

Culture Sector Strategy for category 2 institutes and centres

- The Culture Sector relies on category 2 institutes/centres to extend the reach and effectiveness of its programmes and activities. In the priority domain of normative action, in particular, several category 2 centres for World Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage and Underwater Cultural Heritage provide support to Member States in policy advice, research, documentation and capacity-building. The category 2 institutes/centres are also resources to foster regional collaboration and networking, through their complementary specializations in particular technical domains, as in the case of institutes/centres for World Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage. This approach promotes the creation of regional networks of centres focussing on specific issues and acting in synergy.
- As part of its strategy, the Culture Sector will seek to enhance programme engagement with the institutes/centres through improved consultation, in particular when they elaborate their workplans, regular information-sharing on programme developments and a more systematic involvement of field offices so as to improve effectiveness and delivery capacity at the national and regional level. New proposals for the creation of a institute/centre will continue to be evaluated so as to ensure that it is aligned with core strategic programme priorities and contributes to enhanced programmatic coherence. The Culture Sector, in doing so, will focus on its standard-setting function, while always promoting synergy with and between existing centres, and in particular between those working in heritage-related fields, so as to develop further synergies in the implementation of the conventions. The Culture Sector will also seek to ensure balanced geographical coverage, taking into account thematic specializations in order to avoid regional overlaps and ensure maximum efficiency at the global level.
- Category 2 centres can also play an important role in helping the Organization achieve certain programme objectives for which sectoral expertise or resources are not sufficient, as in the case of certain specialized centres on World Heritage, as well as those working on books (Bogota, Colombia), languages (Reykjavik, Iceland) or art (Doha, Qatar)¹.
- The World Heritage Convention is supported by a network of eight institutes/centres contributing to its implementation. The institutes/centres support the execution of regional programmes as defined through periodic reporting exercises and the decisions of the World Heritage Committee. Some of them have a regional scope, while others focus on specific domains. These institutes/centres work under a very solid strategic framework including a) a Capacity-Building Strategy² adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2011, and which refers specifically to the expected role and contribution of category 2 institutes/centres; b) the World Heritage Regional Programmes developed within each region following the Periodic Reporting exercises, which identify clear priorities for action as well as the roles and responsibilities for category 2 institutes/centres, which play an important role in developing regional programmes by supporting the necessary consultation processes and contributing to their implementation in close cooperation with the World Heritage

¹ For the category 2 centres in Reykjavik and Doha, agreements have not yet been signed.

² Accessible online from: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2011/whc11-35com-9Be.pdf>. Chapter 9 (Key Goals and Summary Action Plan on World Heritage Capacity-Building) and chapter 10 (Regional Capacity-Building Strategies and Implementation Plans) outline the specific actions that category 2 centres may undertake. Documents WHC-12/36.COM/6 (accessible from: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2012/whc12-36com-6-en.pdf>) and WHC-12/36.COM/9B (accessible from: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2012/whc12-36com-9B-en.pdf>) provide further information on the contribution of category 2 centres to the implementation of the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy.

Centre and the three Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Convention (ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN); and c) recommendations and agreed actions resulting from annual coordination meetings among all category 2 centres, which allow monitoring of their current and planned activities and progress towards established objectives, while fostering joint bilateral and trilateral initiatives (especially North-South-South).

