

United Arab Emirates Request for Establishing the Sharjah Institute for Heritage as a Category 2 institute under UNESCO's auspices

A feasibility study

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Acknowledgement

I'd like to express my deep gratitude to UNESCO for having given me the opportunity of conducting the present feasibility study. I'm grateful to Tim Curtis and the colleagues of the intangible cultural heritage Section. Susanne Schnuttgen and Rasul Samadov deserve special thanks for their kind assistance all the way through. I'd also like to thank the United Arab Emirates and Sharjah Emirate for their hospitality while I was on a mission to the country. My sincere appreciation goes to Abdulaziz Almusallam and the whole staff of the Sharjah Institute for Heritage (SIH) who warmly welcomed me during my stay in Sharjah. I was privileged to have Aziz Reznara, adviser at SIH, as my accompanist during my field mission. I not only got to know many places of the UAE, but Aziz made my stay agreeable.

Introduction

In 2017, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have submitted a request for a possible designation of the Sharjah Institute for Heritage as a regional category 2 centre for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage in the Arab States under the auspices of UNESCO. Following the organization's procedures, a feasibility study has to be conducted so as "to assess the relevance, expected impact and benefit for UNESCO" of the designation.

The study "shall consider the related request from UAE and be conducted in conformity with the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Institutes and Centres under the Auspices of UNESCO (37 C/Resolution 93) with a view to support the implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Arab States".

It is expected from the feasibility study to assess the clear programmatic linkage between the activities of the centre and UNESCO's purposes as set forth in its Constitution, its strategy programme, and the objectives of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The study will identify areas of work that can best support and complement UNESCO's programme for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage and its contribution to sustainable development.

The scope of the objectives and functions of the proposed institute/centre and its ability and capacity to meet them will be assessed. The scope should in particular consider the importance of capacity building within the objectives. The regional scope of the institute/centre will also be taken into account.

The study is also expected to assess the regional impact (actual or potential) of the institute/centre, in particular the complementarities between its activities and those of other existing centres in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

The type of nature of cooperation the institute/centre aims to maintain with UNESCO entities will be considered. These entities include UNESCO's Cluster and National Offices and other category 2 centres in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

Finally, the study shall examine the governance and financial sustainability aspects of the institute/centre.

Methodology of the feasibility study

The study examined the main documents sent by UNESCO secretariat and other related documents available on the website of the organization. The former include the following documents: (i) the application submitted by the UAE; (ii) the *Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Institutes and Centres under the Auspices of UNESCO*; (iii) the 39 C/5 Resolutions for the First Biennium 2018-2019 ; (iv) UNESCO's Medium Term Strategy for 2014-2021 (document 37 C/4) ; (v) the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage; and (vi) the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The related documents include the following: (i) documents on the SIH made available by the applicant including the Emiri Act n°10 signed in 2018 on the organization of the Sharjah Institute for Heritage and other documents on the administrative and financial functioning of the institute as well as its staff; (ii) IOS evaluation of Unesco Category 2 Institutes/Centres (April 2017); (iii) agreements signed with existing C2C in the field of the intangible cultural heritage; (iv) the website of the Sharjah Institute for Heritage (SIH). A comprehensive list of the documents used in the framework of this study is included at its end.

The mission took place from April 9 to April 11, 2019. The first day was dedicated to meetings with SIH president and its senior management. A visit of the headquarters was also organized, including the Centre for Arabian heritage and its Costume Museum, the Manuscripts restoration and conservation laboratory, the library, the publications division, among other departments. A visit to ICCROM-Sharjah hosted by SIH completed the tour.

During the second day, a meeting was held with representatives of institutions working with SIH, either on the national or the local level. Another meeting was also organized with NGOs representatives and communities' members who were participating to the Sharjah Heritage Days. All of these institutions and organizations recalled their respective cooperation with SIH and gave concrete examples of activities in which they benefited from the support of the institute and contributed to their joint projects. They also stated their will to continue their collaboration with SIH. Besides, they expressed support for the application of SIH to become a category 2 institute under the auspices of UNESCO.

The mission coincided with Sharjah Heritage Days, an annual cultural event organized since 2003. This offered a valuable occasion to attend some of the activities of the institute's cultural flagship.

The request

The United Arab Emirates presented a first request on 27 April 2017. A second application dated 8 October 2017 was submitted. It was intended to supersede the first one. The last document is in the form of a long letter of 8 pages. It begins with the recall of the legal framework of the establishment of the institute in the Emirate of Sharjah in 2014. It emphasises the fact that SIH enjoys legal personality and capacity to take actions necessary to carry its missions and to achieve its objectives. It then continues with expanding the geographic scope to all Arab States, mainly those which will express their readiness to cooperate with SIH. It also underlines its compliance with the programs, objectives and priorities retained in the draft 39 C/5 in close cooperation of UNESCO field offices in the region.

The application recalls the lasting cooperation set up with some institutions of the countries in the region such as Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman and Tunisia. However, it is stated that since SIH enjoys financial independence, it doesn't rely on the contribution of the Arab States to its budget or to the financing of its activities. It lists the objectives of the proposed category 2 institute/centre and the programs that will be carried out in order to achieve these objectives.

