

Thirteenth Meeting of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the Memory of the World Programme

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**REGISTER COMPANION
DRAFT OCTOBER 2017**



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Memory of
the World

MEMORY OF THE WORLD

REGISTER COMPANION

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This 2018 edition of the *Companion* is an aid for those preparing nominations for the International Memory of the World Register. It should be read in conjunction with the 2018 edition of the *General Guidelines*.

The *Companion* may be updated over time as internet linkages and other details change.

1 Introduction

This Companion is for everyone who has heard about the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme and is interested in being a part of it, especially by nominating items of documentary heritage for the Memory of the World International Register. For full details of the nomination process, refer to the *General Guidelines* ([URL reference](#)) and especially the selection criteria in Chapter 6. This Companion provides the basic information needed to complete a nomination.

What is the 'Memory of the World' (MoW) programme?

It is UNESCO's flagship programme that aims to ensure the preservation and dissemination of documentary heritage, including valuable archive holdings and library and museum collections worldwide.

It is one of three UNESCO initiatives for protecting and raising awareness of the global cultural heritage. The other two are the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, which maintains the *World Heritage List* of buildings and natural sites of outstanding universal value, and the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* which recognizes and supports the survival of oral traditions and culture. The three approaches complement each other.

MoW is underpinned by the *Recommendation concerning the preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage including in digital form*, adopted by UNESCO General Conference in November 2015. The text can be read in Appendix 2 of the *General Guidelines*.

MoW relates to the world's *documentary heritage*. The programme has three objectives:

- To facilitate preservation, by the most appropriate techniques
- To assist universal access
- To increase awareness worldwide of the existence and significance of documentary heritage

It aims to alert governments, decision makers and the public at large that preservation of, and access to, documents of all kinds needs increased efforts, especially in the digital environment, which offers truly democratic dimensions in the production of and access to new and existing documents.

MoW began in 1992, in response to a growing concern about the state of preservation of, and access to, the world's documentary heritage. MoW was established as a long term approach to changing the way the world's documentary heritage – in libraries, archives, museums and elsewhere – is valued, protected, used and supported by nations, governments, communities and individuals.

For further information and to download the *General Guideline* go to the MoW website ([URL Reference](#))

What is a document? What is documentary heritage? What are memory institutions?

The *Recommendation* adopts the following definitions:

A **document** is an object comprising analogue or digital informational *content* and the *carrier* on which it resides. It is preservable and usually moveable. The content may comprise signs or codes (such as text), images (still or moving) and sounds, which can be copied or migrated. The carrier may have important aesthetic, cultural or technical qualities. The relationship between content and carrier may range from incidental to integral.

Documentary heritage comprises those single documents – or groups of documents – of significant and enduring value to a community, a culture, a country or to humanity generally, and whose deterioration or loss would be a harmful impoverishment. Significance of this heritage may become clear only with the passage of time. The world's documentary heritage is of global importance and responsibility to all, and should be fully preserved and protected for all, with due respect to and recognition of cultural mores and practicalities. It should be permanently accessible and re-usable by all without hindrance. It provides the means for understanding social, political, collective as well as personal history. It can help to underpin good governance and sustainable development. For each State, its documentary heritage reflects its memory and identity, and thus contributes to determine its place in the global community.

Memory institutions may include but are not limited to archives, libraries, museums and other educational, cultural and research organizations.

These formal definitions are discussed in more detail in Appendixes 5 and 6 of the *General Guidelines*, and depending on the material you are proposing to nominate it is important to have a good understanding of them.

By way of illustration, the following notes enlarge on these formal definitions.

Groups of documents being nominated should be logical and coherent in their character. The size of the group does not matter; what holds the group together does. A *collection* is a self-contained group of individual documents that have been brought together by a particular circumstance, reason or purpose (for example, subject matter, character, provenance, or historical relationships). An archival *fonds* is the whole group of documents made or received by a person or organization in the course of their normal activities and kept for future reference, and in which the administrative context and relationships between records is preserved. A *holding* is a set or larger grouping of defined collections and/or fonds. It is possible that collections, fonds or holdings may have become split between two or more institutions for various reasons.

Generally, in **traditional (analogue) text documents**, content and carriers form a unit which is usually considered as the *original*. Such documents may owe much of their importance to the specific nature of the carrier (for example, an illuminated manuscript or a photograph recorded on a particular kind of paper) or its circumstantial associations (for example, a music score written by a famous composer or a collection compiled or owned by a renowned person).

In the case of **machine-readable or reproducible documents** – that is, all audiovisual documents except analogue photographs, and all digital documents – the carrier, although necessary to physically contain the information, is sometimes of lesser or even no importance in the context of Memory of the World. This is because digital and audiovisual information is generally preserved by migration from one storage platform and carriers to the next. However, this is not always true. There are cases where the particular carrier on which the content is stored could be the reason for a document's inscription (for example, a phonoautogram, or the oldest data on punch cards). Motion picture film may have characteristics (such as an obsolete colour process) which give the carrier a particular importance.

