

## Join the initiative "Salvem les fotos" to help Valencia save their photographic heritage



On October 29 2024, the Valencian Community in Spain was severely affected by an extreme weather event known as DANA (Isolated Depression at High Levels), which unleashed torrential rains, resulting in catastrophic flooding across the region. In eight hours, parts of Valencia received over a year's worth of rainfall.

As a response to this disaster, conservators in the region took action to help in any way possible. The initiative Salvem les fotos (Save the Photos) was established to salvage photographs of those affected by this catastrophe. This project is led by the University of Valencia, with the support of the five public universities of the Valencian Community, various institutions and museums, the Spanish Association of Conservators and Restorers (ACRE), and the Spanish Group of the International Center for Conservation (GE IIC).

The scope of the initiative goes beyond salvaging family photographs; it seeks to contribute to the healing and resilience within the community by actively involving its members in the recovery tasks, offering them a sense of purpose, connection, and hope during this challenging time. The main goals of the project are to transmit hope and positivism; to foster social cohesion, to contribute to both individual and community well-being, to strengthen the social network within towns and communities and to fill a void with meaningful purpose and significance. In summary, by recovering these photographic memories and family treasures, the initiative aims to help restore the identity and sense of belonging for the affected families, providing meaningful purpose and support during the recovery process will assist in the recovery of their identity of the affected families.

The multidisciplinary and dedicated team of heritage professionals and volunteers who are working across six labs in different locations, safeguarding the treasured memories of nearly 1,000 families.

Photograph conservator Rosina Herrera Garrido writes:

"Right now, our priority is stabilizing the collections by drying or freezing them to prevent mold and further deterioration. Soon, we will begin the process of washing, drying, and treating the most delicate objects. To move forward, we urgently need materials for this next phase, as well as support to compensate the volunteers and experts who have been tirelessly working since November.

This project is entirely free of charge for those affected, but it relies on outside donations to continue. Your support will ensure that we can keep preserving these invaluable family treasures and help restore a sense of identity and hope to those who have lost so much.

Debbie Hess Norris, chair of the Department of Art Conservation at the University of Delaware and Director of the

Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation is raising funds to support our work in recovering photographs and memories of families affected by the #dana in Valencia. Please give now. All gifts at any level are welcome."

How to help: <https://gofund.me/8793f0f1>

More information about the project at: <https://museuhortasud.com/en/save-the-photos/>

Instagram: [@rosina.herrera.garrido](https://www.instagram.com/rosina.herrera.garrido) / [@museucomarcalthortasud](https://www.instagram.com/museucomarcalthortasud)