

Site management and governance



Structures, functions and resources become elements of a governance system geared towards strengthening CREDIBILITY and fostering dialogue with the main stakeholders

4.1 Management of the Botanical Garden of Padua

The Botanical Garden, which is owned by the Italian state, is on permanent loan to the University of Padua which is the sole entity, since the Garden was established in 1545, responsible for its conservation, protection, maintenance, promotion and enhancement and for ensuring its cultural and botanic heritage is passed on to future generations.

In 2002, partly in light of the Botanical Garden's inscription on the World Heritage List (1997), the University established the Botanical Garden University Centre (*COB*), tasked with managing the Botanical Garden and its associated conservation, educational, research and scientific dissemination activities. In 2007, the Botanical Garden University Centre became the formal contact point for the Ministry of Culture for matters relating to the UNESCO Site.

A major change to the Botanical Garden's management came in 2014, when the Biodiversity Garden was opened to the public, effectively doubling the size of the Site and resulting in a significant increase in activities and visitor numbers.

While conservation remains the purview of the Botanical Garden University Centre, whose headcount has increased to meet evolving needs, the University outsourced visitor services and enhancement and promotion activities to a private joint venture on a trial basis (September 2014 - January 2016), before taking over running the services directly, first with the creation of a relevant unit under the Administration Department (February 2016 - January 2018) and then, with the body's reorganization in 2018, through a specially formed department, the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*) — part of the Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) — under the University's Central Administration.

This arrangement — which uses a contract tender process to ensure the organization has the means required to deliver visitor services — allows the University to focus its efforts on the Site's strategic direction and on general policies for the Site's enjoyment by the public, based on a number of cornerstone principles:

- planning and developing cultural content and educational activities that are in line with the enhancement and promotion requirements of the Botanical Garden's institutional mission;
- raising and strengthening the minimum standard of visitor services;
- regulating and managing the leasing of spaces for events and shows;
- striking a balance between costs and revenue with the obligation to channel any profits back into activities for the conservation and/or enhancement and promotion of the cultural site and into new development investments;

- funds to be allocated in the University of Padua's budget to support restoration and conservation policies and investment policies in the field of environmental sustainability and accessibility.

4.1.1 STRUCTURES AND DUTIES

The **Botanical Garden University Centre** (*COB*) is responsible for scientific coordination and UNESCO Site protection duties (cultivation, conservation, expansion of collections), as well as coordinating research activities and establishing scientific collaborations conducted within the Centre.

The **Permanent Events Office** (*UEP*)/**Communication and Marketing Area** (*ACOM*) are tasked with business management involving enhancement and cultural promotion actions aimed at the public.

Visitor services and the education-related service — the coordination and supervision of which are the responsibility of the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) — are contracted out via a tender process. The new European-wide call for tenders — a single call for all the services currently contracted out in the Garden, covering the organization and delivery of services for the public's enjoyment of all the University of Padua's cultural sites (Botanical Garden, Museum of Nature and Humankind, Villa Parco Bolasco, Palazzo del Bo) — is part of the University's 2025-2027 three-year procurement plan (see sect. 4.3.1).

Operating within the Botanical Garden alongside *COB* and the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) are the **University Centre for Museums** (*CAM*) — which has its own people on site to handle the conservation of exhibits held by the Museum and historic Herbarium — and the **University Centre for Libraries** (*CAB*), which is tasked, among other things, with looking after the Botanical Garden's bibliographical collections and managing the medical and botanic library (Biblioteca medica e botanica Vincenzo Pinali e Giovanni Marsili), as well as the Botanical Garden's digital repository, and running the PHAIDRA project (see sect. 2.2.2.e). The Botanical Garden's research laboratories are open to all University lecturers in the course of their work and currently mainly accommodate lecturers and researchers from the Department of Biology.

The University of Padua ensures that buildings, systems, building services and networks (such as electrical and plumbing, heating and cooling, lighting, ICT maintenance) are kept in proper working order and that portage and transport services, the cleaning service and night watch service (with wireless video surveillance systems) are all running efficiently; this it achieves through a number of units: **Building and Safety** (*AES*),

Heritage, Procurement and Logistics (*APAL*) and IT (*ASIT*), each looking after their respective services (delivered by in-house personnel or through contractors). The University's finance and planning department (*AFIP*) supports its Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) in planning and managing tender processes, while *UEP/ACOM* and *COB* handle all routine accounting matters autonomously.

4.1.2 HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATION OF SERVICES

The Botanical Garden's Prefect is appointed by the Rector — usually chosen from among the botany lecturers with the University of Padua's Department of Biology — for a term of three years, which can be renewed only once. The Prefect is assisted in running *COB* by a Vice-Prefect appointed by the Prefect him/herself.

COB's Board is made up of scientific and technical experts, from both inside and outside the University, and is responsible for supporting and monitoring *COB*'s activities and its management.

The University Centre's staff — which is currently still being increased to meet growing duties — is made up of 3 administrative employees (1 secretary and 2 executives), 1 collections contact person, 1 chief gardener who acts as curator, 1 maintenance engineer (irrigation system and automation of the Biodiversity Garden's systems) and 15 gardeners (10 employees, one of whom is in charge of the Gene Bank, and 5 seasonal workers). The number of lecturers and researchers from the Department of Biology who work in the Botanical Garden's laboratories varies depending on what projects are active (two lecturers — in botany and plant ecology — are there permanently).

The Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) — whose management and cultural promotion duties also extend to the Museum of Nature and Humankind and Villa Parco Bolasco — have a total team of 18 employees. The Site's business management is split into three broad areas: a) planning and organizing visitor services (ticket office, guided tours, bookshop, educational activities, security and reception, logistics and maintenance) — 5 people + 1 area manager; b) designing, planning and staging events, exhibitions and shows — 5 people + 1 area manager; c) designing and organizing communication and promotion activities — 3 people + 1 coordinator; 1 administrative employee/accountant and 1 office manager.

The outsourced museum and educational services employ on average 3 FTE resources (Full-Time Equivalent, 9 hours a day for 300 working days a year) for ticket office and bookshop services; 3 FTE resources (9 hours a day for 300 working days a year) for public surveillance services within display spaces; and 1 FTE resource (14 hours a day for 300 working days a year) for security and reception services.



In addition to these resources, there is 1 FTE resource (9 hours a day for 300 working days a year) with pilot duties, in addition to nature guides and museum educators (30 trained operators) involved with guided tour services and educational activities mostly provided on an appointment basis.