Digital documents may be categorized in three groups:

- Digitised documents – that is, digital surrogates made from analogue originals
- Static born-digital documents – that is, finite documents created in the digital domain, without analogue originals
- Dynamic born-digital documents – such as active websites or continually enhanced digital resources, like social media or educational media

Here it is essential to understand which category the documents belong to as the information required in the nomination is specific and critical. It's important to study the explanations in Appendix 6 of the *General Guidelines* so that you can provide the required information in the nomination form.

Examples of documents:

Documents come in an immense range of forms and content. The following are some examples:

Text documents include manuscripts (of any age), books, newspapers, posters, correspondence, business records and computer files. The textual content may be recorded in ink, pencil, paint, digits or other medium. The carrier may be paper, plastic, papyrus, parchment, palm leaves, bark, stone, fabric, hard disk, data tape or many other materials.

Non-text documents include drawings, maps, music scores, plans, prints, diagrams or graphics.

Audiovisual documents include sound discs, magnetic tapes, films, photographs – whether in analogue or digital form, however recorded and in any format. The physical carrier may be paper, various forms of plastic or celluloid, shellac, metal or other material.

Digital documents, regardless of their content, may also be termed manifested documents. They are accessed through digital devices in their various forms – laptops, tablets, smartphones, personal computers, digital television screens etc. – and are an assemblage of data from a variety of sources on a single or multiple devices, or from one or more data carriers on a single device.

- Visual examples of different types of carriers:
<http://www.unesco-ci.org/photos/showgallery.php/cat/522>
- Examples of endangered heritage:
<http://www.unesco-ci.org/photos/showgallery.php/cat/523>

How does MoW and the Register work?

MoW fulfils its responsibilities through a Paris-based UNESCO Secretariat and a network of committees and initiatives that operate in accordance with the programme's *General Guidelines*. You can connect with MoW through whichever committee seems most convenient to you.

MoW has *international*, *regional* and *national* committees and registers. All have separate websites and operate independently but in conformity with the *General Guidelines*. The network is constantly growing, so a good entry portal is the main MoW website at:

(Insert URL)

- For example, the Australian National MoW Committee maintains a national register www.amw.org.au and is a member of the Asia Pacific Regional Committee (MOWCAP) www.unesco.mowcap.org. Australian documentary heritage is inscribed on the national, Asia Pacific and International MoW registers.

The structure of MoW is set out in detail in Chapter 4 of the *General Guidelines*. For the purposes of the International MoW Register, the important bodies are the MoW Secretariat, the International Advisory Committee (IAC) and its Register Subcommittee (RSC).

The Secretariat receives, checks and verifies all nominations and confirms this with the nominator. It then passes the nominations to the RSC, which researches each nomination and arrives at an initial assessment as to whether the nomination meets the selection criteria or not. It presents its assessment to the IAC, which further evaluates the nomination and decides whether or not to recommend the nomination for inscription. Its recommendation goes to the Director-General of UNESCO who makes the final decision in inscription.

All this happens over a two-yearly cycle. In each cycle, nominations must be submitted before an announced deadline, and this is followed by the assessment phases.

- At the time of writing, there are about 60 national MoW committees operating. See <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/about-the-programme/national-memory-of-the-world-committees/>

The assessment process and feedback

The assessment process is set out in Chapter 6 of the *General Guidelines* and specifically in sections 6.5 and 6.6.

To the extent needed, the process is interactive. If further information is needed, there will be correspondence between the Secretariat and the nominator. Nominations, once complete and verified, are posted on the MoW website, circulated to appropriate bodies within the UNESCO system, and are available for public information and comment against the selection criteria. The RSC takes account of all public comments, feedback from referees and UNESCO bodies, and information gleaned from its own research. Following this, the RSC's initial assessment is advised to the nominator, and the nominator has the opportunity to respond. After this interaction, the nomination moves to the IAC.

Why the registers?

The registers are the most visible means of achieving the objectives of MoW. They help to make an abstract ideal – the preservation of documentary heritage – accessible and concrete. By progressively identifying, recognizing and highlighting significant and irreplaceable documentary heritage, the larger objectives of preservation, access and awareness are promoted and advanced. The inscription of an item on any MoW register is an **affirmation** by UNESCO of its permanent value and significance. It also raises the stature of the institution that holds the item(s). Over time, the registers will contribute to rebalancing perceptions and understanding of world history by making little known documentary heritage more visible.

Where can I see the registers?

The registers can be seen on line. They are accessible on the UNESCO MoW website or the websites of regional and national committees. Each inscription includes summary information and pictures; if the items have been digitized and are accessible on line there might be a link to them. For more detail, the main sections of the nomination documents themselves can also be read on line.

The Registers

Why are there different registers?

There are different registers to intensify the work of preserving documentary heritage, and to weave Memory of the World's net more tightly. There are separate **international**, **regional** and **national** MoW registers.

The inscriptions in each register are based on *essentially* the same criteria, adapted to the cultural setting in which it belongs. Each register is separately administered by the relevant international, regional or national MoW committee. **The fundamental difference among the registers is the extent of geographic influence of the documentary heritage that they include.**

The oldest, largest and best known is the *International MoW Register*. It began in 1997 and for many years it was the only MoW register. The other registers have been created more recently.

The world's documentary heritage is so vast and complex that a *single* register would be unwieldy and unworkable. Geographically-based registers also allow *appropriate regional and national expertise* and local resources to be applied to assessing nominations in a way that would never be possible if there was only a single register.