- The process for establishing category 2 institutes/centres related to World Heritage does not require a formal approval by the World Heritage Committee. However, as per the recent practice, States Parties to the 1972 Convention wishing to put forward proposals for category 2 institutes/centres related to World Heritage have informed the Committee of their intention, with a view to rally the support of other State Parties, and in particular those from the region concerned. In some cases, the World Heritage Committee has “welcomed” such proposals in its decisions, but without prejudging the outcome of the normal institutional process.
- While coordination meetings of institutes/centres related to World Heritage are organized on a voluntary basis, the World Heritage Centre encourages the organization of such a meeting once a year, a few months before the session of the World Heritage Committee. In addition, an informal meeting of category 2 institutes/centres’ representatives participating in the World Heritage Committee session is usually convened on the margin of the Committee. As per the agreement reached at the last coordination meeting of category 2 institutes/centres related to World Heritage, each institute/centre will report on its activities following a common template. The reports uploaded on the web page of category 2 institutes/centres within the website of the World Heritage Centre follow this format.
- In the future, the World Heritage Centre will work to strengthen synergies among category 2 institutes/centres, UNESCO Chairs and members of the Forum UNESCO University Heritage. The category 2 institutes/centres for World Heritage have agreed to adopt a results-based management approach in planning and implementing their programmes, so as to facilitate the monitoring of their effectiveness, including in the context of mandatory reviews. As agreed with all category 2 institutes/centres, a specific training on results-based management will be provided to category 2 institutes/centres in 2013 to this end, as per a proposal and with financial support of the Nordic World Heritage Foundation.
- The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention has seen growing interest among Member States, with five category 2 institutes/centres created since 2011 to join those already in place. Most are still in their formative period and are therefore for the time being only potential partners and not yet active collaborators in programme delivery. The Culture Sector will endeavour to mobilize the institutes/centres as resources to assist safeguarding at the national and regional levels. This will imply monitoring their activities and consulting with them on their programmes so as to develop synergies and complementarities regionally.
- The six Intangible Cultural Heritage institutes/centres have welcomed the idea of an annual coordination meeting, building upon several smaller meetings that have brought together the four centres in the Asia and Pacific region. A first meeting is foreseen in Paris in 2013, to be supported by several of the centres. This will allow better integration of their planning processes so that their own long-term and medium-term programmes, and particularly their annual work plans, can closely reflect the Organization’s C/4 and C/5. Specific technical assistance from UNESCO to the centres in order to strengthen their own capacities is a necessity.

- Primary responsibility for UNESCO's interactions with each category 2 centre rests with the relevant section and/or field office. Most of the Culture Sector category 2 institutes/centres are attached either to the Office of the Director of the World Heritage Centre or to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, with others attached to the Museums and Creativity Section, History and Memory for Dialogue Section or Cultural Heritage Protection Treaties Section. A designated representative of the Director-General sits on the governing body of each centre; that person may be from Headquarters or from a field office. The officer responsible for each centre and the Director-General's representative (if they are not the same person) share responsibility for reporting and monitoring on the Institutes'/Centres' activities and integrating workplans and results into SISTER. Coordination meetings among category 2 institutes/centres concerned with a particular domain are organized periodically by the World Heritage Centre or Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, respectively. Each section maintains relevant information concerning the activities of its category 2 institutes/centres within its respective websites; a Sector-level web portal will be developed by the Web Administrator.
- Overall responsibility for ensuring compliance among all culture-related institutes/centres with the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy (document 35 C/22 and Corr.) rests with the Assistant Director-General for Culture. Once a written proposal from a Member State for designation of a category 2 institute or centre is received by the Director-General, she reviews it with the support of the Assistant Director-General for Culture who formulates, after analysis of its programmatic relevance by the concerned Sector unit, his recommendation. Based on this the Director-General decides whether a feasibility study should be undertaken by the Sector. With regard to renewal of a centre's status, the Assistant Director-General formulates the Sector's recommendation, subsequent to a pre-renewal review assessment coordinated by the Sector, in consultation with IOS, and submitted to the Review Committee for recommendation to the Director-General and examination by the Executive Board. A designated category 2 institute/centre focal point at the Sector level liaises with and provides support to the Assistant Director-General, the Executive Office and the various Sections and field offices in the discharge of their functions.
- Overall, established institutes/centres are subject to careful monitoring to ensure that they remain relevant and provide added value to UNESCO's programme delivery. Should the results of the renewal review assessment, conducted in line with the process and criteria outlined in Annex 2 of Document 190 EX/18 Part 1, indicate that an agreement should not be renewed, this recommendation shall be brought before UNESCO's governing bodies for their decision. When existing agreements do not fully respect the integrated comprehensive strategy, steps will be taken with the Member States concerned to bring them in conformity.