

ASOR 2025—Strengthening Our Foundation | Expanding Horizons—A Call to Action

In 2025, ASOR will be hitting its 125-year mark. Yes, fellow ASOR members and friends, our quasiquintennial is nearly upon us, and we have *cause to celebrate!*

A first cause for celebration is that ASOR members continue to be engines of research, education, publication, and engagement about the history and cultures of the Near East and the wider Mediterranean world.

In light of recent events and conflicts, this work has never been more needed. So, amid celebration, we confront challenges. Worldwide threats to cultural heritage are a great concern, because we know that targeting people's cultural heritage is a first step toward violence and extremism. Also, such losses cannot be undone. The humanities bring this into focus, yet dollars to fund these departments and this research are being siphoned off elsewhere. Some professional organizations focused on past human experience are shrinking. Not so for ASOR!

There is a second cause for celebration. Our membership is expanding. ASOR is in solid financial shape. You have created a foundation for positive change and action.

To continue this momentum, ASOR has embarked on a grand challenge, a \$5 million dollar—\$5,000,000—fundraising initiative. *Our third cause for celebration* is that generous members already have pledged or given \$2.8 million dollars, with more coming.

This is a call to action, asking you to help shape the future through the discovery, documenting, and protecting of cultural heritage in innovative ways. I ask you to think how you can join in this effort to equip ASOR to meet the challenges of this moment.

Your gift of support to ASOR makes a real difference. With your participation, ASOR can:

- 1. Increase membership support:** You can strengthen and widen ASOR's geographic impact throughout the Middle East and North Africa with scholarships, research fellowships, and excavation project grants, many of which will benefit citizens from countries that lack resources.
- 2. Widen and expand ASOR's publications:** You can ensure that ASOR continues to disseminate knowledge and educate the public in an economic climate where support for scholarship is shrinking.
- 3. Make ASOR more accessible to everyone:** You can address financial need for access in North America, North Africa, the Middle East, and around the world. With you, ASOR can set an example with diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives that span language and cultural divides.
- 4. Grow Cultural Heritage Initiatives:** You can support cultural heritage stabilization, documentation, and mitigation efforts. You can guarantee that ASOR continues to be seen as a world leader in protecting heritage and ensure the continuation of education and stewardship programs that combat violent extremism and misuse of heritage.
- 5. Develop Greater Online Access:** You can fund innovations in the rapidly growing field of online and virtual resources to make research accessible to everyone with a computer, tablet, or phone.
- 6. Expand the Friends of ASOR Programs:** You can help underwrite education and outreach programs that will broaden ASOR's membership and bring non-academic supporters with an interest in the ancient world to our organization.
- 7. Strengthen the Foundation of ASOR's Operations:** You can safeguard ASOR's work to 2050 and beyond through the Annual Fund, or with endowment gifts to sustain operational staffing and capital needs at the James F. Strange Center.

These are but a few ideas. Studies of the human past have never faced greater obstacles, but ASOR has the financial stability and talent to find innovative solutions. Each of us is a critical part of this effort. If you and I do not respond to this call to action to shape the future of our profession and document and protect cultural heritage in innovative ways, who will? **You can be part of this historic moment, creating change and making a legacy. Organizations thrive because of people like you.** Please join in celebrating our 125th year with "ASOR 2025— Strengthening Our Foundation | Expanding Horizons—A Call to Action."