

November 8, 2024

To: ASOR Board of Directors

From: ASOR Cultural Heritage Committee

Re: Motion for affiliation status for Civil Society Organizations and Conservation Projects

The Cultural Heritage Committee has become aware, through the work of Andy Vaughn and Will Reynolds, of projects being carried out by conservation and/or civil society organizations that do not fall into the category of excavations. We would ask the Board to consider a policy that allows these organizations to obtain affiliate status, on the parallel of ASOR affiliation granted to excavation projects.

ASOR has been carrying out cultural heritage initiatives especially in North Africa and the Sahel, and these are places that do not have many ASOR-affiliated excavations (there is one in Libya and one in Morocco). It should be pointed out that there are not many members, but we do have about 50–60 members now in North Africa and the Sahel. ASOR is seeing strong interest from local stakeholders in these regions. Much of this cultural heritage and conservation work is being led by civil society organizations who do not have affiliation or support from external organizations in North America and Europe. The value of these projects can be far-reaching, especially in areas that are strained by political divisions, as they can be a unifying and stabilizing force within their societies.

The Cultural Heritage Committee consulted with CAP, to assess their procedure for granting affiliation. The process is streamlined, with project heads asked to abide by ASOR best practices. The chair of CAP also agreed that the affiliation application should be handled by the CH Committee, not CAP.

Thus, following the unanimous endorsement from the CH Committee, with support from the Chair of CAP, and with support of the President and Executive Director, we are asking the Board to consider initiating an affiliation process for conservation projects or projects undertaken by civil society organizations that are not excavations, to be approved by the Cultural Heritage Committee.

We thus present the following resolution for consideration by the Executive Committee and the Board:

Be it resolved that ASOR create a mechanism for Civil Society Organizations and Conservation Projects to be affiliated with ASOR in an analogous manner that Excavation Projects are ASOR Affiliated Projects. Further, ASOR Board charges the Cultural Heritage Committee to review these applications for affiliation in a manner like that used for CAP affiliation.