Furthermore, the application describes the legal, administrative and financial statuses of SIH. It is mainly recalled that the Emiri Decree of 2014 sets the origin of SIH's resources. The commitment of the institute to cooperate with UNESCO in the field of the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage is stated as well as its respect of the obligations contained in the *Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO*.

The institute

The Sharjah Institute for Heritage already exists. It was established by the Emiri Decree n°70 in 2014. It's headquarters¹ are situated in University City in Sharjah on an area of almost 8208 m², including a courtyard of 201,72 m². It is the heir of the Cultural Directorate which began its work in 1995, although the actual work of heritage has begun in the Emirate of Sharjah since the beginning of the 1980s. The SIH is considered as a public non-profit institution which is affiliated to the government of Sharjah under the patronage of the United Arab Emirates ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development.



Image 1. View of the main building of the Sharjah Institute for Heritage (SIH)

The institute enjoys legal and administrative autonomy in accordance with the governmental legislation that enables it to act in its areas of expertise. The institute has an administrative system consisting of a chairmanship, an administration, an academic board, a financial department, technical divisions, specialized centres, committees, and other authorities. The institute has annexes in four cities of the emirate of Sharjah, and international delegates in few states, in addition to associated experts.

¹ The area doesn't include neither the SIH branches situated in the old city of Sharjah nor its four local offices in other cities of the emirate.

The SIH makes use of a permanent and adaptable annual government financial budget within which it acts independently in accordance with the UAE laws and regulations. It has control over all movable and immovable possessions necessary to ensure its functioning and realize its objectives. The institute also has the capacity to conclude agreements with national, regional, or international partners.

The SIH is composed of the following departments and divisions:

- a. The chairman: (i) Chairmanship Executive Office; (ii) Administrative and Financial Affairs Administration.
- b. Academic Sector: (i) programmes and curricula; (ii) Manuscripts restoration and conservation Laboratory; (iii) Library.
- c. Arabian Heritage Centre: (i) Arabian heritage Museum; (ii) Arabian heritage Archives.
- d. Intangible cultural heritage sector: (i) Studies and researches Division; (ii) Artistic heritage Department; (iii) Fieldwork inventorying Department.
- e. Professional Sector: (i) Emirates Crafts Centre; (ii) Heritage Arts Division; (iii) Sharjah Cultural heritage International Award; (iv) Edition and Publication Department.
- f. Services Sector: (i) Public relations and Protocol Department; (ii) Institutional Communication Department; (iii) Programmes and Activities Department; (iv) Exhibitions and Acquisitions Department.
- g. Other departments: the institute has the following branches in the old town of Sharjah: (i) the Centre for cultural heritage festivals which organizes each month a week dedicated to the cultural heritage of a foreign country; (ii) Emirates Crafts Centre; (iii) Traditional Games House; (iv) the Observatory of the intangible cultural heritage which collects ICH international specialized documentation.
- h. Local annexes: (i) Office of Al-Dhaid; (ii) Office of Khor Fakkan; (iii) Office of Kalbaa; (iv) Office of Diba Al Hosn.



Image 2: Conference room

In addition, the institute hosts ICCROM-Sharjah within its premises. A new building is being built in the nearby of SIH. In addition to ICCROM-Sharjah which will be relocated within, it is intended to host annexes of international organizations such as the International Association of Traditional Games, the International Council of Organizations of Folklore Festivals and Folk Arts (CIOFF), the International Organization of Folk Art (IOV), among others.



Image 3: Library of SIH

314 people work at SIH headquarters and its four local annexes. The senior management is composed of highly graduated executives specialized in various fields related to cultural heritage preservation. They're assisted by medium and lower graduated personnel, either in administrative, financial, technical or specialized areas.

The institute has organized several permanent events for years. They all have in common the preservation and promotion of aspects of the intangible cultural heritage. The main events are the following:

- a. Sharjah Heritage Days: Sharjah Heritage Days started in 2003. It is a big cultural event focused on heritage, knowledge, sharing and entertainment. It is organized in April every year. During the 2019 edition, ICH practitioners and professionals from 60 countries and 16 international organizations were invited with Tajikistan being the guest of honor.
- b. World cultural heritage Weeks: launched in January 2016, this event is intended to celebrate a different country every month by displaying elements of its cultural heritage. Traditional handicrafts, performing arts, traditional cooking, folk games, and other related heritage of peoples and host countries are promoted.
- c. Sharjah International Narrator Forum: this event was launched in 2001 to become a permanent annual regional event. In 2015, after the establishment of the Sharjah

Institute for Heritage, Al-Rawi Day was developed as the Sharjah International Narrators Forum, with a wide international participation exceeding 25 countries. The past years have witnessed the contributions of narrators from all over the world. Audiovisual archives are being set in SIH with their participation and support. Over the past years, the Institute has honoured about 100 narrators.

- d. Sharjah Traditional Crafts Forum: this cultural event celebrates the traditional handicrafts since 2007. It grants crafts practitioners with support, thus promoting their role and contribution towards preserving local cultures. Conferences and exhibitions are organized to raise awareness about and highlight the diversity of crafts.
- e. Sharjah International Award for Cultural heritage: it was established on 30 May 2016 with the objective of preserving cultural heritage, honouring storytellers and heritage bearers. This Award includes three categories and nine prizes.

