

Partnership for the Millennium of Abadía de Montserrat

Beneficiary: Fundació Abadía de Montserrat 2025
Location: Spain, Europe
Grant Cycle: 2024
Type of Grant: one-year program support,
Delegació a Catalunya, Promotion of Arts & Culture

L'Abadía de Montserrat, with its millenarian history, is perhaps the greatest symbol of Catalonia. It was founded in 1025 on the site where, according to the legend, the statue of the Virgin of Montserrat was found in 880, the same date that marks the beginning of the cult of La Moreneta (the dark virgin). Over the centuries, the site has become an important place of pilgrimage and cultural life in Catalonia, with the construction of several buildings, including the monastery, which is still active today with more than seventy monks of the Order of Saint Benedict, and the sanctuary, which is a place of worship to Our Lady of Montserrat. For a thousand years, Montserrat has sought to be a place of welcome and encounter, a place of listening, understanding and peace. In this way, the imprint of its founder has strengthened the charism that Benedictine monks have tried to live with since the beginning of the Middle Ages. The flourishing of the abbey was interrupted by Napoleon, who destroyed it during the Peninsular War (1807-1814). However, due to its importance as a spiritual and cultural place in Catalonia, the abbey was rebuilt between the 19th and 20th centuries and finally, after the Spanish civil war, the first stone of the new façade of the monastery was laid in 1942. In 1997, the Fundació Abadía de Montserrat 2025 was created to promote the social, cultural and ecological values, that are an integral part of the Monastery and Montserrat Sanctuary for the benefit of the pilgrims and visitors. Since its foundation Montserrat has played a very important role in cultivating the cultural and intellectual life of Catalonia, even in the recovery of democracy

in Spain after the Franco dictatorship. Culture and all its manifestations, such as art, literature and music, including the digital dimension, are forms of encounter and dialogue with contemporary society, and Montserrat has always played a key role.

The year 2025 will mark the thousandth anniversary of the foundation of the Monastery of Montserrat by Oliba, Abbot of Ripoll and Cuixà and Bishop of Vic. As a continuation of Elsa Peretti's commitment to Catalonia, the **Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation – Delegació a Catalunya** (NaEPF) signed a grant agreement on June 18, 2024 with the Fundació Abadía de Montserrat 2025 to support the celebration of Millennium of Montserrat. September 7, 2024 marks the official opening of the Millennium of Montserrat, which will last until December 8, 2025. During these 15 months, under the direction of commissioner Bernat Juliol, the celebration will include almost 500 activities, mainly focused on culture, inclusion and sustainability, through conferences, exhibitions and meetings. At the opening event, more than 600 people supported the drone show with the music of "el Virolai", a choir song dedicated to the Black Madonna. The President of Catalonia, Salvador Illa, was in Montserrat for the event and declared that "this religious site is a great symbol of our country, and the world needs the values that this place represents, such as dialogue and understanding." During the event, several speeches emphasized that the millennium must be used to look back and celebrate Montserrat's 1.000-year history, but also to look forward to the future.