



# UNESCO Creative Cities Network FAQs

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## 1. WHAT IS THE UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK?

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) was created in 2004 to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity and innovation as key drivers for a more sustainable and inclusive urban development. With the designation of 66 new creative cities in October 2019, the Network assembles 246 members worldwide across seven creative fields: Crafts and Folk Arts, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts and Music.

As a UNESCO flagship cities programme, the UCCN provides its member cities the opportunity to work and learn from each other on using culture and creativity as a driver for sustainable development. Through sharing experiences, knowledge and best practices; building new and strengthening existing cooperation, the Network encourages and inspires member cities to construct and implement local policies and actions that aim towards sustainable development as regards to economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

## 2. HOW DOES THE UCCN WORK?

### **UCCN Secretariat**

The Secretariat is administered by UNESCO that ensures the Network's management at the global level. It proposes and leads strategic and programmatic initiatives. It provides support to member cities through guidance, capacity building materials and opportunities for participation and collaboration, as well as promotes the Network's visibility through communication and advocacy, particularly at the international level. The Secretariat also implements the designation process and convenes the Network's Annual Conference (together with the Host City) and other meetings as appropriate.

## Sub-Networks

The 7 sub-networks, corresponding to the 7 creative fields, provide a thematic focus for member cities to develop their cultural and creative assets and competitiveness, and facilitate knowledge exchange and experience with other member cities. The different creative fields should be considered as lever for a more holistic development vision, cross-cutting cultural and creative domains. The sub-networks monitor progress and identify key trends and opportunities within their respective field.

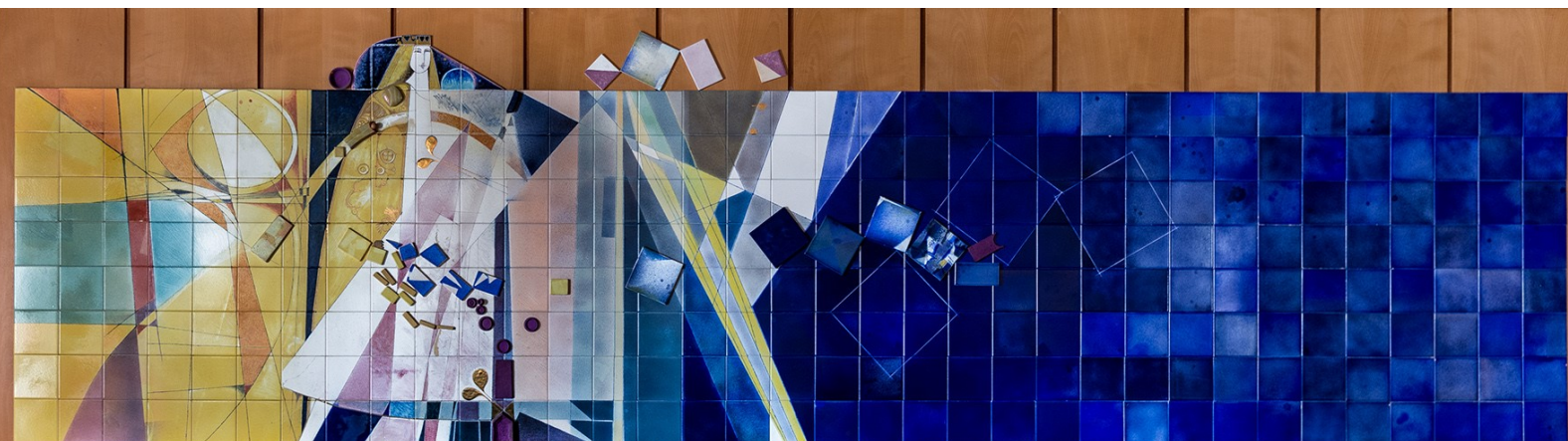
## Coordination Committee

The Coordination Committee acts as a liaison between UNESCO and the 7 sub-networks. It is composed of representatives of each sub-network, namely the Coordinator and the Deputy Coordinator, designated by their fellow member cities for a two-year mandate. The Committee collaborates with the UCCN Secretariat on questions related to different functioning aspects of the Network.

## 3. HOW DOES THE NETWORK HELP MY CITY?

Becoming a UNESCO Creative City provides your city with strategic positioning and opportunities to stimulate local policies and action towards creativity, and strengthen regional and international outreach and impact. Being part of the UCCN represents a genuine added value, allowing your city to:

- ▶ Nurture and strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognized creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development;
- ▶ Strengthen its national, regional and international profile and impact, by providing visibility for your innovative policies, strategies and activities towards creativity and sustainable cities;
- ▶ Increase its regional and international attractiveness to economic investors and stakeholders, skilled creative professionals or visitors, and facilitate the mobilization of financial resources from the public and private sectors;
- ▶ Network with fellow Creative Cities through joint events and common projects, to stimulate cross-fertilization, share knowledge and know-how, and build partnerships;
- ▶ Build momentum on creativity by putting the spotlight on your creative sector as a driving force, mobilizing all stakeholders including the public and private sectors, and nurturing dialogue between local authorities, professional organizations, academia and the creative community;
- ▶ Propel its local creative field and communities to nurture an encouraging policy and economic environment, and further connect creative professionals and local creative businesses to international networks and markets; and
- ▶ Connect to the international development agenda through UNESCO, obtaining opportunities of illustrating your cities experiences and good practices at the international level to reinforce your city's image and outreach.