Clear programmatic linkage between the activities of the institute and UNESCO's purposes

There clearly is a linkage between the activities of the SIH and UNESCO's Constitution. As stated in Article 1, paragraph 1 of the Constitution: "the purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice". The institute's objectives focusing on cultural heritage preservation through regional and international cooperation are in line with this broad declaration. The programmes and activities of the institute as recalled above are being organized for years and have contributed to the promotion of various aspects of cultural heritage in different areas of the world.

The activities of the SIH are in line with the objectives adopted in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (2014-2021). Objectives 7 (protecting, promoting and transmitting heritage) and 8 (fostering creativity and the diversity of cultural expressions) as well as the objective 1 (developing education systems to foster high quality and lifelong learning for all) are concerned. The institute's focus on cultural heritage has achieved an undeniable accumulation of experience and expertise in this field. The cultural events organized mainly by SIH in Sharjah have become a must-attend in the Arab States and beyond. In the field of education, the SIH academic department has developed programmes and certificates for various publics in the field of cultural heritage preservation.

Regarding the objectives of the 2003 Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, the SIH, as mentioned earlier, dedicates its programmes, activities and projects mainly to the intangible cultural heritage. The institute focuses on the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage by referring to the 2003 Convention to which UAE are a State Party. It draws on the pertinent articles of the Convention, i.e. articles 13 and 14 and the requirements of the Operational Directives, mainly sub-chapter IV.1 on raising-awareness about intangible cultural heritage.

Finally, in its proposal, the State Party asserts its commitment to the strategic objectives of the organization and to the provisions of the 2003 Convention.

Areas of work that can best support and complement UNESCO's programme for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage and its contribution to sustainable development

In its proposal, the State Party insures that SIH is willing to contribute to the objectives of the organization. To that end, SIH will cooperate with the Arab States that will express their wish to collaborate in case it is recognized as a category 2 institute under the auspices of UNESCO. The institute will also seek to cooperate closely with UNESCO field offices as well as with the other category 2 centres in the region and worldwide.

During field mission, it appeared that the areas of work that the Institute can best support are the following: capacity building, awareness-raising and developing partnerships. This may support UNESCO in assisting States Parties of the region in their efforts to better implement the 2003 ICH Convention. The work of the Institute and the promotion of the role of ICH as contributor to sustainable development or in achieving specific sustainable development goals (SDGs) are also worth consideration. The following SDGs are concerned: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (8); Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (11); and Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development (17).

Furthermore, the proposal specifies the outlines of this contribution by asserting to provide material, technical, and logistic conditions able to achieve the common objectives. On the ground, SIH is already cooperating with the Arab States. Many of their nationals, either professionals or practitioners of ICH, are invited to participate to the various cultural events organized in Sharjah. Many ICH capacity-building workshops have been organized in Sharjah and other emirates of the UAE.

The scope of the objectives and functions of the proposed Institute and its ability and capacity to meet them

The scope of the proposal is the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage. SIH intends to contribute to the UNESCO work in this area. All the domains of the 2003 Convention are concerned with a focus on capacity-building. During the discussions with the president and senior management of SIH, a strong will to contribute to the UNESCO capacity-building programme in the field of the intangible cultural heritage. In fact, capacity-building appeared as a transversal means that should be outstretched in all ICH safeguarding measures (as listed in Articles 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the Convention). The Arab States willing to cooperate with the institute may benefit from the UNESCO capacity-building programme through SIH. This may help broaden the audience of the ICH Convention in the region and participate to the efforts of communities, groups and individuals in safeguarding their intangible cultural heritage.

Regarding the objectives of SIH, the proposal underlines the following:

- Working with the Arab States willing to cooperate in the spirit and the provisions of UNESCO 2003 convention for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.
- Providing material, logistic and human resources to assist the Arab States capacities with the implementation of the convention.
- Increasing the participation of communities, groups, and individuals in their efforts to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage in conformity with the 2003 Convention.
- Encouraging regional and international cooperation, and providing the necessary conditions for achieving the objectives of the 2003 Convention.

- Making SIH a leading centre in training and developing skills of Arab States professionals in the field of ICH safeguarding.
- Preserving the intangible cultural heritage in line with sustainable development and disseminating and promoting it in a suitable way, locally, regionally, and internationally, mainly the ICH in need of urgent safeguarding.
- Raising-awareness about the importance of the intangible cultural heritage in terms of identity and development.
- Supporting the exchange of expertise with specialized academic institutions on the local, regional and international levels in the field of ICH safeguarding.

These broad objectives are in line with the spirit of the 2003 Convention. They are supported by the main functions of SIH. The institute performs scientific, cultural, technical and artistic activities mainly dedicated to ICH safeguarding. According to the results of the field mission and to the discussions with its senior management as well as the consultations with its institutional and NGO partners and to the documents provided, the institute is likely to meet its objectives. Its long experience in the domain of cultural heritage is likely to help with its mission if it were granted the status of category 2 under the auspices of UNESCO. Its human and financial resources are an asset (see below).