4.1.3 OPERATING MODEL

Daily active collaboration between the various University structures involved in running the Site has allowed for effective operation over the course of these years of growth for the Botanical Garden, establishing strong roles and interaction procedures, which the Management Plan now sets out formally according to the model described below.

The Prefect (*Praefectus Horti Botanici Patavini*) — scientific director of the Botanical Garden and chair of the Botanical Garden University Centre Board — shares the Site's day-to-day management duties with the Director of the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*), with each retaining their decision-making autonomy over their respective areas (**MANAGING BOARD**).

MANAGING BOARD

In order to streamline the internal management model and keep it very functional, the Managing Board meets at least once a month and whenever the Site's day-to-day management so requires, to deal with general or specific issues.

All structures operating daily within the Botanical Garden meet as members of the **Coordination Table**, whose purpose is to enable members to exchange progress reports on the most significant activities relating to the Site (work sites, maintenance, major projects, etc.), share information on conservation, enhancement and promotion actions and initiatives being carried out by each area/structure/group and identify activities to be developed in unison as part of the Site's cultural programme.

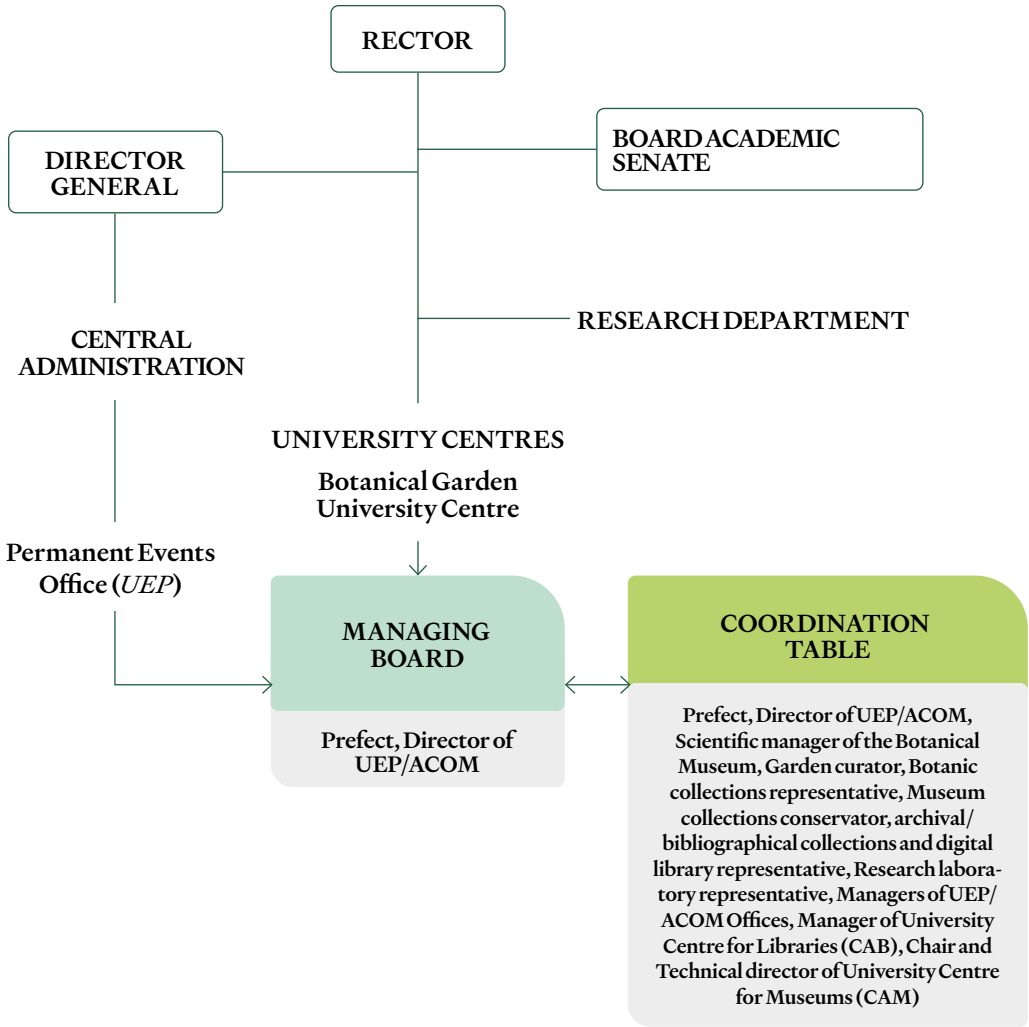
COORDINATION TABLE

The Coordination Table consists of the Prefect, the Director of the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*), the scientific manager of the Botanical Museum, the garden curator, the botanic collections representative, the Museum collections conservator, the archival/bibliographical collections and the digital library representative, the research laboratory contact person, and the managers from the *UEP/ACOM* departments responsible for services, events and communication. The managers of Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) and the University Centre for Libraries (*CAB*) also sit on the Coordination Table along with the Chair and Technical director of the University Centre for Museums (*CAM*). As specific requirements or contingent needs arise, the above members may be joined by departments concerned with other technical areas (*AES*, *AFIP*, *APAL*, *ASIT*) or research departments where there specific expertise is required.