## 4. HOW CAN MY CITY FULFILL ITS POTENTIAL AS A CREATIVE CITY?

As a UNESCO Creative City, you are now an active representative of the Network's mission and objectives to raise awareness of the power of culture and creativity in building sustainable cities. This commitment lies within the framework of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Being part of the UCCN provides your city with a stronger voice at the international level, to take part in global discussions on creativity and sustainable cities, as well as promote the recognition of your innovative initiatives by other cities and the international community. Your city can leverage and fulfill the Network's mission in a number of ways:

- ▶ Develop, pool, and share knowledge and good practices, highlighting the contribution of culture and creativity in building more sustainable and inclusive cities; and increase their outreach through the UCCN website – download the [Event Form](#) to be sent to the UNESCO Secretariat;
- ▶ Take an active part at both the Network and sub-network level to monitor major trends in your respective creative field (Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts or Music), identify new challenges and opportunities and build a strategic approach, while working transversally with other creative fields' sub-networks to foster cooperation and synergies;
- ▶ Reflect and translate key objectives of the 2030 Agenda in local development strategies and policies, as well as encourage Research & Development in the fields of culture, creativity and innovation to contribute to the international sustainable development agenda;
- ▶ Engage in co-development cooperation with cities from the Global South, notably those from under-represented regions in the Network, to foster exchange, solidarity, experience and knowledge sharing;
- ▶ Promote your creative community by enhancing its capacities and possibilities, including involvement in international programmes, and mobility through artistic residencies sited in other Creative Cities; and
- ▶ Convene various actors, stakeholders and partners and mobilize resources of different natures in the framework of the Network at different levels.

## 5. WHAT IS THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?



The 2030 Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity adopted in 2015 by the international community. It outlines a vision for a more sustainable future, as one that is equitable, inclusive, peaceful, and environmentally friendly. Its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets provide guidance for strategic policy design and implementation at the local, national and international levels.

For the first time, culture and creativity have been recognized as powerful enablers for sustainable development. The role of culture is particularly highlighted in SDG 11 to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”, but also, transversally, in other SDGs on social inclusion, job creation, urban resilience or environmental protection.

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, UNESCO's key priority is to facilitate Member States through its programme and activities in achieving the 17 SDG Goals and targets at various levels.

Cities have been widely recognized as key actors and contributors to the implementation of the international sustainable development agenda. For UNESCO, the UCCN and its member cities are key partners to operationalize the 2030 Agenda at the urban level. Creative Cities are emerging as hubs of experimentation that lead to innovative and successful models of sustainable development. Innovative urban solutions are essential source of new ideas and inspiration in dealing with global challenges of our time, be it economic, social and environmental. To learn more: [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

## 6. WHAT IS MY CITY'S MAIN RESPONSIBILITY AS A UCCN MEMBER?

The designation as a UNESCO Creative City is certainly a recognition of your city's cultural assets and creative vibrancy as a driver of its sustainable development. It only represents the starting point of a long-term journey to move even further in fulfilling its potential. As any member-based organization comes with responsibilities, your city is expected to:

- ▶ Implement activities directly in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Network's Mission Statement, outlining the UCCN collective vision and common objectives;
- ▶ Report every four years on the implementation of its past quadrennial action plan via the Membership Monitoring Report (MMR) to take stock of the main achievements, challenges and opportunities as a member city. As a new member to the Network your first MMR should be submitted in 2023; To get familiar with this exercise, [click here](#).
- ▶ Participate in each UCCN Annual Conference, the most important gathering of the Network, bringing member cities together with the participation of mayors, focal points and other relevant stakeholders. The event will enable you to network with other cities around the world, share your experience and learn from others, and seed for future collaboration and co-development;
- ▶ Consider providing a financial support to the Network through the UCCN's voluntary Financial Contribution Mechanism in which member cities are invited to take part according to their respective situation and capacities;
- ▶ Participate actively in your subnetwork's activities, including its annual gatherings, and consider applying for the Coordination Committee to assist the UCCN Secretariat in liaising with the member cities and stimulating activities in each creative field;
- ▶ Communicate actively and regularly with the UCCN Secretariat to disseminate information and initiatives undertaken locally and internationally with a view to promoting knowledge and experience developed in the Network; and
- ▶ Participate in selecting the Host City of the UCCN Annual Conference organized by the UCCN Secretariat.

## 7. WHAT ARE THE MAIN EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE MEMBER CITIES?

The Network regularly organizes and attends various events to further strengthen international cooperation and co-development between member cities. As emphasized above, members of the Network are strongly recommended to attend these important activities as well as proactively enrich the Network by organizing and participating in various city led events. Among which, the most important regular events organized in the framework of the Network are:

- ▶ **Annual Conference**, which is held once a year (except in case of force majeure) by one of the Creative Cities voted by the members. It offers a unique occasion to strengthen the ties between cities from around the world and serves as a platform to define the strategic objectives of an expanded and well-balanced Network. The next Annual Conference, under the theme *Creativity, Path to Equality*, will be held from 13 to 17 July 2020 in Santos, Brazil, during which a special integration session will be organized for the new members. Delegates from your city are highly recommended to attend this Conference to be able to better understand the Network and lay ground for the establishment of your city's future collaborations and activities.





► **The Mayors' Forum** is an annual event currently organized on the occasion of the Annual Conference. It is a prime platform for Mayors to showcase and share their cities' vision and local policies and actions with their counterparts, city delegates and other stakeholders. It is highly encouraged that mayors, deputy/vice mayors from the newly designated cities participate in this dedicated event to enrich their experience and deepen their understanding of the Network during the Annual Conference.

Further information on the above mentioned events will be provided to the member cities in due course.

► In addition to these events, the sub-networks and member cities also carry out various events and projects guided by the vision and objectives of the Network. Information about these events are shared by the Secretariat via email, news items, and call for applications/entries/papers published regularly on the [UCCN website](http://www.unesco.org/creative-cities).

Meanwhile, the UNESCO Secretariat regularly provides opportunities of participation to member cities in major international events and activities organized by UNESCO or other partners on diverse subjects related to cities and urban development.

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