The registers are not a hierarchy. In UNESCO's eyes, all are equally important and all inscriptions have equal value in the sense that UNESCO endorses/recognizes the significance of every inscription.

Every MoW register has its own nomination process and timeframe. For simplicity, this Companion focuses on the process of nominating to the International MoW Register. However, similar steps and issues apply to all other MoW registers. The regional or national MoW committee concerned can provide the nomination information and forms for its own register.

Why nominate? What is the benefit?

Being inscribed on a MoW register is not an end in itself. It is a beginning.

Inscription on a register publicly affirms the world significance of the documents and makes them better known. They become part of the visible continuum of documents that have had a substantial impact on cultural and social history, causing history to be re-interpreted over time. Inscription encourages accessibility and attracts publicity. It carries the symbolic weight of UNESCO endorsement and the right to use the MoW logo, which is in itself an affirmation of UNESCO's recognition. It is therefore a source of pride and distinction. The stature of your documentary heritage and/or your institution benefits by association with the inscriptions already on the registers; and it visibly justifies government or other expenditure on your institution and the documentary heritage in its care.

There is a strategic value in the inscription of your heritage in one of the registers. It

varies according to circumstances. It reflects positively on the organization responsible for its safety, care and preservation. Sometimes it can help to attract sponsorship and funding to protect heritage under threat. Sometimes it has the effect of making the documentary heritage more secure. There are cases on record where inscription has even saved an entire archival institution from closing and being dismantled.

Who can nominate?

Anyone can nominate an item for inscription in a register.

In practice, most nominations come from institutions, such as libraries, archives or museums, that propose items that are in their own custody. They are best placed to provide the kind of information needed by the Secretariat for assessment purposes. But nominations also come from a range of private and public organizations, from international associations and from private individuals.

If you are nominating an item for inscription, it is a good idea to involve your national MoW committee (if there is one) in the process. It is not compulsory – but if your national MoW committee or National Commission for UNESCO supports your nomination, its endorsement will be taken into account in the assessment process. For the International Register, national MoW committees and National Commissions are informed and the nomination form is uploaded on the website.

What's the process? Is it competitive? Are there quotas? Can I get help?

Nomination is not competitive. Every nomination is judged against the criteria. Either it satisfies them or it does not.

Generally, there is currently no overall limit to the number of nominations that will be accepted from each country or organization. For the International MoW Register **only**, there is a limit of two nominations from institutions and/or individuals per country in each two-year cycle: this is a practical way of managing the workload. (If more than two nominations are received, the national MoW committee of that country – or if there is none, the UNESCO National Commission and/or relevant regional committee, will be asked to adjudicate on their priority). However, that limit **does not apply** to joint nominations involving a partnership between institutions in two or more countries, and they are not counted as part of the quota of each participating country. UNESCO fosters international cooperation.

If you need help in preparing your nomination you can ask any MoW national or regional committee, or you can ask the Secretariat to refer you to a mentor who can explain the range of information you need to compile and how to compile it (this is called technical help). Of course, there are protocols: the mentor **cannot** prepare your case for you and **cannot** express an opinion on whether your nomination has a good chance of success. The MoW Code of Ethics is at Appendix 1 in the *General Guidelines*.

There are deadlines. The international and regional registers, and most national registers, accept nominations on the basis of a two-year cycle. Your nomination must be received before the announced closing date or it will be deferred to the following cycle.

2 Constructing a nomination – a guide to completing the form

An annotated copy of the nomination form for the **International MoW Register** can be found at the end of this document. It is also reproduced in the *General Guidelines* (Appendix 3) and is available on the website.

The annotations explain how each section of the form is to be completed. The information below is an extended commentary on the “heart” of any nomination:

- The criteria for inscription
- The "contextual information" that assists the assessment.

Sections 1.0 to 5.0

These sections are largely self-explanatory. It is important to give some thought to the **title** of the nomination: it should be descriptive and, if possible, memorable – and not too long.

The **summary** is what you write **last** – it is the “shop window” of your nomination and should summarise the key elements, arguments and explanations.

Section 6.0 Identity and description

6.2 Groups of documents must be finite, not open ended. The description provided here needs to be sufficiently detailed to allow the assessors to fully understand the character, size and content of the collection or fonds being nominated.¹ In some cases, a catalogue might be appended to the nomination. For larger holdings, where that is not a practical approach, a descriptive statement, perhaps accompanied by accessioning or registration numbers, or a link to an online catalogue, may be a better approach.

6.4 Setting out the **history** and **provenance** of a collection or document – its “life story” – is critical to understanding its **authenticity**. This is a threshold test: is the documentary heritage actually what it appears to be? There are endless historical examples of fakes and forgeries – copies or replicas that purport to be originals, deliberate hoaxes or deceptions, “real” documents whose content has been altered, and so on. These documents can take any form. Establishing authenticity is not necessarily a simple issue. Digital technology provides vast possibilities for manipulating text, images and sounds in ways that leave no trace of the alteration.

Sometimes originals no longer exist, and establishing authenticity becomes a matter of identifying historical copies, which may in turn have their own original and distinguishing features as, for example, in the case of mediaeval manuscripts. Audiovisual media, in particular, are readily copied and originals may no longer exist. The oldest carrier may not necessarily have the most authentic content. Films and photographs can be altered in a variety of ways to change their content.