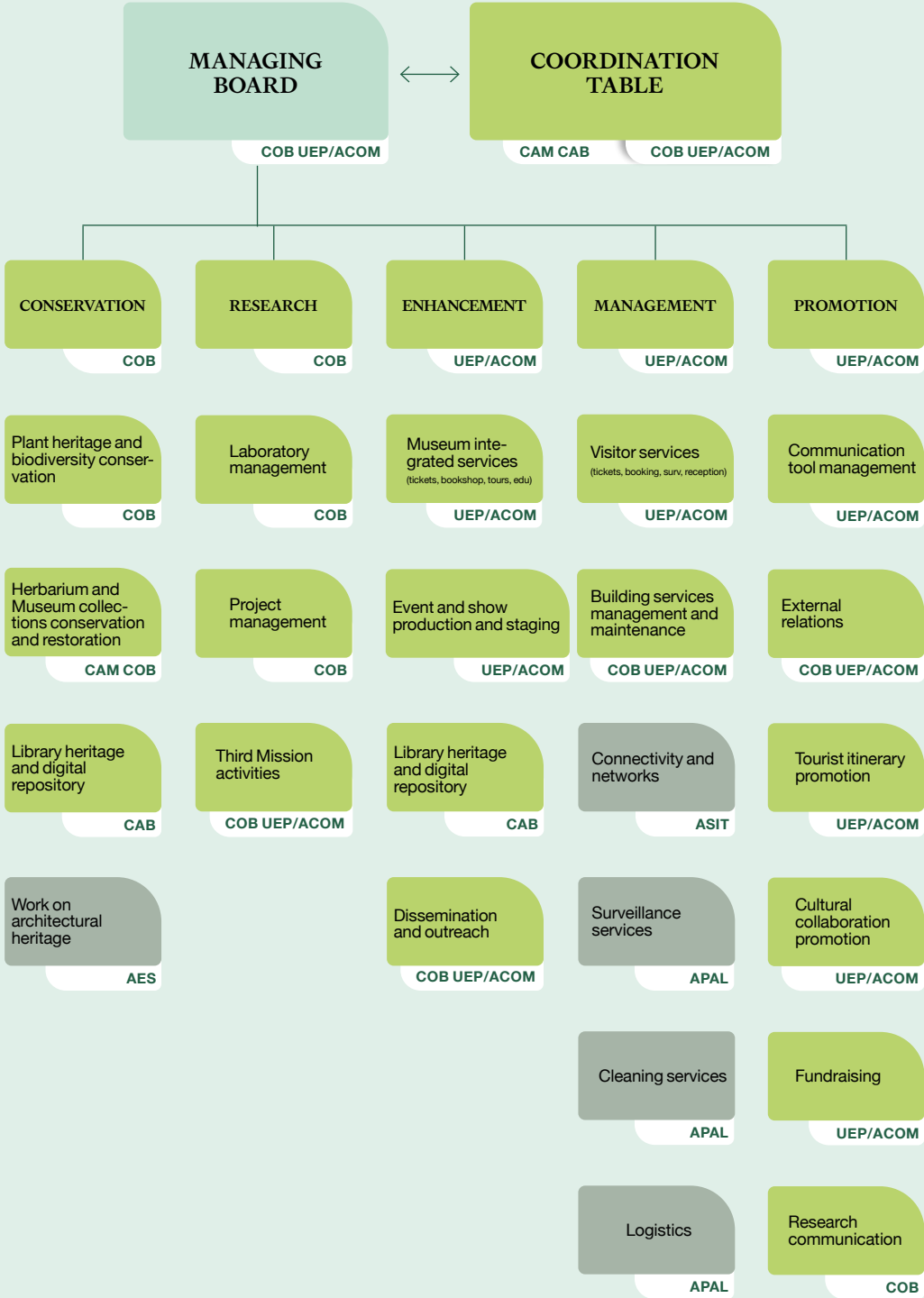
The Coordination Table meets — called by the Prefect — at least three times a year (October/November to plan the coming year; January/February to launch activities for the current year and go over the previous year's outcomes; June/July for a report on the first half of the year and to plan the second half of the year).

The Prefect and Director of the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) report to the Rector and Director General once a year with the Botanical Garden's programme of conservation, research, promotion and enhancement activities and the financial statement. A comparative financial statement for the Botanical Garden, featuring the previous year's final balance and a forecast for the year in progress, is submitted annually by the Managing Board for this purpose (January).

Botanical Garden management



Botanical Garden functional organization structure



JOINT BUSINESS MANAGEMENT OF THE BOTANICAL GARDEN AND MUSEUM OF NATURE AND HUMANKIND

The Botanical Garden model (trialled over the 2016-2025 period) has served as a blueprint for developing the business model for the Museum of Nature and Humankind.

The University has tasked the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing (*ACOM*) with the business management of the Museum, in addition to that of the Botanical Garden, which it has handled since June 2023, with the following goals:

- to build connections and synergies in the natural sciences knowledge dissemination field, in conjunction with the University Centre for Museums (*CAM*) and Botanical Garden University Centre for scientific and conservation matters;
- to ensure the promotion and synergic enhancement of the cultural sites' offering;
- to improve and further develop visitor services and activities, handling the coordination of management activities;
- to ensure the rationalisation and control of costs incurred by promotion and enhancement activities as part of a coordinated development policy.

This coordination, promotion and enhancement strategy, which systematizes the visitor experiences of the University of Padua's cultural sites, has demonstrated its effectiveness with the achievement of record-high admissions over the 2023-2024 period, in a city setting that is enjoying increasing renown both nationally and internationally. The 2024 figures — which attest to the University's efforts in the Third Mission field and in the dissemination of science culture — reveal a total of 417,870 visitors, which is up 2.7% on 2023 (407,344 visitors) and a new all-time high for the number of visits to the University of Padua's cultural heritage. The figures in detail: 191,210 visitors (Botanical Garden, with the Biodiversity Garden closed), 90,336 visitors (Museum of Nature and Humankind), 91,941 visitors (Palazzo del Bo and Hall of the Giants), 33,121 visitors (other university museums), 12,062 (Villa Parco Bolasco in Castelfranco Veneto).

The figures highlight a city landscape — namely Padua's — dominated by UNESCO Sites, with two veritable icons of Art and Science, the Scrovegni Chapel and Botanical Garden, acting as key drawcards and, at the same time, fostering the establishment of joint promotion actions aimed at strengthening the relationship between Site managers, actively developing existing landscape and cultural itineraries even further and taking them to the next level, providing visitors and tourists with increasingly insightful information and engagement (see sect. 2.5.3).

4.2 Key stakeholders and governance system

Governance is a two-fold concept: on one hand, there is governance relating to entities tasked with strategic decision-making and, on the other, governance relating to entities whose participation is required. Both decision-makers and entities involved in various capacities in the Site's activities qualify as stakeholders.

The decision-maker for all Botanical Garden matters is the University of Padua, which operates through the Botanical Garden University Centre and the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing (*ACOM*) for decisions pertaining to day-to-day running (see sect. 4.1), and through its governing bodies for strategic and special decisions (Rector, the Board, Academic Senate).

The University of Padua, which looks after and manages the Botanical Garden, also serves as the main stakeholder, acting through: the faculties when it comes to research efforts; the technical and administrative departments for actions intended to support operation and the allocation of resources; and, when it comes to policies regarding the enhancement and promotion of cultural assets, through the university museums, above all the Museum of Nature and Humankind.

In addition to the University, there are many other entities that qualify as stakeholders given their proximity to the Site and/or role in its development.