The regional scope of the Centre/Institute

As stated in the proposal, the geographic scope of the institute is the Arab States, mainly those that express their acceptance to cooperate with it in case it is granted the status of a category 2 institute. On the one hand, the geographic distribution of the existing seven category 2 centres shows that there is still no category 2 centre or institute covering the entire Arab States. None of the existing centres cover the whole Arab States. The Centre for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in Africa established in Algeria is, as its name and scope demonstrate it, dedicated to the African continent. This assumes that North African States that are members of the UNESCO Electoral Group 5(b) will be covered by both centres in case SIH is granted the category 2 status. On the other hand, unlike the seven institutions already created under the auspices of UNESCO in the field of ICH safeguarding, the proposal, followed by the discussions during the field mission, is willing to be granted a category 2 centre status within the SIH. It will stand out with all existing centres and, at the same time, it will benefit from the premises, personnel and technical and financial support of SIH. Moreover, it will remain close to SIH and its basic and future functions, both focused on ICH capacity-building.

The regional impact (actual or potential) of the Institute

The following table shows the location country, electoral group and main focus of the existing category 2 centres.

Category 2 Centre	State Party of location	Electoral Group of the State Party of Location	Main focus of the Category 2 Centre
Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Africa	Algeria	V(b)	Safeguarding through promotion, capacity-building and fostering cooperation
Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in	Bulgaria	II	Safeguarding through promotion, increasing the participation of communities,

South-Eastern Europe			capacity building, information sharing and cooperation
International Training Centre for the Intangible cultural heritage in the Arab States (CRIHAP)	China	VI	Training while focusing on promotion of the Convention, increasing participation of communities, enhancing capacities and fostering cooperation
Regional Research Centre for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in West and Central Asia	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	IV	Promotion of the Convention, capacity building, coordination of scientific and technical studies
International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI)	Japan	IV	Enhancing safeguarding of ICH through research
Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL)	Peru	III	Safeguarding through promotion, exchange, cooperation, sharing of experience, strengthening capacities
International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICHCAP)	Korea	IV	Information and networking while focusing on promotion of the Convention, increasing participation of communities, enhancing capacities and fostering cooperation

Table 1: existing category 2 centres, their country location and their focus

The SIH is willing to assist States Parties in the region in their efforts to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage. The focuses of the existing centres are diverse. Each of them has chosen a specific angle to contribute to ICH safeguarding. This division of tasks lets room for strengthening ICH capacity-building as a UNESCO priority in the framework of the implementation of the 2003 Convention. Moreover, the proposal may enhance South-South cooperation.

During discussions with the president of SIH and his collaborators and advisers, the area of capacity-building was considered as being of high priority. The SIH aims to enhance the capabilities of the States Parties in the region in the various domains of ICH: safeguarding, inventorying, promoting and awareness-raising. As stated above, a transversal approach to capacity-building is to be privileged according to the institute's senior management.

The type of nature of cooperation the Institute aims to maintain with UNESCO

In its proposal, the State Party insures its commitment to develop and expand the domain of interest of the institute in the event it is granted the category 2 status under the auspices of UNESCO. During the field mission, the president reiterated the will of the institute to cooperate with UNESCO entities, including the Living Heritage Entity, UNESCO's Cluster and National Offices, and with the existing category 2 centres in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

During discussions with the president and senior management of the SIH, it was stressed that the institute is disposed to cooperate with the UNESCO Cluster offices in Rabat, Doha, Beirut and Cairo and National Offices in Amman, Khartoum, Bagdad and Ramallah and assist with the implementation of the 2003 Convention. The institute might mainly assist the countries in the region with issues related to the safeguarding of their intangible cultural heritage, the elaboration of nominations for inscription on the lists of the Convention and the preparation of their Periodic Reports. The institute may also cooperate with the Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States in Beirut and with the Regional Bureau of Sciences in the Arab States in Cairo, if necessary, regarding related work within the 2003 Convention, either in the field of research or education.