¹ Nominally the collection or fonds may be open ended, but the items nominated would need to be clearly circumscribed (for example, up to a certain date or box number.)

In some cases the provenance story may be a simple one: in others, where documents have passed through many hands over time, it may be more complex. You may not even know the full story: just give the fullest account you can.

➤ Example: The NOVA "*Viking Deception*" website lists a number of famous hoaxes: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/vinland/fakes.html>

6.5 The **bibliography** provides evidence of the impact and influence of the documentary heritage, and what scholarly attention has been focused on it. The key here to develop a list of citations that is as diverse and geographically widespread as possible. It can include monographs, articles, theses, websites, audiovisual sources – everything that helps to provide the widest picture. If the bibliography is very long it may be useful to make it an appendix to the nomination form.

6.6 **Referees** will be asked to comment on your nomination and whether, in their view, it meets the selection criteria. For obvious reasons, these need to be independent voices, preferably also from other countries, who can make an informed comment. So that they can speak freely, their identities are kept confidential within the assessment process.

Section 7.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

7.1 Primary Criteria

This is where you present **the case for inscription** by demonstrating how the documentary heritage you are nominating satisfies the criteria. We will look at them in turn, but remember *that you do not have to satisfy all of them*. In many cases only some of the criteria will be relevant, but you have to satisfy **at least one** of them.

7.1.1 Historic significance

What does the documentary heritage tell us about the history of the world? The nomination form and the criteria in the *General Guidelines* (at para 6.3.6.2) lists several dot points that may apply to the heritage you are nominating. Decide how to set this out in your own way: you are giving an explanation, not answering a series of questions. Here are some suggestions as a starting point.

What can you say about the ways in which the documentary heritage reflects the time of its creation? Times change: there are periods of political, cultural or social change, of evolution of ideas and beliefs, of revolution and regression, of contact between peoples of contrasting cultures. Does the documentary heritage help us to better understand a particular period in history and its turning points, and changing patterns of life and culture?

Remember that documentary heritage does not have to be “old” to be of significance. The concept of antiquity is relative: in some countries, documents dating back 100 years are seen as “recent”; in others, they are seen as “old”. Documents from the recent past may be

significant for their ability to demonstrate the impact of an important event or movement.

- *Examples: Hittite cuneiform tablets from Bogazköy, Turkey*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/turkey_hittite_cuneiform_tablets_bogazkov.pdf
- *Tuol Sleng Archive, Cambodia:*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/cambodia_tuol_sleng_genocide_museum_archive.pdf

Places and locations can be significant because of cultural and historical associations. Did the location influence the course of events? Was it the birthplace of political, social or religious movements that had an impact on later history? Did the environment itself influence the way in which those movements developed? How do the documents provide evidence of this?

- *Examples: Construction and Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Two-Plus-Four-Treaty of 1990, Germany*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/Germany%20Berlin%20Wall.pdf
- *Commemorative Stela from Nahr el-Kalb, Lebanon*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/Commemorative%20stela%20of%20Nahr%20el-Kalb%20Mount%20Lebanon.pdf

World history may be influenced by leading personalities, so documents may have an intrinsic association with the life and work of a person or people or cultural group that have a major impact. It can be in any field: literature, music, arts, sciences, politics, religion, sports and so on.

- *Examples: The Constantine Collection, Trinidad and Tobago*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/Trinidad%20Constantine.pdf
- *Nikola Tesla's Archive, Serbia*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/serbia_nikola_tesla_archive.pdf

Does the documentary heritage demonstrate an important innovation or major theme or development in the march of history? For example, great inventions – everything from the wheel to the internet – have shaped the course of history and the progress and development of nations and societies. The emergence of the concept of the nation state (the basis for the structure of UNESCO) was an historical evolution.

- *Examples: Patent DRP 37435 "Vehicle with gas engine operation" submitted by Carl Benz, Mannheim (29 January 1886 Germany)*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/germany%20Benz.pdf
- *Human Rights Archives: Argentina, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, etc.*
<http://www.unesco.org/webworld/en/mow-register>

7.1.2 Form and style

Much documentary heritage is unremarkable in its physical nature – for example, manuscript or typescript paper records. But some documents display innovative qualities,

or high levels of artistry, notable aesthetic characteristics or a particular connection between content and carrier; carriers are objects and artefacts as well as a container of information.

Sometimes the form and style is related to social or industrial conventions or needs, may be characteristic of particular places or periods in history, or may be the output of particular industrial processes. They may typify a disappeared or disappearing style.

- *Examples: Ancient Naxi Dongba Literature Manuscripts, China*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/china+Ancient+Naxi+Dongba+Literature+Manuscripts.pdf
- *Sakubei Yamamoto Collection, Japan*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/japan_sakubei_yamamoto_collection.pdf

7.1.3 Social, community or spiritual significance

This concept is another way of expressing the significance of a document or set of documents in terms of their spiritual or sacred values. You need to show how a community's **present** attachment to the documentary heritage is demonstrated: for example, a community may be strongly attached to the heritage of a beloved leader, or a saint. You should provide evidence of how this attachment is expressed..