In 2007, the University signed a memorandum of understanding on the Botanical Garden with relevant local institutional bodies: Padua City Council, Padua District Council, Veneto Regional Council, Italian Ministry of Culture (regional governing body and Heritage Department (*Soprintendenza*)). These entities met again in 2024 to start work on the new Management Plan and supervise its development.

More specifically, **Padua City Council** — as the contact point for the city's UNESCO Site "Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles" — works closely with the University on tourism and cultural promotion actions that concern the Garden in conjunction with the city's various other cultural and museum sites, while it is also the entity in charge of issuing consents and permits for building projects (e.g. consents for minor works (SCIA), planning permission) and events (e.g. public shows). The University is also part of the steering group for the Padua tourism development organization (*Ogd*), in which the City Council has a promoting role.

In order to strengthen the active relationship between the two entities, it is felt that one of the orders of business of the new Management Plan needs to be the establishment of the **Institutional Roundtable for UNESCO Sites** (see Action 22) for discus-

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PADUA CITY
COUNCIL

INSTITUTIONAL
ROUNDTABLE
FOR THE CITY'S
UNESCO SITES

sion and coordination on activities that regard Padua's UNESCO Sites and for the development of possible common projects. The Roundtable will convene, at the request of the two entities, at least once a year. The "Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles" Site will be represented at the roundtable by: a representative from the lead entity, Padua City Council; the Chair of the Site's Steering Committee; the Head of the Department of culture and tourism; and the Manager of the Padua City Council World Heritage department. While the Botanical Garden Site will be represented by: the University of Padua's Vice Rector for artistic, historical and cultural heritage and for the Library System; the Prefect of the University Botanical Garden; the Manager of the University's Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) and Manager of the Permanent Events Office (*UEP*). They will be joined by executives responsible for the two Sites' management, enhancement and promotion activities. Participation in the Roundtable is open to other entities, who may be invited for their specific expertise in certain matters. On the technical front, actions for the two Sites' enhancement and promotion will be jointly coordinated, on a continuous basis, by the University Botanical Garden's and the "Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles" Site's respective management departments.

The Botanical Garden also sits on the UNESCO Site Regional Coordination Table, which was established by the **Veneto Regional Council** and has been active for several years in promoting and enhancing the Sites and in exchanging information and best practices among local World Heritage Sites.

OTHER
STAKEHOLDERS

When it comes to research and conservation activities, the Botanical Garden's stakeholder is the national and international scientific community, while for promotion and enhancement activities, visitors and tourists, schools and other educational institutions are the main stakeholders when it comes to economic sustainability and cultural dissemination.

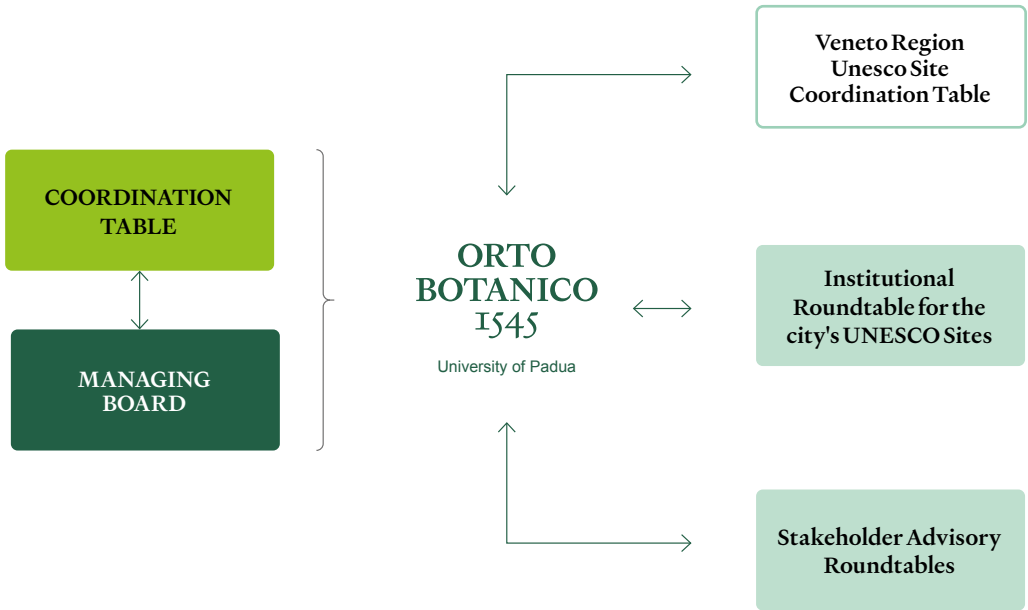
The main stakeholder locally is Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo, a savings bank that provides the University with support for its major structural projects and for annual enhancement and culture dissemination projects, including the *Risvegli. La festa dei fiori* flower festival organized by the Botanical Garden and the event held specifically for *Science4All* pupils. In addition to this longstanding partner, other bodies and institutions have supported some of the Botanical Garden's specific projects, including Padua's Chamber of Commerce, the local branch of the Confederation of Italian Industry *Confindustria Veneto Est* and associations that bring together the University, local businesses and local residents (*Associazione degli Amici dell'Università di Padova* and *Associazione Alumni Università di Padova*). The most substantial funding effort in recent years was linked to the building and fitout of the Botanical

STAKEHOLDER
ADVISORY
ROUNDTABLES

Museum (2023). Then there are major and minor individual donors who are recruited, with the help of the University's Fundraising Department, for specific events, restoration work and projects.

The preparation of the Garden's new Management Plan involved the active participation of local stakeholders in the process of updating/supplementing the document, which inherently served as a valuable opportunity to raise the Site's profile as well as awareness around its value. Providing deeper insight into issues relating to the conservation, promotion, enhancement and use of cultural heritage was pivotal to the participatory process, resulting in the process itself becoming an opportunity to share and exchange ideas on the Site's goals and development strategies, with a special focus on projects to be carried out in the medium-to-long term. Against this background, the Botanical Garden's main stakeholders were invited to discuss a number of what were considered key issues during an event held over two days: one day of workshops with thematic roundtables held to identify and share common requirements and propose shared actions, and a second day for the Botanical Garden to present the results and discuss them with the stakeholders. The outcomes of this process were worked into the 2025-2031 Action Plan (see sect. 3.2 e 4.4) and Advisory Roundtables have been confirmed as a method for engagement and exchange with local entities, to be maintained as a permanent arrangement in the coming years (**Stakeholder Advisory Roundtables**) with at least one meeting a year (see Action 22).

The Botanical Garden's governance system

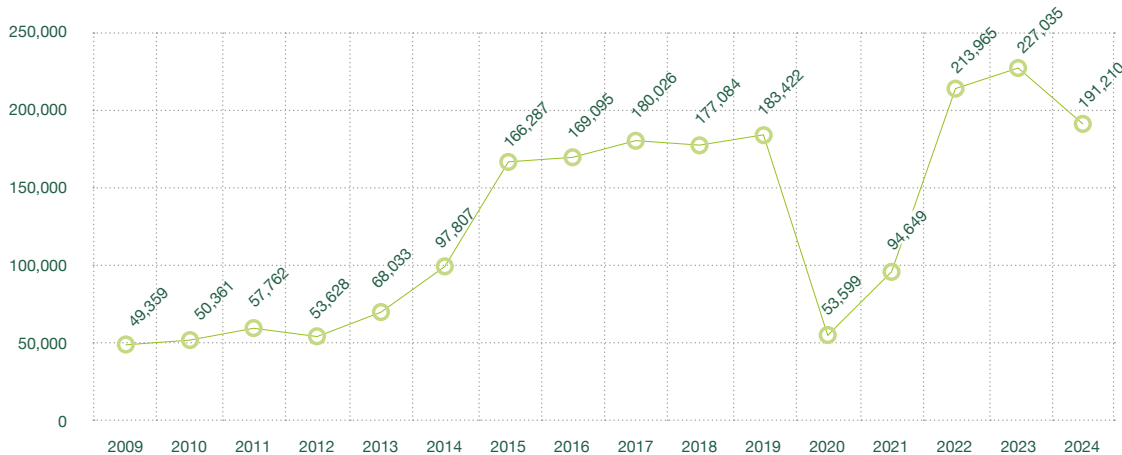


4.3 The financial side

In the broadest terms, the financial side of the Botanical Garden's activities can be broken down into income and expenditure, divided up according to the purpose of the action (conservation, promotion/enhancement and general costs), regardless of the cost centre they are associated with, producing a summarized picture of the current situation.

From a business point of view, this is the culmination of the cultural site's substantial evolution in terms of its use by the public, resulting in a total increase in visitor numbers since 2009 of 360% (from 49,359 visitors in 2009 to 227,305 in 2023). A growth curve that really took off in 2014-2015 with the opening of the Biodiversity Garden (see sect. 2.1).

Botanical Garden visitor figures 2009-2024



This evolution called for an overhaul of the management processes. Aside from the 2014-2015 period — which was a trial period for the operation of services by private parties on a concession basis, to help the Garden acquire the necessary know-how — the management of the Botanical Garden is handled directly by the University of Padua's various Centres and Departments (see sect. 4.1), which ensures that there is a certain level of financial balance across the activities that show up on the University's annual consolidated financial statement.



4.3.1 INVESTMENTS OVERVIEW (2008-2024)

The investments overview for the 2008-2024 period, totalling 24,089,369.88 euros, provides a picture of the overall extent of the University of Padua's commitment to the Botanical Garden's heritage conservation and related promotion and enhancement activities. These elements form the foundation underpinning both the current business financial statement and future development prospects.

Investments for projects 2008-2024

Project	Description	Amount	Source of funding	Year
Restoration of Botanical Garden of Padua's boundary wall and ancient manmade structures	Work was carried out on all ancient manmade structures within the Garden as part of the restoration project. More specifically, the circular wall was restored, which also involved rendering the inside of the wall with the original <i>cocciopesto</i> finish, a traditional plaster made from lime and crushed brick. The project also included restoring the marble balustrade running on top of the circular wall, the entrance columns and associated acroteria, the statues, fountains and all wrought iron gates.	€520,318.88	Funding from University Budget 07.01.01 (Italian law <i>Legge</i> 370/99)	2009
Restoration and expansion of the Botanical Garden of Padua	The project involved building the new Visitor Centre and newly expanded structures, consisting in a single large glass house divided into five spaces reproducing the Earth's different climate conditions (Biodiversity Garden).	€14,796,932	Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (<i>MIUR</i>) Funding from University Budget 07.01.01 (Italian law <i>Legge</i> 370/99)	2010 – 2013
Setting up Biodiversity Garden greenhouses visitor routes		€700,000	University of Padua's own funds	2013 – 2014
Restoration of the "Goethe's Palm" glass house	Conservation project (restoration of windows and doors) aimed at making the palm more visible for visitors and improving the plant's conservation conditions.	€373,890	Technical sponsorship (supply of glazing) from private donors: €327,530 University of Padua's own funds	2015
Restoration of 19 th -Century Greenhouses	Restoration to conserve 19 th -Century Glass Houses, with repair of deteriorated parts and removal of later additions. Functional reorganization of spaces.	€1,730,000	Veneto Regional Council with resources from the Development and Cohesion Fund (<i>FSC</i>): €1,000,000 University of Padua's own funds	2016 – 2018
Work to reorganize the Biodiversity Garden's multifunctional building	Reorganization of storage spaces and rooms used by gardeners, creation of a control room for the auditorium hall and interiors designed to accommodate the cafeteria and catering requirements.	€688,683	University of Padua's own funds	2020 – 2021

Remedial work on Prefect's Residence, fitout of Botanical Museum and refurbishment of Library spaces	Conservation remedial work, building services upgrade, energy upgrade and earthquake strengthening on the Prefect's Residence, including fitting out the Botanical Museum and the Historic Library of Botany and Medicine.	€2,707,546	Italian Ministry of Education and Research (<i>MUR</i>) special funds: € 200,000 <i>MUR</i> university building funds: € 1,070,000 Padua Chamber of Commerce: €100,000 <i>Art Bonus</i> tax credit: €40,150 University of Padua's own funds	2020 – 2023
Additional work to repair the Keeper's Lodge	Restoration of the "Keeper's Lodge" to house offices and store rooms, including energy efficiency improvement work, refurbishment of flooring, stairs and internal partitions, replacement of joinery and shutters and building of an accessible toilet.	€600,000	University of Padua's own funds	2020 – 2024
Restoration work with NRRP funding for historic parks and gardens	Plant component. The project seeks to strengthen the Botanical Garden of Padua's contribution to the conservation of plant biodiversity by expanding its ability to handle, conserve and distribute larger collections of plant species, especially rare or endangered species. Restoration of greenhouses to strengthen biodiversity and make growing spaces more accessible; improving the gene bank for seed conservation; dredging of the Alicorno canal and use of wetland species for water treatment to ensure better quality.	€1,972,000	Italian Ministry of Culture NRRP funding for parks and gardens	2022 – 2024
	Architectural and sculptural component. Restoration of the ancient Garden's historic stonework, with support from the regional heritage institute (<i>IIBC</i>) to enhance the historic heritage.			
	Equipment and systems component. Installation of hi-tech systems to monitor moisture levels and optimize irrigation; composting upgrade to reduce waste to zero			
		€24,089,369.88		