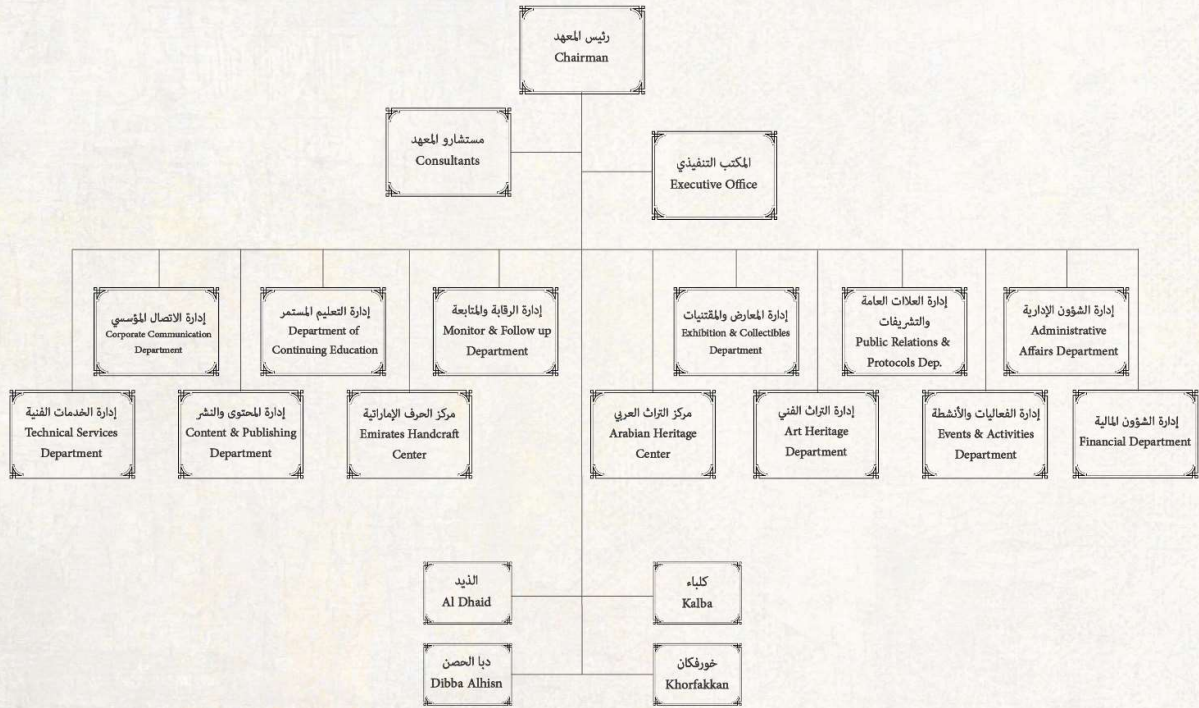
The institute is also willing to work closely with the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Africa established in Algeria. In case it is granted the category 2 status, the two entities might work together for a better assistance to the Arab States that express their willingness to collaborate with both. The institute will also work together with the other existing category 2 centres in the field of the intangible cultural heritage in the sake of a better implementation of the 2003 Convention worldwide, mainly the International Training Centre for the Intangible cultural heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (CRIHAP) in China to learn more on capacity-building programme and its experience in this field.

The governance and financial sustainability aspects of the Institute

As stated above, the Sharjah Institute for Heritage is a public non-profit institution affiliated to the government of Sharjah under the patronage of the United Arab Emirates ministry of Culture. Under article 7, the above-mentioned Emiri decree on establishing SIH, the institute's financial resources consist of: (i) Government allocations; (ii) the institute's own revenues resulting from the practice of its functions; (iii) the proceeds of investing the funds of the institute; and (iv) any other resources approved by the Sharjah Executive Council. Also, under article 11, the institute is exempted from all government taxes and duties.

The annual budget allocated by the government to the institute is of: 147 000 000,00 AED. During the field mission, the president of the SIH expressed his commitment, in case the institute is granted the category 2 status, to allocate, in addition to the budget mentioned above, an annual budget of 2 000 000,00 AED.

معهد الشارقة للتراث - الهيكل التنظيمي
Sharjah Institute for Heritage - Organization Structure



Organization chart of the Sharjah Institute for Heritage

I suggest that the chart be revised to add the “future category 2 centre” in case it is granted by UNESCO

Recommendations

The present feasibility study has examined the documents made available both by the UNESCO Living Heritage Entity and by the Sharjah Institute for Heritage (United Arab Emirates). A field mission has also been conducted to the Emirate of Sharjah (UAE) from 9 to 11 April 2019. The following points can be summarized based on the evaluation of both sources of information:

1. The United Arab Emirates submitted a proposal requesting UNESCO to grant Sharjah Institute of Heritage with the category 2 status under the auspices of the organization. This proposal contains broad outlines of the way the institute is willing to work in case the status is accepted. If so, the agreement to be signed between both parties shall precise with more accuracy the objectives, responsibilities and obligations of the submitting Member State. A proposal for such an agreement is annexed to the present feasibility study.
2. The *Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO* states that “the designation as a category 2 institute and centre may be granted to an existing entity or to an institution in the process of being created” (A.1.3, p.1). In the case of the present request, the Sharjah Institute for Heritage is an existing entity since 2014. Its functioning as a possible category 2 institute is at the heart of the request from the submitting Member State. The field mission made it possible to discuss the possible relevant ways to establish the centre within the SIH (see points 7, 8 and 9 below).
3. The proposal is in line with the constitution, objectives and strategies of UNESCO, mainly with the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
4. The institute stressed its willingness to cooperate with UNESCO entities, including the Living Heritage Entity, UNESCO’s Cluster, Regional and National Offices in the Arab States, and with the existing category 2 centres in the field of intangible cultural heritage.
5. In case the SIH is granted the category 2 status, it will fill a geographic gap as there isn’t for the moment such an institution in the Arab States covering the region in its entirety. On the thematic level, it also will foster and broaden the implementation of the Convention in the field of capacity-building.
6. The institute has accumulated a long and rich experience in the field of promoting and preserving cultural heritage, mainly intangible cultural heritage. It is provided with adequate premises in the emirate of Sharjah. It has a legal and administrative autonomy to conduct its programmes and projects. The institute personnel are graduated in various specialties of cultural heritage preservation and promotion. Its budget allows it to undertake various activities and cultural events dedicated to intangible cultural heritage in UAE and worldwide. It is expected that the SIH ICH centre will benefit from these assets.
7. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Sharjah Institute for Heritage be granted with the status of a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO.
8. As stated in the *Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO*: “Attachment 2 to this strategy contains a generic draft model agreement. In applying the model agreement governing the establishment of such centres enough flexibility should be allowed in order to take into account the legal constraints of Member States in proposing the establishment of such centres” (paragraph A.1.7). All previous category 2 centres approved by the UNESCO General Conference in the field of intangible cultural heritage were not existing entities. In the present proposal, the institute exists and is functioning as such since 2014. Therefore, there might be need for time, at least one year, for SIH to adapt to the category 2 status, in case it is granted with.
9. During field mission, this discussion occurred with the president and his advisors. Two options might be explored by UNESCO and UAE in the framework of the

agreement to be signed, in case the General Conference approves to grant SIH with category 2 status:

(i) Full transformation of the existing SIH into a category 2 institute: this option consists of deep revision of the statutes and of the organizational chart of the existing institute. It also may need time according to the existing legal and institutional frameworks.

