

## **Educational and Cultural Park**

The Educational and Cultural Park, which will be developed in an area of at least 120,000 m<sup>2</sup> around the two educational and cultural pillars that will be funded by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, the National Library and the National Lyric Theater, will constitute both on its own and also together with these pillars an important contribution to Greece's capital city of Athens, to its residents, and to education and civilization as a whole.

The Park will provide a much-needed green area in the capital. Indeed Athens, and especially its central neighborhoods, are so densely populated that on lists ranking the ratio of green areas in European cities to inhabitants, the capital of Greece is positioned in last place. The need for green space gains urgency when one considers ongoing climate changes and the world's dramatic global warming. The creation of the Park, with the planting of a significant number of trees, will also positively influence the area's microclimate and air quality. In addition, it will connect the city centre to its waterfront.

In terms of the general planning for the National Library and the National Lyric Theater, the Park will constitute not just a small addition or an entranceway to access the two buildings, but a true environmental and cultural bridge between them and an affirmation of function and creativity. The planning and design of the entire project will be carried out with the highest quality, aesthetic and functional standards.

The Park will become an urban oasis and provide opportunities for relaxation, leisure activities, learning and culture. It will be able to accommodate numerous activities and programs. Possible examples could include gardening and horticulture classes for adults and children, outdoor literature classes in collaboration with the Library, Christmas tree recycling, park maintenance programs for volunteers, and arts and cultural programs such as painting and concerts. These activities and programs will be periodic and will be carefully selected so that they cultivate the liaison that will characterize the harmonious coexistence and operation of the complex that houses the Park, the National Library and the National Lyric Theater.

In creating this Park, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation's goal is for it to constitute a prototype and a lively nucleus of health, relaxation and cultural well-being for Athens and for Greece.