Application of this criterion must reflect living significance – the documentary heritage must have an emotional hold on **people who are alive today**. Once those who have revered the documentary heritage for its social/spiritual/community significance no longer do so, or are no longer living, it loses this specific significance and may eventually acquire historical significance.

- *Examples: Illuminated MSS of the Koran, Christian Bible, Buddhists texts, etc., woodblocks and textiles; character-based hand calligraphy; obsolete audiovisual carriers*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_for_ms/slovakia_basagic_en.pdf
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_for_ms/korea_tripitaka.pdf
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_for_ms/denmark_hamburg_bible_bertoldus.pdf

7.2 Comparative Criteria

7.2.1 Rarity or uniqueness

A **rare** item may or may not be unique or irreplaceable: it is one of a small number of surviving exemplars of a type or class of document. The classic example is the “rare book”: thousands of copies may have been printed but only a few copies are known to survive. Each one of these may have unique attributes while still sharing in the common attributes of all surviving copies.

Unique means one-of-a-kind – it is not the same as **rare**. It usually applies to an original document, or a document which has defining characteristics that are not shared by any other document which may be similar to it. Irreplaceability reinforces the value of uniqueness: no copy or surrogate can have the same significance or intrinsic character as the unique original.

7.2.2 Completeness, condition

Describe the condition of the documentary heritage. Depending on the nature of the document or the collection, the description will need to be sufficiently detailed to allow an appreciation of current risk and/or conservation needs, as well as establishing whether its integrity has been compromised. For example, in the case of a paper document, individual pages may be torn or incomplete or replaced by copies, or they may be missing altogether. The document may have been altered or defaced in other ways. Archival records may have been removed from their archival series or fonds, thus compromising their integrity. In the case of a motion picture film, segments may be missing or the film may be scratched or damaged.

The importance of the **carrier** as well as the **content** matters here. There is sometimes a critical relationship between the two, with one shaping the other, and the artefact value of the carrier also has to be appreciated. Some documents (such as those utilizing certain photographic colour processes) cannot be replicated exactly by any known technology. A photographic or digital copy of a mediaeval manuscript is very different object from the original, even if the textual content can still be read easily.

In the case of *audiovisual media*, many important works survive only in incomplete form, or in “reconstructed” versions that assemble the best material from sources available at the time. Such versions may be superseded by later discoveries.

- *Example: Metropolis:*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/germany_metropolis.pdf

7.3 Statement of significance

This should be written carefully and thoughtfully.

Summarise the points you have made in 7.1 and 7.2 above, and make the case for **authenticity** based on the provenance of the documentary heritage.

Then explain **why this document is important to the memory of the world**. What has been its influence and impact – positive or negative – on life and culture beyond the boundaries of a nation state or region? Why would its loss impoverish the heritage of humanity? Influence can be direct and immediate, or indirect and subtle and only discernible over time. Sometimes it can be measured numerically (for example, through an Internet search); sometimes it can be inferred because of events that followed

its creation.

Section 8.0 Discussion with stakeholders

Who else has an interest in your nomination? Who else might be affected by it?

Nominations do not always come from the owners or custodians of the documentary heritage: sometimes they are submitted by others. It is obviously important, however, that owners and custodians are part of the discussion because it is the custodian who is responsible for managing the heritage and providing for its safekeeping.

Sometimes there will be wider communities with whom prior discussion is appropriate, whether for social, spiritual or professional reasons. Such discussion adds strength to a nomination and can produce additional information to be incorporated in the argument and the significance statement. It is important to also consider whether any party may be offended or aggrieved by the potential inscription of the documentary heritage – for example, whether it could breach privacy of persons living or dead, or portray a given community or section of society in a negative light. These factors do not of themselves diminish the significance of the documentary heritage, but prior consultation wherever possible will strengthen the nomination and assist the settlement.

Those who have done past research on the documentary heritage can lighten the load of the nominator by providing additional information and provide a scholarly basis for the nomination.

Section 9.0 and 10.0 Risk assessment and management

9.1 The survival of all documentary heritage is at risk in the long term. Risk is minimized by good professional practice in handling, storage, preservation and access practice, and by the predictability and security of its custodial situation. MoW is concerned about both the short and the longer term.

Many carriers are physically and electronically vulnerable and the practicalities of preservation are often not popularly understood. Storage and climatic conditions may be critical. Many institutions have very limited economic resources, facilities and skills to ensure longer-term preservation, and social, political and security conditions may not be conducive to document survival. MoW makes a judgment about the level of threat by taking all these factors into account. Inscription can sometimes significantly improve a document's safety and chances of proper care and long-term survival.

➤ Example: <http://www.unesco-ci.org/photos/showgallery.php/cat/523>

10.1 A **Management plan** is highly desirable. If there is one, include it in the nomination. If there is not, explain why and provide details about proposed conservation, storage and access strategies..

Management plans can be elaborate or simple but they must be **realistic**. Most institutions do not have an ideal environment or limitless funding and just have to do the best they can for the time being – and it is important that they say so!

An ideal – *repeat, ideal* – management plan would include a statement of the significance of the documentary heritage, refer to the institution’s policy and procedures for access and preservation, set out a preservation budget, describe the available conservation expertise and facilities, describe the physical environment in which the documentary heritage is held (for example, air quality, temperature and humidity, shelving, security) and include a disaster preparedness strategy.