(ii) Keeping the present SIH functioning as it has done since its establishment in 2014 and add an ICH centre to its organizational chart playing the specific role of a category 2 centre: this option enables the existing institute of continuing its work initiated since 2014 while adding to its mission the ICH centre which will be charged with the obligations required by the category 2 status. This option also makes it possible for the SIH to keep its initial local and national dimension while gaining a regional one through the possible recognition of its ICH centre as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO. This option should seek to establish full cooperation and smooth functioning of both components, the present SIH and the category 2 centre to be created. This option seemed to be preferred during the field mission. Nevertheless, further discussion is needed so that the best option is included in the draft agreement to be signed should UNESCO approve the proposal by UAE.

List of Documents

- UNESCO, *Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO*, 2013.
- Proposal: letter from Sharjah Institute for Heritage to UNESCO, October 8, 2017.
- UNESCO, General Conference, *2018-2021 Draft Resolutions 39 C/5, First Biennium (2018-2019)*, 2017.
- UNESCO, Executive Board, *Main Changes Proposed For Revision of the Management Framework of Category 2 Institutes and Centres Under the Auspices of UNESCO*, March 2019.
- UNESCO, OIS Audit Section, *Audit of the UNESCO's Management Framework for Category 2 Institutes/Centres*, April 2017.
- UNESCO, *Agreements signed with category 2 centres in the field of intangible cultural heritage*.
- Sharjah Institute of Heritage Manual, 2018 دليل معهد المشاركة للتراث،
- Sharjah Institute for Heritage, non formal documents, charts and photographs.

List of persons with whom consultations were conducted during field mission

- Abdulaziz Al Musallam, Sharjah Institute for Heritage Chairman.
- Fatima Eisa Al Marzooqi, Executive Office Manager of SIH Chairman, Director of Administrative Affairs Department.
- Aisha Rashed Al Hossan, Director, Arabian Heritage Centre, Sharjah Institute for Heritage.
- Aziz Reznara, Consultant, Arabian Heritage Centre, Sharjah Institute for Heritage.
- Némer Salamun Dario Paz Orontes, Director of the International School of Storytelling and Oral Arts, Sharjah Institute for Heritage.
- Basma Waleed Kashmoola, Deputy Director, Continuing Education Department, Sharjah Institute for Heritage.
- Kholood Abid Al Hajeri, Director, Emirates Crafts Centre, Sharjah Institute for Heritage.
- Hassan Maamun Mamluk, Chief, Manuscripts Restoration Laboratory, Sharjah Institute for Heritage.
- Khalid Ahmed Ai-Shehhi, Administrator, Sharjah Institute for Heritage Bureau, Khor Fakkan.
- Khalid Ben Jamia Al-Handassi, Administrator, Sharjah Institute for Heritage Bureau, Dhaba Al-Hosn.
- Said Mubarak Al Haddad, Administrator, Sharjah Institute for Heritage Bureau, Kalbaa.
- Mohammed Bin Huaiden, Administrator, Sharjah Institute for Heritage Bureau, Dhaid.
- Eng. Hunaida Khaldi- Scholar in Continuing Education Department.
- Shireen Sahouri, Project Associate, ICCROM Regional Conservation Centre in the UAE (ICCROM-Sharja).
- Department of Culture and Tourism –Abu Dhabi
- Saeed Ali Al Mannaie, Emirates Heritage Club, Sharjah.
- Abdulaziz Sultan Al Ali, vice-chair, Sharjah Falconers Club.
- Musa Al Hawari, Head of Content Development Section, Department of Culture and Tourism, Abu Dhabi.
- Faisal Jawad, Executive Manager, Fujairah Culture and Media Authority.
- Ahmed Obaid Al Tunaiji, Manager, Tourism Standards Department, Government of Sharjah.

DRAFT
AGREEMENT BETWEEN
THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND
CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT IN THE EMIRATE OF SHARJAH OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING IN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL
HERITAGE IN THE ARAB STATES AS A CATEGORY 2 CENTRE UNDER THE
AUSPICES OF UNESCO

The Government of the United Arab Emirates

and

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,

Recalling the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which was adopted in 2003 by the General Conference at its 32nd session and entered into force in April 2006,

Considering that the Director-General has been authorized by the General Conference to conclude with the Government of the United Arab Emirates an agreement in conformity with the draft that was submitted to the General Conference at its 40th session,

Desirous of defining the terms and conditions governing the framework for cooperation with UNESCO that shall be granted to the said Centre in this Agreement,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1: Definitions

1. In this Agreement, "UNESCO" refers to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
2. "The Government" refers to the Government of the United Arab Emirates.
3. "The Centre" refers to the International Centre for Capacity-building in Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Arab States at the Sharjah Institute for Heritage.
4. "SIH" refers to the Sharjah Institute for Heritage of the United Arab Emirates.
5. "The 2003 Convention" refers to the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
6. "ICH" refers to intangible cultural heritage.

