
Blue Shield 30! The Past, Present, and Future of Cultural Property Protection

Conference to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of The Blue Shield

Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 October 2026

The need for an international cultural property protection organisation has been recognised since 1915, though it remained unrealised for many years. In the post-World War II era, new legislation was drafted to protect civilians and civilisation in war, including the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. UNESCO and the global experts convened to draft the Convention recognised the value and need for such an organisation, drawing a parallel with the Red Cross. Ultimately, however, the Blue Shield was established in 1996 by the International Council of Museums, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, the International Council on Archives, and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. Initially, voluntary, the organisation aspired to support cultural property protection (CPP) during armed conflict and crisis.

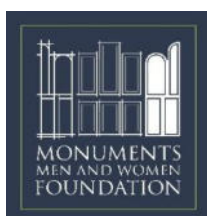
Today, the Blue Shield is established under Dutch law and has 35 national and regional committees and a small central team. Working across the heritage, humanitarian, and uniformed sectors, it develops and delivers better CPP around the world before, during, and after conflict and crisis. The Blue Shield regards CPP as a vehicle to support the maintenance or creation of healthy, stable, secure, sustainable communities – the bedrock of peaceful societies.

Together with our partners, the Monuments Men and Women Foundation, the University of Nicosia, and the Hellenic National Committee of the Blue Shield, the Blue Shield is excited to invite you to join us for our 30th anniversary conference in Athens on 24th and 25th October, generously supported by our partners, along with the J. M. Kaplan Foundation and the Republic of Armenia.

The conference, which is free to attend, will chart the concept of CPP, an idea that has been championed by military theorists and strategists for some two and a half thousand years. It will review the present state of CPP, and look to the future of this critical field at a time when the world is witnessing widespread attacks against cultural heritage. What lessons can be learned from history? What current activities are most effective? What is coming that we need to plan for, and how can new technologies help?

Find out more and register at our conference website: <https://theblueshield.org/blue-shield-general-assembly-2026/>

Partners and Funders



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Call for Papers

On Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 October 2026 the Blue Shield will hold its 30th anniversary conference in Athens, Greece. The academic committee is interested in hearing from individuals wishing to present papers on **cultural property protection (CPP): past, present, and future**. The conference will be followed by a peer-reviewed publication.

Anyone interested in submitting a paper on one of the above topics should complete the form below and submit it to Professor Peter G Stone peter.stone@blueshield-international.org by 12.00 noon (UK time) on Monday 20 July 2026. Presentations should be based on past or current academic research on, or practical application of, CPP in armed conflict. We are not looking for overview polemic contributions.

Unfortunately, we do not have funding available to support presenters' travel to the conference. Papers of interest to the academic committee whose authors cannot attend the conference in person may, in collaboration with the author, also be considered for publication.

Papers must be presented and written in English or French. Each presentation will be 25 minutes long, followed by 5 minutes dedicated discussion time.

The conference is being organised in partnership with the Monuments Men and Women Foundation, the University of Nicosia (UNIC) Campus in Athens, and the Hellenic Committee of the Blue Shield.

Conference website: <https://theblueshield.org/blue-shield-general-assembly-2026/>

Proposed Presentation

Speaker name:

Organisation / Institution:

Email:

Will you be able to attend the conference in person? **YES** **NO**

Title of proposed presentation:

Abstract (max 250 words):