A final word - the virtue of brevity

Your nomination should be comprehensive, but it should be no longer than is necessary. Filling your nomination with unnecessary repetition or arguments that do not address the criteria only makes the task of assessment more onerous. Your nomination will be judged by its quality, not its quantity. If it exceeds, say, 15 pages, you should check to see whether everything you have included is needed to make the case for inscription. There is no mandatory minimum or maximum length – just use your common sense.

3 The outcome: what happens after you submit a nomination?

Announcement of inscription

Successful nominations are announced in a press release issued by the Director-General, and all nominators are informed of the outcome by letter from the Secretariat. The new inscriptions are then listed on the MoW website.

Ceremonies and presentation of certificates with examples

All successful nominators and custodians receive an official certificate of inscription. In the absence of any other alternative, this is simply delivered by mail. But that is missing an opportunity for promoting the inscription. A formal certificate presentation is potentially a high profile media event that benefits both the recipient institution and UNESCO. As its means permit, the UNESCO Secretariat will be happy to cooperate in such arrangements.

Publicity

Custodians of inscribed heritage are encouraged to publicize their status and to draw public attention to the items that have been inscribed. For example, a number of institutions have placed inscribed items on public display; have digitized them so that they are readily accessible; have promoted the recognition through their website; and have sold reproductions as products. The only limitation is imagination.

Use of the UNESCO/MoW logo

The use of the name and logo of UNESCO is subject to rules laid down by the governing bodies of the Organization and unauthorized use is strictly forbidden. However, custodians of inscribed heritage are entitled to use a personalized UNESCO/MoW logo, and are encouraged to do so. This is sent to custodians on request. The rules are explained in Appendix 9 of the *General Guidelines*.

What if your nomination is rejected? You can apply again...

If your nomination is unsuccessful, you can resubmit a revised version in future rounds. If you are contemplating doing so, you should review the arguments you presented in your previous nomination, and consider whether there is additional information you could offer in support of the nomination. Take into account any feedback you received from the Secretariat; and consider whether there are additional authoritative referees who could support your case.

4 FAQ

Everything you wanted to know, but were afraid to ask...

Digital documents, including databases and websites

If nominating a digital document or collection it is important to read Appendix 6 of the *General Guidelines* so that your nomination will provide the assessors with all the needed information.

Audiovisual documents

Audiovisual media exist in a wide variety of analogue and digital formats. Identifying an “original” or earliest surviving generation is sometimes a matter of judgment. For analogue documents, the relationship between content and carrier may be important to its character. See the further comments in Appendixes 4 and 5 of the *General Guidelines*.

Artistic, literary and musical works

This is, by its nature, an area of unclear boundaries in which MoW has established its precedents with care. See the discussion in Appendix 4 of the *General Guidelines*.

MoW does not seek to inscribe artistic, literary or musical works *as such*, based purely on their artistic, literary or musical merit. However, it does inscribe documents that show the genesis of an important single work, group of works or of a whole oeuvre, or depict a prominent state of a work, and/or the biographical and societal context of an important artist or work.

To suggest a hypothetical example, one may nominate a group of letters that reveal the relationship between two Renaissance painters. These are documents. But their actual paintings would be ineligible for nomination *unless* they had significant documentary value and satisfied the criteria for inscription on a MoW register.

- *Examples of inscriptions: Metropolis, Gutenberg Bible, Astrid Lindgren Archives, Wizard of Oz, Bayeux Tapestry, Gothic architectural drawings, Beethoven’s 9th symphony MSS, the Bayasanghori Shahnameh, Carlos Gardel tango recordings, Russian posters, Song of the Nibelungs poem:*
- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/access-by-region-and-country/>

Exclusions from the international register

As a practical necessity, experience has shown that certain types of document should not normally be considered for inscription on the International MoW Register. Two indicative examples are the papers of contemporary political leaders and political parties, and national constitutions (or similar documents). For a discussion on these, refer to Appendix 4 of the *General Guidelines*.

“Whole of institution” nominations

While the nomination of a collection, a fonds or a group of collections and fonds (as described in section 1) is welcome, the nomination of the *entire contents* of an archival, library or museum institution is unlikely to be successful, unless it demonstrates a significance, unity and coherence beyond the *coincidence* of material which happens to reside in the same institution. Further, such nominations do not usually meet the test of being closed and finite – the holdings of the institution are constantly changing. Again, refer to the discussion in Appendix 4 of the *General Guidelines*.

Monetary value

Some items on MoW registers have considerable monetary value. The very fact of achieving inscription may have the effect of enhancing that value in some quarters. However, the monetary value of any item, collection or fonds is **irrelevant** to its significance in the MoW context. The Programme does not take account of such monetary value.

Ownership, custody, copyright and management

Nomination and inscription on a MoW register does not in any way affect existing ownership, possession, control or copyright in the documentary heritage. UNESCO does not gain any form of proprietary interest. However, there is an *implied* commitment by the owners of the heritage that it will be managed and cared for properly. Inscription also means that UNESCO has a continuing and informed right to monitor this commitment and the well-being of the inscribed material, and may periodically contact custodians for this purpose. That is why the nomination document asks you for such details as storage conditions, security and details of the management plan relating to the material Section. Paragraph 6.4.12 and Section 6.8 of the *General Guidelines* refers.