Article 2: Establishment

The Government shall agree to take, in the course of the year 2020, any measures that may be required for the establishment of the International Centre for Capacity-building in Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Arab States at the Sharjah Institute for Heritage as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO, as provided for under this Agreement.

Article 3: Purpose of the Agreement

The purpose of this Agreement is to define the terms and conditions governing collaboration between the Government and UNESCO and also the rights and obligations stemming therefrom for the parties.

Article 4: Legal status

- 4.1. The Centre shall be independent of UNESCO.
- 4.2. The Centre shall be an integral part of SIH, which enjoys within its territory the functional autonomy necessary for the execution of its activities and the legal capacity:

- to contract;
- to institute legal proceedings;
- to acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property.

Article 5: Objectives and functions

1. The Centre shall specialize in capacity-building for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and its objectives shall be to:

- (a) Promote the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and contribute to its implementation in the Arab States;
- (b) Strengthen institutional capacities for safeguarding ICH in the Arab States, while promoting the purposes of the 2003 Convention in the region;
- (c) Increase the participation of communities, groups and individuals in safeguarding ICH, and raise awareness of and ensure respect for ICH in the Arab States;
- (d) Foster regional and international cooperation for the safeguarding of ICH.

2. In order to achieve the above objectives, the specific functions of the Centre will be to:

- (a) Implement long-term and short-term capacity-building programmes and activities in ICH safeguarding based on the programme developed by UNESCO for the effective implementation of the 2003 Convention;
- (b) Adapt capacity-building materials developed by UNESCO to the regional context and ensure their translation into Arabic;
- (c) Build networks among concerned communities, groups and individuals to reinforce transmission and dissemination of ICH, organize public events and meetings at the regional and international level;
- (d) Strengthen international and regional networks to exchange information and knowledge concerning the safeguarding of ICH, including in the context of the Overall results framework of the Convention and periodic reporting.

3. The Centre's activities and programmes shall be carried out in conformity with the 2003 Convention and, in particular, its purposes and definitions (Articles 1 and 2 of the 2003 Convention).

Article 6: Governing Board

1. The Centre shall be guided and overseen by a Governing Board renewed every three years and composed of:

- (a) a representative of the Government or his/her appointed representative, who shall be the ex officio Chairperson of the Governing Board;

- (b) The Chairman of the SIH;
- (c) Two representatives of the Government representing the following institutions: Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development of the United Arab Emirates, and United Arab Emirates National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science;
- (d) Up to five representatives of the Member States of UNESCO, which have sent to the Centre notification for membership, in accordance with the stipulations of Article 11 paragraph 2 and have expressed interest in being represented on the Board, while ensuring, as far as possible, equitable geographical representation;
- (e) A representative of the Director-General of UNESCO;
- (f) Up to two representatives of the associated and cooperative organizations working in the field of ICH in the United Arab Emirates;
- (g) Up to two representatives of any other intergovernmental organizations or non-governmental organizations, which can be accorded a seat by the decision of the Governing Board.

The Director of the Centre shall participate in the Governing Board as a non-voting member.

2. The Governing Board shall:

- (a) Approve the long-term and medium-term programmes of the Centre;
- (b) Approve the annual work plan and budget of the Centre, including the staffing table;
- (c) Examine the annual reports submitted by the Director of the Centre, including a biennial self-assessment reports of the Centre's contribution to UNESCO's programme objectives;
- (d) Examine the periodic independent audit reports of the financial statements of the Centre and monitor the provision of such accounting records necessary for the preparation of financial statements;
- (e) Adopt the rules and regulations and determine the financial, administrative and personnel management procedures for the Centre in accordance with the laws of the country;
- (f) Decide on the participation of regional and intergovernmental organizations and international organizations in the work of the Centre.

3. The Governing Board shall meet in ordinary session at regular intervals, at least once every calendar year; it shall meet in extraordinary session if convened by its Chairperson, either on his/her own initiative or at the request of the Director-General of UNESCO or of two thirds of its members.

4. The Governing Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure. For its first meeting the procedure shall be established by the Government and UNESCO.

Article 7: Secretariat

1. The Centre's secretariat shall consist of a Director and such staff as are necessary for the proper functioning of the Centre.

2. The Director shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Governing Board in consultation with the Director-General of UNESCO, who should have recognized academic standing and professional experience in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

3. The other members of the secretariat may comprise:

- (a) Any person appointed by the Director, in accordance with the procedures laid down by the Governing Board;
- (b) Government officials who are made available to the Centre, as provided by Government regulations.

