

**The Assistant Director-General  
for Priority Africa and External Relations**

To Secretaries-General of  
National Commissions for  
UNESCO

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27 May 2026

Dear Secretary-General,

I am pleased to inform you that UNESCO launched the eighth edition of the “Youth Eyes on the Silk Roads” international photo contest on 8 April 2026, under the theme “Living Heritage along the Silk Roads”.

Since its first edition in 2018, the photo contest has offered young people a valuable opportunity to share their perspectives on the shared heritage of the Silk Roads through photography. As a powerful medium in today’s digital era, photography enables youth to raise awareness of contemporary challenges and promote intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, and a shared vision for a more peaceful future.

For this edition, young participants are invited to submit photographs showcasing how traditions and cultural and ritual practices reflect the interconnected histories of peoples across regions linked by these routes, and how this shared living heritage continues to safeguard collective memory and enable the transmission of knowledge and cultural expressions. They are encouraged to capture both visible and less visible elements that sustain communities, highlighting the role of heritage in fostering intercultural dialogue, mutual respect, and more peaceful societies.

I am pleased to share with you the link to the photo contest website (<https://unescosilkroadphotocontest.org>), where you may find useful guidelines.

I kindly invite you to share information on the contest widely across your youth, education, cultural, and artistic communities in order to encourage the participation of as many young people as possible.

The UNESCO Silk Roads Programme team, Mr Mehrdad Shabahang ([m.shabahang@unesco.org](mailto:m.shabahang@unesco.org)) Programme Specialist, and Ms Tara Golkar ([t.golkar@unesco.org](mailto:t.golkar@unesco.org)), Associate Project Officer, remain at your disposal for any further information you may require.

With my best wishes, I remain,

Yours sincerely,



Lidia Arthur Brito

cc.: Permanent Delegations to UNESCO