. Public funds mainly arrived from the region Lombardy and by the Municipality of Brescia. I believe that the public funds should had been more.

I hope that there will be some rules for these economic forces that permits to enhance the culture of museums, without diminishing it. The essential feature in order to maintain the right balance with the private interventions is to have a strong project and a solid administration. As a matter of fact, museums are the mirror of the society and they live from the contributions that the society can give them. The society influences the museums' autonomy as well.

Being civic, the museums had a tight relationship with the politics. In the case of compatible intents, we immediately received financial resources, and vice versa. Therefore, the situation presented pros and cons.

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Anyway, the most important aspect for us and for our museums was to maintain the audience at the core of our operations. Museums indeed are the most important occasion to identify oneself either in the past and in the present, and to conduct research and educational activities. Therefore, museums must remain free from external influences. They must have strong personalities and maintain their objectives over time.

**2. How was the transformation of the museums over time?**

It has been a difficult transition. Moreover, we needed to understand how cultural foundations were changing. For example, it changed the modalities of hiring the director. Foundations, as a matter of fact, do not necessarily follow a public announcement but they could hire *ad personam*. This could be a great risk. In these situations of transition, it is important the presence of the scientific committee. They slow some operations but permit to have a plurality of visions and to maintain the scientific projects of the Foundation.

**3. Are you satisfied with the Fondazione Brescia Musei's administration?**

Over the last couple of years, the Covid crisis highlighted the situation of weakness of the cultural sector, because it is not always possible to find solutions all of a sudden. What Fondazione Brescia Musei has done is respectable. Among the others, they have increased the visitors' participation using the digital channels, and they have organized conferences.

However, museums should had been prepared and should had improved the use of the digital far before the Covid pandemic. Alternative ways to engage the public and to become truly interactive were needed before otherwise, as it happened, many museums were taken by surprise. On the contrary, the museums prepared to face the situation were just a few.

Considering the corporate support for cultural organizations, museums can involve companies only in the presence of a strong and precise project.

**4. Considering the post-crisis current situation, do you think that Fondazione Brescia Musei should improve its strategy?**

Covid obliged to use the digital means and I believe museums do not have to lose this approach with the audience. By now, our everyday reality is made of visitors using the internet channels for discovering the cultural heritage and for visiting the museums.

Museums must convince the audience to return and to visit them multiple times. The digital tools could help in this, creating, among them, contents focused on the artworks in order to encourage people to physically access the museums.

The generic visit inside the museums must not satisfy anymore. It is required an efficient planning and an improvement of the network with other museums. Likewise, it is important to collect collaborations with other realities and to create a solid system for the future. In this way, new forms of fruition of the museums are possible, as well as the creation of a network with other cultural realities.

In this sense, Brescia as Capital of Culture 2023, together with Bergamo, will be a very important occasion. Brescia and Bergamo are two bordering cities, whose municipalities are willing to create collaborations between them and between cultural and non-cultural related activities. It is important that Brescia Musei exploits this situation. The success of these operations will also depend on the current political situation as these museums are strictly dependent on politics, differently from the USA ones that have their own profits.

**5. How do you consider the changes of Brescia Musei with respect to the past?**

Museums answer to the needs of society. The important values of museums should always be conservation and research.

Once, our focus was on the engagement of teachers to make them aware about our research, restorations and discoveries in order for them to teach this knowledge in schools. Every year, we chose a theme.

Nowadays, teachers do not have the time for this. Today the school system is different, and visits are not free anymore. Currently, the assumptions are changed.

The educational activities generate a profit, together with the ticket sales and the bookshop. In the past museums were free of charge or there were more reductions, in particular for the youngest. This is another aspect that has changed over time. Reductions are present and they are necessary because museums need to take into account the financial situations of all the visitors, especially of families with children, in order to involve them in their activities and to fulfil their mission.

**6. In your opinion, how does Fondazione Brescia Musei differentiate from the other cultural realities?**

An aspect that changed from the past regards the President's profile, that has been particularly enhanced in its decision-making power.

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## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank my Supervisor Professor Irene Popoli. Her teachings encouraged me to choose the topic of the research, and her expertise guided me into the accomplishment of this paper.

I also thank Fondazione Brescia Musei, its Director Stefano Karadjov and its staff, in particular Francesca Belli, Roberta D'Adda and Federica Novali, who offered me an insight of the internal operations of cultural organizations. Likewise, I thank Roberto Saccone, Carlo Clerici, Pierangelo Pedersoli, and Elena Tamburini, for their fundamental contribution that helped me better understanding the topic.

Moreover, I am grateful for the assistance Elena Lucchesi Ragni gave me, facilitating my comprehension of the complex environment of the museums of Brescia.

Finally, I thank my family and friends who encouraged and supported me through my academic path.