Article 8: Duties of the Director

The Director shall discharge the following duties:

- (a) Direct the work of the Centre in conformity with the programmes and directives established by the Governing Board;
- (b) Propose the draft work plan and budget to be submitted to the Governing Board for approval;
- (c) Propose all the working documents of the Governing Board, including the draft work plan and budget, to UNESCO at least six weeks before the Governing Board meeting. UNESCO will provide feedback within two weeks of receiving them. Finally, the Centre will submit to the Governing Board a final version of those documents at least two weeks before the meeting;
- (d) Prepare reports on the Centre's activities to be submitted to the Governing Board;
- (e) Represent the Centre in law and in all civil acts.

Article 9: UNESCO's Contribution

1. UNESCO may provide assistance, as needed, in the form of technical assistance for the programme activities of the Centre, in accordance with the strategic goals and objectives of UNESCO by:

- (a) providing the assistance of its experts in the specialized fields of the Centre; (and/or)
- (b) engaging in temporary staff exchanges when appropriate, whereby the staff concerned will remain on the payroll of the dispatching organizations; (and/or)
- (c) seconding members of its staff temporarily, as may be decided by the Director-General on an exceptional basis if justified by the implementation of a joint activity/project within a strategic programme priority area.

2. In all the cases listed above, such assistance shall not be undertaken except within the provisions of UNESCO's programme and budget, and UNESCO will provide Member States with accounts relating to the use of its staff and associated costs.

Article 10: Contribution by the Government

1. The Government, through SIH, shall provide all the resources, financial or in kind, needed for the administration and proper functioning of the Centre.

2. The Government undertakes to:

- (a) Cover the cost of salaries and compensations of the staff including the Director, and the funds necessary for the implementation of the Centre's activities including the cost of holding the sessions of the Governing Board;
- (b) Make available to the Centre required office space, documentation rooms, meeting rooms, equipment and other facilities for its secretariat;
- (c) Entirely assume the maintenance of the premises and cover the cost of communication, and other utilities;
- (d) Make available to the Centre the administrative staff necessary for the performance of its functions, which shall comprise an accountant and technical support personnel.
- (e) Contribute a minimum amount of AED 2,000,000.00 annually to the operational activities of the Centre in addition to the in-kind contributions mentioned above in the present Article.

Article 11: Participation

1. The Centre shall encourage the participation of Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO which, by their common interest in the objectives of the Centre, desire to cooperate with the Centre.

2. Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO wishing to participate in the Centre's activities, as provided for under this Agreement, shall send to the Centre notification to this effect. The Director shall inform the parties to the agreement and other Member States of the receipt of such notifications.

Article 12: Responsibility

As the Centre is legally separate from UNESCO, the latter shall not be legally responsible for the acts or omissions of the Centre, and shall also not be subject to any legal process, and/or bear no liabilities of any kind, be they financial or otherwise, with the exception of the provisions expressly laid down in this Agreement.

Article 13: Evaluation

1. UNESCO may, at any time, carry out an evaluation of the activities of the Centre in order to ascertain:

- (a) whether the Centre makes a significant contribution to the UNESCO's strategic programme objectives and expected results aligned with the four-year programmatic period of C/5 document (Programme and Budget), including the two global priorities of the Organization, and related sectoral or programme priorities and themes;
- (b) Whether the activities effectively pursued by the Centre are in conformity with those set out in this Agreement.

2. UNESCO shall, for the purpose of the review of this Agreement, conduct an evaluation of the contribution of the Centre to UNESCO strategic programme objectives, to be funded by the host country or Centre.

3. UNESCO undertakes to submit to the Government, at the earliest opportunity, a report on any evaluation conducted.

4. Following the results of an evaluation, each of the contracting parties shall have the option of requesting a revision of its contents or of denouncing the Agreement, as envisaged in Articles 17 and 18.

Article 14: Use of the UNESCO name and logo

1. The Centre may mention its affiliation with UNESCO. It may therefore use after its title the mention "under the auspices of UNESCO".

2. The Centre is authorized to use the UNESCO logo or a version thereof on its letterheaded paper and documents including electronic documents and webpages in accordance with the conditions established by the governing bodies of UNESCO.

Article 15: Entry into force

This Agreement shall enter into force upon its signature by the contracting parties.

Article 16: Duration

This Agreement is concluded for a period of six years as from its entry into force. The Agreement shall be renewed upon common agreement between Parties once the Executive

Board made its comments based on the results of the renewal assessment provided by the Director-General.

Article 17: Denunciation

1. Each of the contracting parties shall be entitled to denounce this Agreement unilaterally.
2. The denunciation shall take effect within 60 days following receipt of the notification sent by one of the contracting parties to the other.

Article 18: Revision

This Agreement may be revised by written consent between the Government and UNESCO.

Article 19: Settlement of disputes

1. Any dispute between UNESCO and the Government concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement, if not settled by negotiation or any other appropriate method agreed to by the parties, shall be submitted for final decision to an arbitration tribunal composed of three members one of whom shall be appointed by a representative of the Government, another by the Director-General of UNESCO, and a third, who shall preside over the tribunal, shall be chosen by the first two. If the two arbitrators cannot agree on the choice of a third, the appointment shall be made by the President of the International Court of Justice.
2. The tribunal's decision shall be final.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have signed this Agreement.

DONE in duplicate on in the Arabic and English languages, each text being equally authentic. In case of divergence between the English and Arabic versions, the English version shall prevail.

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FOR THE UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
THE
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES