



ANDREA BOCELLI FOUNDATION INAUGURATES NEW HEADQUARTERS & EDUCATION LABORATORY, THE “ABF GLOBALAB”

*Located in a historically important 17th Century Florentine Palazzo,
the newly restored space opens its doors on International Day of Education,
symbolically kicking off a series of anniversary events
to celebrate 10 years of “empowering people & communities”*

Florence, Italy (January 22nd, 2021) – This Sunday, January 24th, on International Day of Education, the Andrea Bocelli Foundation (ABF) officially opens the doors to its new headquarters and adjoining education laboratory called “ABF GlobalAB.” Located in the heart of Florence at the famed Baroque “San Firenze” palazzo, the meticulously restored historic spaces serve not only as the Foundation’s operational hub, but more importantly as a physical expression of its mission of “*empowering people and communities:*” a place open to the Foundation’s worldwide community where young people and thinkers from all walks of life will come together to be inspired and grow. The inauguration also marks the first of a series of engaging and thought-provoking public events planned throughout 2021 to celebrate the Foundation’s 10th anniversary year.

Maestro Andrea Bocelli, ABF Founder, states “*When my family and I established the Andrea Bocelli Foundation in 2011, we were inspired by the joy and love we were given by fans from around the world. Our passion to support people and communities and put ourselves at the service of others has over the past decade been channeled into an organization that has grown beyond my wildest dreams. For me, ABF represents one of the highlights of my life; I am looking forward to experiencing many special moments with our global community in its new spaces.*”

The ABF GlobalAB at San Firenze: a living laboratory

Adjacent to the Foundation’s new operational offices, the “ABF GlobalAB” is a strategic vocational project ideated to incentivize and drive the talent of the citizens of tomorrow. Dedicated areas have been carefully designed to build community and foster dialogue through complimentary, year-round physical and virtual educational activities. These include workshops, talks and cultural events that draw from ABF’s numerous education-focused projects, which work to help meet the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda Goal 4.7 (education tools for inclusion).

Indeed, with a particular emphasis on engaging youth aged 16-25 – but with programming for younger children as well – this dynamic living laboratory brings together an innovative educational approach with the support of leading multi-disciplinary thinkers from around the world. In fact, an ABF GlobalAB committee has been formed to help drive strategy and impact



measurement as well as engage directly with ABF programming participants. The inaugural members include:

- **Stefania Giannini**, UNESCO Assistant Director General for Education
- **Mike Ferry**, Entrepreneur & Motivational Speaker
- **Dario Nardella**, Mayor of Florence
- **Beatrice Venezi**, Orchestra Conductor
- **Giovanni Caccamo**, singer-songwriter
- **Max Frieder**, award-winning artist and educator
- ... And more to be announced.

Stefano Aversa, ABF Chairman, comments, *“The new ABF GlobalAB will be a place for youth to engage and grow. A place where they can learn to express their fullest potential. For the Foundation, the space acts a driver to bring together public and private institutions, both Italian and non, in the service of art, music and culture: all critical elements for the development of a more just and responsible society.”*

International Day of Education & ABF 10 Year Anniversary Events

This Sunday, January 24th, International Day of Education, will mark not only the ABF GlobalAB’s grand opening, but also the first of a series of ABF’s 10 Year Anniversary Events currently being developed.

The inaugural and inspirational event will be streamed on ABF’s social media channels (Facebook & YouTube) beginning at 3:00PM CET, kicked off with a special message from Maestro Bocelli and UNESCO’s Assistant Director General for Education, Stefania Giannini as well as engaging content that serves as a preview of the initiatives that will be implemented over the coming years.

The restoration project

Thanks to the generous support of the Florence City Council, ABF has been offered the second floor at San Firenze on loan for complimentary use for 29 years. The Foundation, in turn, committed to carrying out a complex restoration project to transform the 500 square meters of space back to their previous beauty and splendor which took over 90 days and almost 1,000 hours of work.

Dario Nardella, Mayor of Florence, commented: *“From music, to solidarity and education arrives a new signal of hope and rebirth for our city: in the heart of Florence we add a new and important building which used to host the ex-courthouse and which we did not want to leave empty and abandoned. Here, the Maestro Andrea Bocelli has brought his Foundation to unveil a*



an important cultural and social project for Florence and the world. One that gives clear message during these long pandemic months that a new renaissance is not only possible, but also that the beauty of culture and education is crucial for young generations.”

The San Firenze complex, with its majestic façade and interiors, is regarded as one of the most important architectural Baroque-style buildings in the city. Dating back to the 17th Century, the building was originally commissioned by the Oratorians of Saint Philip Neri and has – over the centuries – housed an oratory, a seminary, the city’s court and a church, which is still active today.

Today, the building is also home to the Franco Zeffirelli Foundation & Museum. With ABF’s arrival, the newly revitalized San Firenze complex highlights its role as a new center for arts and culture education, a place open to the world.

About the Andrea Bocelli Foundation

The Andrea Bocelli Foundation (ABF) was established in July 2011 by Bocelli family after being inspired by the affection and positivity received from fans and partners around the world. ABF has since grown into an independent non-profit led by world-class professionals that oversee the strategic development of key projects.

The Foundation’s core mission is to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, distress due to illness and social exclusion by promoting and supporting national and international projects that promote the overcoming of these barriers and the expression of their full potential.

Since 2011, ABF has raised over 36 million Euros in fundraising efforts resulting in the construction of 9 schools in Italy and Haiti that offer daily access to a world-class education to over 3,500 students. Additionally, ABF has created welfare projects that guarantee access to clean water and basic medical treatment to over 400,000 people living in the most remote and impoverished areas of Haiti. The Foundation also implements and promotes education projects that leverages music as an additional tool for social inclusion and talent development, all in line with the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda Goal Number 4.7.

For more information, visit: [AndreaBocelliFoundation.org](https://www.AndreaBocelliFoundation.org).

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