

The Vesuvian Observatory

Founded in 1841 by Ferdinando II di Borbone, the Vesuvian Observatory was the first structure in the world created to study volcanic phenomena. The scientific institution was placed in an elegant neoclassical building designed by the architect G. Fazzini and inaugurated in 1845. The structure started its research activities only in March 1848.

The location on Vesuvius, between Ercolano and Torre del Greco, at an altitude of 608 meters, was chosen because it was far enough from the crater that it was not reached by the lapilli and high enough not to be affected by lava flows.

In the same building today there is a museum, where instruments of considerable historical value are preserved, used by scientists and researchers over the centuries, including the electromagnetic sismograph of Luigi Palmieri of 1856. In the museum there are also XVI and XVII century texts , a vast collection of pictorial reproductions of the erupting Vesuvius and samples of lavas, ashes and fumarolic minerals. Since 2009, there is the exhibition "Vulcanica - multimedia path in the world of volcanoes" with panels and exhibits on Italian volcanoes with news about their dangerousness and the systems adopted by the National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV) for the control of their activity.

The Observatory actively cooperates with many international research institutions and hosts a large number of researchers from all over the world.