4.3.2 BUSINESS FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Business revenue from visitor-related activities (amounting to 97,758 euros/year in 2009) came in at 2,114,700 euros in 2023. 2024 saw a drop in revenue, which was down 19.84% on the year before, mainly due to reduced visitor numbers as a result of the Biodiversity Garden's closure (from July 2023 to April 2025, see sect. 2.2.2.b). This event took business revenue back to 2019 pre-Covid levels, attesting to the strong interdependence between the Biodiversity Garden and overall public use of the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT	2024	change 2025/2027	change 2028/2029	change 2030/2031
ORDINARY INCOME				
Admission ticket, museum education and tour sales	€1,300,000			
<i>Bookshop</i>	€150,000			
Income from space lease and service concession fees	€55,000	-5%/+5%	+40/+50%	+20/+25%
Projects, sponsorships and other contracted services	€190,000			
University of Padua ordinary funding	€1,695,000			
EXTRAORDINARY INCOME AND INVESTMENTS				
Extraordinary funding for projects under NRRP for historic parks and gardens	€1,731,240	-100 %	+30 %	
University of Padua conservation investment funding	€900,000	+15 %	+5 %	
TOTAL INCOME	€6,021,240			
CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH EXPENDITURE				
Routine maintenance and conservation expenses (property and systems)	€240,000			
Non-routine maintenance expenses	€60,000			
Routine maintenance expenses (plant component) (*)	€603,000	+5 %	+10 %	+10 %
Research expenses (*)	€303,000			
Utilities (electricity, gas, water)	€450,000			
TARGETED INVESTMENTS				
Investments in scientific equipment	€170,000	-100 %	+50 %	
EXTRAORDINARY FUNDING FOR THE HISTORIC GARDEN'S CONSERVATION AND MAINTENANCE				
Conservation and research work drawing on NRRP extraordinary funding	€1,268,240	-100 %	+30 %	
TOTAL CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH COSTS	€3,094,240			

EXPENDITURE FOR VISITOR-RELATED, PROMOTION AND ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES 2024		2025/2027	2028/2029	2030/2031
Ticket office service	€138,000	+0/+5%	+20/+30%	+10/+20%
Educational services (guided tours, workshops and <i>pilot</i>)	€190,000			
Public surveillance and assistance service	€250,000			
Bookshop service (production and management)	€110,000			
Costs for personnel for running business	€120,000			
Call centre	€70,000			
Running costs (consultancy, administration and tax costs) (**)	€85,000			
Cultural, science dissemination and promotional initiatives and activities (exhibitions, educational activities, conferences and meetings) (*)	€180,000			
Awareness raising of historic parks and gardens under NRRP scheme	€190,000			
Communication, promotion and marketing (*)	€220,000			
TOTAL VISITOR-RELATED, PROMOTION AND ENHANCEMENT COSTS		€1,553,000		
GENERAL COSTS		2025/2027	2028/2029	2030/2031
Security and visitor reception service	€78,000	+5 %	+20 %	+10 %
Cleaning expenses	€136,000			
Logistics expenses	€30,000			
Costs for Unipd personnel (administrative and institutional activities)	€230,000			
MULTI-YEAR INVESTMENT DEPRECIATION				
Multi-year investment depreciation	€900,000	+150 %	+5 %	+10 %
TOTAL GENERAL COSTS		€1,374,000		
TOTAL INCOME		€6,021,240		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		€6,021,240		
(*) this item includes the relevant portion of costs for personnel performing the activities				
(**) includes non-deductible VAT				



In terms of ordinary operations, income from admission tickets and visitor-related services and projects account for 50% of total income (net after investment expenses), while the remaining 50% of income items consists in the University's regular funding of conservation and research activities and to cover general costs (including the salaries of regular employees).

Entry tickets account for 69.13% of total business revenue, while revenue from services, the bookshop, events and projects make a 30.87% contribution to income. The steady increase of these latter items attests to the effectiveness of a revenue stream diversification policy put into effect after the Covid-19 pandemic hit.

Business revenue covers 109.14% of total costs for visitor-related, promotion and enhancement activities (including the salaries of regular employees and cost of outsourced services). The positive balance covers 29.96% of total general costs.

Looking at the expenditure items, there is a fairly even split between conservation/research activities (41.50% of ordinary costs) and visitor-related/promotion/enhancement activities (38.92%), with general costs accounting for 11.88% of the total.

On the investment front, with investments very much geared towards conservation/research, extraordinary income for 2024 amounted to 2,631,240 euros (accounting for 43.70% of the total income items), derived from finance provided under the Ministry of Culture's NRRP funding for historic parks and gardens; the financial statement continues to show multi-year structural investment depreciation.

4.3.3 DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS FOR THE 2025-2031 PERIOD

While the closure of the Biodiversity Garden greenhouses put the brakes on the Botanical Garden's growth policies and has had flow-on negative effects, this was somewhat mitigated by the temporary reopening (from May 2025). This decline completely bucks the city's growing tourism trend and its effects are destined to continue until the completion of the Garden's restoration project, which is expected to take a total of no more than 36 months (see Action 4).

The completion of this phase — backed with substantial investments intended to relaunch the Garden's cultural image and produce a new visitor offering — is the prerequisite for re-establishing the positive trend of the 2014-2023 period and will enable new scenarios to be planned for the Site's revival and development, ensuring the actions set out in the Management Plan can be implemented.

With 30% growth over the 2028-2029 period (>250,000 visitors) and an additional 20% for the following two-year period 2030-2031 (maximum limit to maintain the Site's sustainability), revenue is estimated to increase up to 2,600,000-3,000,000 euros, up between 60 and 75% on 2024's figures.

