

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **OCEAN LITERACY: UNESCO AND PRADA GROUP EXTEND THEIR SEA BEYOND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM TO 56 COUNTRIES**

Paris and Milan, 23 January 2024 – Ahead of the International Day of Education, UNESCO and Prada Group announced the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of their SEA BEYOND educational program dedicated to the dissemination of ocean literacy and ocean preservation. More than 34,000 students in 56 countries will benefit from this training this year. This new chapter will also be marked by a new partnership with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières (Libraries without Borders).

### **Third edition of SEA BEYOND educational program**

34,385 students from 184 secondary schools across 56 countries will benefit from the SEA BEYOND's training this year, which will focus on the interrelation between the ocean and climate, and the associated environmental challenges. It will offer ocean literacy training sessions for students and teachers and include live lessons with UNESCO ocean and climate experts. The programme will run from January to June 2024 and end with an international contest, as per the previous editions.

UNESCO and Prada Group will launch a contest inviting schools to create an awareness campaign with text, graphics or interactive content, with the aim to explain to their peers how to adopt more conscious behaviours to preserve the ocean. The jury evaluating the campaigns will be composed of new and pre-established SEA BEYOND "friends", the so-called SEA BEYONDers, people who have placed a love for the ocean at the centre of their personal and professional lives.

**Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO's Director-General**, commented: *"Humanity depends on the ocean, but the future of the ocean is in jeopardy due to human activity. If we want to succeed in saving it, we must support scientific research, advance knowledge but also invest in education. This program supported by UNESCO and Prada Group, is a very positive example of how to raise awareness among younger generations and move towards virtuous practices"*.

**Lorenzo Bertelli, Prada Group Head of Corporate Social Responsibility**, commented: *"The record number of students enrolled in this year's program shows that we are progressing in the right direction and that SEA BEYOND is able to generate a real change". And he added: "The new partnership with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières is the first humanitarian project within SEA BEYOND; we want to inspire new generations, making them aware of the importance of the ocean and the need to preserve it and we want to do this by leaving no one behind"*.

### **Partnership with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières (Libraries without Borders)**

This new partnership with the international non-profit organization Bibliothèques Sans Frontières aims to facilitate access to ocean education for children and young citizens in vulnerable communities through the Ideas Box, a mobile multimedia centre of over 100 square meters including internet connection, tablets, laptops and over 250 books and games, as well as hundreds of training materials.

The Ideas Box concept was initially developed by **French designer Philippe Starck** for **Bibliothèques Sans Frontières** back in 2014 and today **115 communities** all over the world benefit from it.

This partnership will allow, from June 2024, the first SEA BEYOND-dedicated Ideas Box focused on ocean education, which will be presented in Venice on International Ocean Day. It will be based in Naples and managed by **Fondazione Quartieri Spagnoli**. It will then travel across Italy.

Moreover, contents related to ocean literacy prepared by UNESCO experts, will be integrated into pre-existing Ideas Boxes in France, Burundi and the Ivory Coast. UNESCO's experts will also be in charge of training the local teams running the Ideas Boxes and accompanying the children using them.

**Patrick Weil, Founder and President of Bibliothèques Sans Frontières**, said: *"We are very excited about this partnership with SEA BEYOND. Education is a fundamental human right and the benefits of scientific advancements should not be limited to the few. Prioritising this challenge and giving access to ocean education is a matter of social justice, ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity to be informed about crucial environmental issues, become familiar with the ocean, and realise their potential as citizens"*.

SEA BEYOND is supported by 1% of the proceeds from the Prada Re-Nylon Collection.

## Presentation

### SEA BEYOND

Conducted in partnership with UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) to raise awareness about sustainability and ocean preservation, SEA BEYOND is an educational program supported by Prada Group since 2019. The project has contributed to the progress of ocean education on a global scale, through a series of training initiatives dedicated to younger generations. From 2023, SEA BEYOND extended its scope beyond education with two new areas of focus: support for scientific research dissemination and humanitarian projects, both dedicated to the ocean. Within the framework of SEA BEYOND, Prada Group also trained its more than 14,000 employees worldwide on ocean literacy principles, via VR learning contents and the AWorld app, the official platform selected by the United Nations to live more sustainably.

### Prada Group

Prada Group is socially engaged to contribute to the sustainable development of the communities and stimulate the cultural debate in all its forms of expression. The Group partners with recognized players and international entities to develop educational and training programs, value talent, support scientific research, foster women's empowerment, and promote local culture and artistic heritage. Prada Group operates in the luxury sector through the Prada, Miu Miu, Church's, Car Shoe, Marchesi 1824 and Luna Rossa brands.

### UNESCO

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It contributes to peace and security by leading multilateral cooperation in education, sciences, culture, communication and information. As part of this mandate, UNESCO is home to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO) which promotes international cooperation in marine sciences to improve management of the ocean, coasts and marine resources. UNESCO also leads the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030). With 194 member states, UNESCO employs over 2000 people, has offices in 54 countries and coordinates a network of over 2000 protected cultural and natural sites. It is headquartered in Paris and its Director-General is Audrey Azoulay.

### Bibliothèques Sans Frontières

Bibliothèques Sans Frontières is a non-profit organization working to bring access to information, education, and cultural resources to those who need it most. Combining cutting-edge technologies with tailored content and mediation expertise, we deliver innovative programs to strengthen knowledge, capacity and cohesion in underserved communities across the world. Since 2007, BSF has developed inclusive multi-language projects and cross-sectoral partnerships in 30 countries, impacting over 1.5 million individuals.

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