Review and removal

Inscriptions are not immutable. Under certain circumstances inscriptions can be removed entirely from a register. Among the possible reasons are serious deterioration or damage to the heritage that destroys its significance, or if a reassessment demonstrates the ineligibility of the documentary heritage against the criteria under which it was inscribed.

Such a decision would not be taken lightly. It would follow the due process set out in Sections 6.8 and 6.9 of the *General Guidelines*.

What does nomination cost?

Nothing but preparation time. UNESCO does not levy a fee for receiving or processing a MoW nomination.

Why do you have to nominate “originals”? Why won’t copies do?

The “original” is where maximum information is found and authenticity is verifiable. In most cases there is only one original. See Paragraph 6.3.4 of the *General Guidelines*.

Where originals do not survive, MoW seeks to ensure that the earliest surviving generation or copy is identified by the nominator. This may be a matter of research and

judgment; for example, in the days before printing, manuscripts were copied by hand and may exist in several variant versions, which may be of great antiquity. Closer to the present, the question of identifying an original can become more complex – and even impossible.

In such cases, where documentary heritage may exist in multiple copies and variant versions of equal validity – for example, early printed books or feature films in differing versions or multiple languages – it may be preferable to nominate the **work** that exists in a number of exemplars, rather than one specific item. All exemplars would then be listed in the nomination (or even added afterward, if further exemplars are subsequently located).

- *Examples: Metropolis, Gutenberg Bible :*
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/access-by-region-and-country/>

Why “closed” and “fixed”?

It is not possible to reliably assess a collection, fonds or group that is in a fluid state, nor could UNESCO award an MoW logo to documentary heritage whose character might change without its knowledge. That is why what is nominated must be finite and precisely defined. See Paragraph 6.4.6 of the *General Guidelines*. An exception is made for certain types of born digital objects. See Appendix 6 of the *General Guidelines*.

Does the nominator have to own the material being nominated?

No. While it is unusual for nominations to be submitted by parties other than the owner or custodian of the documentary heritage, it is permissible.

Does the nominator or the custodian have to be a public institution?

No. MoW makes no distinction between public or private, commercial or non-commercial organizations, nor between institutions and individuals.

- *Example: Carlos Gardel:*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/uruguay-%20records_carlos_gardel.pdf
- *Christopher Okigbo Collection:*
http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/nomination_forms/50+Africa+Okigbo+papers.pdf

Does material have to be old to be nominated?

No. Age and significance are unrelated.

UNESCO MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER NOMINATION FORM

1.0 Title of item or collection being proposed

Keep the title short – maximum ten words is desirable.

2.0 Summary (max 200 words)

*Give a **brief description** of the documentary heritage being nominated, and the argument for its **significance for the memory of the world**.*

*Write this section last, once you have completed all the other sections. Include all the essential points you have made in the nomination, especially the key arguments you have made in the statement of significance **as to why the nominated documentary heritage is critical to the memory of the world**.*

3.0 Nominator contact details

3.1 Name of nominator (person or organisation)

3.2 Relationship to the nominated material

3.3 Address

3.4 Telephone

Email

4.0 Declaration of Authority

I certify that I have the authority to nominate the item, or items, described in this document to the Memory of the World Register.

Signature

Full name and position

Date

5.0 Legal information

5.1 Name of owner (person or organisation)

5.2 Address

5.3 Telephone

Email

5.4 Name and contact details of custodian IF DIFFERENT from the owner

5.5 Legal status

Provide details of legal and administrative responsibility for the preservation of the documentary heritage.

Any relevant supporting documents should be scanned and submitted with the application.

5.6 Copyright status

If the copyright status of the documentary heritage is known, it should be stated. However, the copyright status of a document or collection has no bearing on its significance, and is not taken into account when determining whether it meets the criteria for inscription.

Images supplied with the nomination must be accompanied by the signed 'Agreement Granting Non-Exclusive Rights' form available on the UNESCO Memory of the World website.

5.7 Accessibility (note any restrictions, including cultural restrictions)

Describe how the item(s) or collection may be accessed.

If legal or cultural constraints limit access, describe the nature of these constraints.

Digitisation for access purposes is encouraged. Comment on whether this has already been done, or is planned.

6.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

6.1 Name and identification details of the items/collection being nominated

Give the exact title of the nomination and the institution(s) nominating it. These will appear on the inscription certificate if the nomination is successful.

6.2 Catalogue or registration details

Give the catalogue or registration details for the item or collection.

Provide a physical description of the item(s) if it is relevant to their significance.

A nominated collection or archival fonds must be finite, with clear beginning and end dates.

If the catalogue or registration details are too unwieldy, provide a description of the contents with sample catalogue entries, accession or registration numbers.

Or you can add the catalogue/registration details as an appendix, or refer to an online inventory.

6.3 Visual documentation (if available and appropriate)

Visual documentation includes photographic images or audiovisual material where relevant.

Attach photos as jpg files to be submitted with the application, or supply a CD, DVD or USB key for audiovisual material.