More specifically, the contribution to the increase in revenue for the individual business income items can be split as follows:

- +30/40% of total revenue resulting from an increase in the number of tickets sold due to an increase in days/times it is open to the public, and resulting increase in the average visitor ticket price;
- +5% of total revenue resulting from lease fees and cafe and catering service fees;
- +10% of total revenue resulting from increase in events, exhibitions and shows;
- +10% of total revenue resulting from increase in bookshop sales;
- +5-10% of total revenue resulting from increase in fundraising.

Business income becomes the primary source of ordinary funding, while the University is required to concentrate on backing investment policies required to relaunch the Site.

Building investment three-year planning 2025-2027

Project	Investment	Stage
Historic garden glasshouses (see Action 3)	€2,800,000	Work getting under way
Repairs to roof on Prefect's Residence (see Action 6)	€600,000	Framework Agreement for contracting out building and building services repair work, including work on buildings requiring certification of contractor compliance (SOA categories OG2 and OG11 Ed. 4) (contract to be awarded)
Restoration of stonework and metalwork in the medicinal plant garden Hortus Simplicium (see Action 5)	€390,000	Final drawings and documents
Building services (lighting) upgrade (see Action 7)	€475,000	Final drawings and documents being drawn up
Biodiversity Garden greenhouses glazing restoration work (see Action 4)	€5,000,000	Estimated by technical consultant - Court of Padua / final drawings and documents being drawn up
Work to replace Biodiversity Garden greenhouses roofing and other building services work (see Action 4)	€1,500,000	Estimate / final drawings and documents being drawn up
New discovery trails and related signage and landscape improvements for the Biodiversity Garden (see Action 4)	€1,500,000	Estimate
TOTAL	€12,265,000	

4.3.4 FUNDING OUTLOOK

The creation of the Biodiversity Garden saw the Botanical Garden's income supplemented with sources from outside the University in what has become a systemic and organic funding model. Since 2014, the resources invested by the University have been supplemented by steadily growing results associated with the Garden's commercial management, on the one hand and, on the other, the procurement of external funds intended for specific projects.

The main institutional financial backers over the last 15 years have been the Italian Minister of University, Veneto Regional Council and the Italian Ministry of Culture (see sect. 4.3), who have contributed to the construction/restoration of the Site's main infrastructure — such as the Biodiversity Garden, 19th-Century Glass Houses, and Botanical Museum — and, most recently, to the launch of a wide-ranging process of upgrading the conservation, building services, security and surveillance structures (project financed by the Ministry of Culture drawing on NRRP funds for historic parks and gardens). Another source of institutional funding — which is significant for the continuity it has afforded in supporting the delivery of promotion and enhancement projects — is the funding allocated under the Italian Ministry of Culture's UNESCO Site protection and development law *Legge 77/2006* that, in recent years, has been a major contributor to the restoration and extension of the Site's information and promotion tools (guide, audio guide, activities for schools, website and app) and has enabled this Management Plan's preparation project to go ahead.

In the local context, the University of Padua's main and ongoing partner is the *Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo* savings bank. Additional supporters are Padua's Chamber of Commerce, the local branch of the Confederation of Italian Industry *Confindustria Veneto Est* and individual business owners, often members of associations like *Associazione degli Amici dell'Università di Padova* and *Associazione Alumni Università di Padova* (see sect. 4.2).

Between 2008 and 2024, out of the total 24,089,369.88 euros in investments, external funding accounted for 4,709,680 euros. The Botanical Garden University Centre and Permanent Events Office (*UEP*)/Communication and Marketing (*ACOM*) can draw on the expertise of the University's own Fundraising Department — part of the Communication and Marketing Area (*ACOM*) — for support in delivering these actions (see sect. 4.1).

Effective fundraising and sponsorship policies and campaigns are essential to help procure resources to grow the Site's ability to be financially self-sufficient, optimizing the input-to-output ratio for both individual projects and for all conservation,

promotion and enhancement activities. The diversification of sources of funding is crucial in coming years to support investments and ensure the Site's development, through a combination of existing established institutional and business sources and by exploring new external funding options, at a European, national and local level.

A non-exhaustive list of the main funding options in this sense might include:

- European funds: submitting projects for access to finance, applying for both direct and indirect funds, which can be used for restoration, conservation, promotion and enhancement projects (e.g. Creative Europe, Digital Europe and Horizon Europe, LIFE);
- State funding: annual application for project funding under *Legge 77/2006* (see Action 18);
- Regional funding: application for funding for "*The Botanical Garden of the University of Padua, living heritage*" project under ERDF Regional Programme 2021-2027, action 4.6.1 (see Action 12);
- Banking foundations: submission of specific projects and call for funding application to the *Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo* savings bank;
- Sponsorships, private donations: fundraising and sponsorship policies put in place to attract funding from for-profits and non-profits, such as businesses, associations and private donors, counting on the friends of the University and student association network *Amici dell'Università* and *Associazione Alumni*, with the opportunity for donors to claim the *Art Bonus* tax credit also making donations more appealing;
- Research projects: submission of scientific projects to programmes such as *PRIN* (Projects of Significant National Interest) and other national and international programmes, drawing on the Garden's expertise in the field of botany, ecology and biodiversity conservation.

4.4 Actions for the 2025-2031 period

Actions for the 2025-2031 period driven mainly by the Credibility strategic objective are given below (see Action Plan, sect. 3.2).

ACTION 22. Local advisory roundtables	
Strategic objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To build the Garden's reputation as a go-to space for education and culture, which includes cultivating relationships and developing projects with bodies and institutions at a local, national and international level (<i>Reputation</i>)
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To establish/strengthen ongoing relationships with local stakeholders, with a particular focus on the city's other UNESCO SiteTo create more opportunities to share and exchange information and ideas with entities in the same field or in complementary fields for the delivery of new initiatives and projectsTo raise awareness around the values of the UNESCO Site and its protection requirements

Description of the project and planned activities

The project includes all initiatives for the establishment and strengthening of local roundtables put in place for the preparation of the Management Plan, which are intended to become an ongoing arrangement and are due to have resources allocated for their organization and management. More specifically:

- Institutional Roundtable for the city's UNESCO Sites;
- Stakeholder Advisory Roundtables.

The Institutional Roundtable for the city's UNESCO Sites will convene at least once a year for discussion and coordination on activities and needs that regard Padua's Sites and for the development of possible common projects, including projects for the promotion of Padua as both a "City of Art and City of Science" (see sect. 4.2). In addition to this, on the technical front, actions for the two Sites' enhancement and promotion will be jointly coordinated, on a continuous basis, by the Botanical Garden's and the "Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles" Site's respective management departments.

