In the last century, the Humayun’s Tomb site, a jewel of the Mughal period that predates the Taj Mahal, had become dilapidated from lack of maintenance. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) believed that heritage sites could not only sustain themselves, but could become catalysts for the revitalization of historic districts. In India, AKTC began by restoring the gardens of Humayun’s Tomb, as a gift to India by His Highness the Aga Khan on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of India’s independence. Following the completed garden restoration in 2004, AKTC expanded its activities to encompass an urban renewal project that comprises the adjoining areas of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti, Sundar Nursery, and the Humayun’s Tomb complex.

AKTC focuses on the physical, social, cultural and economic revitalization of communities in the Muslim world. It includes the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, the Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme, the Aga Khan Music Initiative, the on-line resource ArchNet.org and the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The Aga Khan Museum was opened in Toronto, in 2014. AKTC has restored over 350 monuments and historic sites and has received 13 UNESCO heritage awards for excellence in restoration.