6.4 History/provenance

*Set out the history of the item or collection - its 'life story' or provenance - from the time when it was created to its place in your institution. This is critical to the item or collection's **authenticity**. You may not know all the details, but give as comprehensive an account of the item or collection's provenance as you can.*

6.5 Bibliography

A bibliography provides evidence that the documentary heritage has been used by scholars, and knowledge of its impact and influence is in the public domain. It is a good idea to cite the works of scholars from outside your own country, as well as local scholars, to demonstrate this influence.

6.6 Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organisations with expert knowledge about values and provenance of the nominated material.

Name	Qualifications	Contact details (email)
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Note that the names and contact details of these referees will not be disclosed on the Memory of the World Register, nor disclosed without their permission to any third party. Other authoritative referees should also be contacted to obtain a broad spectrum of opinion for assessment purposes.

7.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

7.1 Primary criteria - significance value to the world. Comment on one or more of the following significance criteria.

Not all the criteria will apply to your documentary heritage. Choose only those criteria that are relevant to your nomination.

7.1.1 Historic significance

What does the documentary heritage tell us about the history of the world? Does it deal with

- Political, economic, social or spiritual movements*
- leading personalities in world history*
- events of world-changing significance*
- specific places of significance*
- traditional customs*
- relations with other countries or communities*

- *changing patterns of life and culture*
- *a turning point in history, or a critical innovation*
- *an example of excellence in the arts, literature, science, technology, sport, or other parts of life and culture?*

7.1.2 Form and style

This criterion refers to the physical nature of the documentary heritage. Much documentary heritage is unremarkable in this respect, for example, manuscript or typescript paper records. However, some forms of documentary heritage display innovative qualities or high levels of artistry, and it is to these that this criterion applies.

- *Is the documentary heritage a particularly fine exemplar of its type?*
- *Does it have outstanding qualities of beauty and craftsmanship?*
- *Is it a new or unusual type of carrier?*
- *Or is it an example of a type of document that has now disappeared?*

7.1.3 Social, community or spiritual significance

*This criterion refers to the attachment to the documentary heritage of a specific community **in the present**. You must show how this attachment is demonstrated, for example, a community may be strongly attached to the heritage of a beloved leader, or to the documentary evidence of a specific incident or site. Or it may revere the documentary heritage associated with a spiritual leader or a saint. Provide information on how this attachment is expressed.*

7.2 Comparative criteria. Comment on one or more of the following comparative criteria:

7.2.1 Rarity

Is the item or collection rare? Is it one of a kind (the only one ever created), or the last survivor of a form of documentary heritage that was once widespread? Do similar items or collections exist?

7.2.2 Integrity, completeness, condition

Is the documentary heritage complete, or are sections or pages missing? Has part of the documentary heritage become lost, or are supplementary parts being preserved elsewhere? If so, give details.

What condition is it in?

7.3 Statement of significance

*Summarise the points you have made in 7.1 and 7.2, and make the case for **authenticity** based on the **provenance** of the documentary heritage.*

*What has been the **impact** of this documentary heritage material on world history and culture?*

*Why is this documentary heritage important to the memory of the world? What has been its impact on life and culture **beyond the boundaries of a nation state or region**? State why the documentary heritage is important to the memory of the world, and why its loss would impoverish the heritage of humanity.*

8.0 Consultation with stakeholders

8.1 Provide details of consultation with relevant stakeholders about this nomination

Relevant stakeholders include:

- *Owners/custodians of the documentary heritage*
- *Communities with involvement in the documentary heritage*
- *Scholars who research the documentary heritage*

9.0 Risk assessment

9.1 Detail the nature and scope of threats to the nominated material

Is the documentary heritage at risk from:

- *Climatic conditions*
- *Poor storage*
- *Economic issues*

- *Potential political interference*

If your documentary heritage is at risk, say so - UNESCO needs to know its true situation.

10.0 Preservation and access management plan

10.1 Describe, or attach as a scanned document, any existing plans. If no plans exist, provide details about proposed conservation, storage and access strategies.

11.0 Any other information that may support the nomination

11.1 Note below or attach scanned documents as appropriate.

This may include statements from supporters, plans for promoting the documentary heritage if it is inscribed, or scanned news items relating to the documentary heritage.

How do you see this documentary heritage being used for education and research?

12.0 CHECKLIST

Summary completed (section 2);

Nomination and contact details completed (section 3);

Declaration of Authority signed and dated (section 4);

If this is a joint nomination, section 4 is appropriately modified, and all Declarations of Authority obtained;

Legal information (section 5);

Details of custodian if different from owner (section 5);

Details of legal status completed (section 5);

Details of accessibility completed (section 5);

Copyright permission for images completed (section 5);

Catalogue and registration information (section 6);

History/provenance completed (section 6);

Bibliography completed (section 6);

Independent referees identified (section 6);

Significance – primary criteria (section 7);

Significance – comparative criteria (section 7);

Statement of significance (section 7);

Details of consultation with stakeholders completed where relevant (section 8);

Assessment of risk completed (section 9);

Summary of Preservation and Access Management Plan completed or strategy proposed (section 10);

Any other information provided – if applicable (section 11);

Additional scanned documents, including suitable reproduction quality photographs identified to illustrate the documentary heritage (300dpi, jpg format, full-colour preferred);