Stakeholder Advisory Roundtables, established for the preparation of the Management Plan in January 2025, are to become more systematic meetings for discussion and exchanging ideas, with at least one meeting a year. The roundtables are designed to identify and share common requirements and propose shared actions (see sect. 4.2).

Project location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buffer zone
Project scope	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Network project	<input type="checkbox"/> Local project
Partners and/or stakeholders	Padua City Council; contact points for the fresco cycles serial site; other institutions; local bodies and associations (culture, tourism, social); tour operators	
Recipients	University of Padua; Padua City Council; contact points for the fresco cycles serial site; other institutions; local bodies and associations (culture, tourism, social); tour operators	
Financial resources (identified or to be identified)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> own <input type="checkbox"/> third-party contributions	<input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> international <input type="checkbox"/> sponsorships
Budget	institutional activity	
Timeframes	Short, Medium and Longterm (2025-2031)	Length ongoing
Project status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> planned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in execution phase
If planned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> implementation-ready <input type="checkbox"/> not implementation-ready (because)	
Replicability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Roundtables established (yes/no)No. of meetings held within the timelineCollaborations established (yes/no)	
UN Sustainable Development Goals captured	11: Sustainable cities and communities	
Level of alignment with strategic objectives of UNIPD 2023-2027 Strategic Plan	High	
Environmental impact	Medium	Digital impact Medium Gender impact Medium
5Cs	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> credibility <input type="checkbox"/> capacity building

ACTION 23. Visitor Management Plan	
Strategic objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To strengthen processes and actions involved in dealings with the public (<i>Welcoming</i>)• To cast the Garden as a place worth revisiting, encouraging users to make repeat visits and purchases (<i>Engagement</i>)• To redefine the Garden's offering to capture the interest of different audiences (<i>Attraction</i>)
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To plan sustainable management of visitor flows• To make users aware of the Site's OUV• To improve the visitor experience
Description of the project and planned activities	
<p>The aim of the project is to prepare the Visitor Management Plan (VMP) for the Site in line with the UNESCO Programme for World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism, using the guidelines contained in the "Visitor Management Assessment & Strategy Tool" (www.vmast.net). The VMP seeks to identify sustainable tourism practices in keeping with the Site's outstanding value and its specific qualities, achieving a balanced distribution of visitor flows in terms of both time and space, ensuring responsible use of the Site while delivering a rewarding experience for visitors. The Plan's strategies include strategies relating to the Botanical Garden's integration with the city's other cultural sites and tourist attractions, especially the World Heritage Site "Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles". The Plan should include strategies to educate visitors on the importance of the Site's conservation and to communicate the rules and best practices to be followed during their visit, and should also incorporate measures for managing the risks identified in the Disaster Risk Management Plan.</p> <p>The planned activities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• assessing the Site's Tourism Carrying Capacity;• analysing the impacts of tourism on the Site;• defining tourist flow management goals;• planning specific management strategies, including the ticketing system, reception services, etc.;• defining a continuous monitoring and assessment system;• planning and constantly fine-tuning the plan based on monitoring results and on the Site's evolving conditions.	

Project location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buffer zone
Project scope	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Network project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local project
Partners and/or stakeholders	Padua City Council, Tourism department; IAT Padova visitor centre; tour operators and guides	
Recipients	Personnel and users of the Botanical Garden	
Financial resources (identified or to be identified)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> own <input type="checkbox"/> third-party contributions	<input type="checkbox"/> regional <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> sponsorships <input type="checkbox"/> international
Budget	€25,000	
Timeframes	Medium term (2027-2028)	Length 12 months
Project status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> planned	<input type="checkbox"/> in execution phase
If planned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> implementation-ready <input type="checkbox"/> not implementation-ready (because)	
Replicability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• VMP compiled (yes/no)• No. of monitoring indicators identified	
UN Sustainable Development Goals captured	11: Sustainable cities and communities 12: Responsible consumption and production	
Level of alignment with strategic objectives of UNIPD 2023-2027 Strategic Plan	High	
Environmental impact	High	Digital impact Medium Gender impact NA
5Cs	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> credibility <input type="checkbox"/> capacity building

ACTION 24. Certification of event sustainability	
Strategic objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To actively set about making a difference in the environmentally responsible use of resources through targeted actions and complex strategies (<i>Sustainability</i>)To build the Garden's reputation as a go-to space for education and culture, which includes cultivating relationships and developing projects with bodies and institutions at a local, national and international level (<i>Reputation</i>)
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To plan sustainable event management

Description of the project and planned activities

The aim of the project is to have event sustainability certified to standard ISO 20121. The certification is both an acknowledgement and objective guarantee that the event has been conceived, designed and/or organized to minimize environmental, social and economic impacts, and covers issues such as water and power usage, waste management, effects on the local community and biodiversity, logistical management and mobility. On that note, the certification underlines the University of Padua's unwavering commitment to the issues of environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

The project concerns events staged by all offices within the University's Communication and Marketing Area (Permanent Events, Communication, Public Engagement), involving the Botanical Garden directly in cultural programme initiatives.

ISO 20121 certification will be achieved with the aid of a specialist firm and will apply, above all, to the event planning stage.
The project follows on from the analysis and testing stage carried out in 2024 and aims to establish an event organization model in line with the University's sustainability policies.

Project location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Buffer zone
Project scope	<input type="checkbox"/> Network project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local project
Partners and/or stakeholders	Offices in the Communication and Marketing Area	
Recipients	Personnel and users of the Botanical Garden	
Financial resources (identified or to be identified)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> own <input type="checkbox"/> third-party contributions	<input type="checkbox"/> regional <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> international sponsorships
Budget	institutional activity	
Timeframes	Short term (2025-2026)	Length 12 months
Project status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> planned	<input type="checkbox"/> in execution phase
If planned	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> implementation-ready <input type="checkbox"/> not implementation-ready (because)	
Replicability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
Indicators	• Certification issued	
UN Sustainable Development Goals captured	11: Sustainable cities and communities 12: Responsible consumption and production	
Level of alignment with strategic objectives of UNIPD 2023-2027 Strategic Plan	High	
Environmental impact	High	Digital impact Medium Gender impact NA
5Cs	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communication	<input type="checkbox"/> community <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> credibility <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> capacity building