

UNESCO Memory of the World Programme and Researchers: The Sub-Committee on Education and Research (Paris) asks for your contribution and commitment

The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme is dedicated to the world documentary heritage. Created in 1992, after distressing experiences of destruction of valuable documents and collections by war, fire, water, chemical processes, negligence, and other causes, Memory of the World wants: - to help facilitate preservation of the world's documentary heritage, - to assist universal access to documentary heritage, with a special eye on digitization and the Internet, - and to raise awareness worldwide of the significance of documentary heritage.

Its International Register – together with Regional and National Registers – of outstanding documents and collections is the most visible tool of Memory of the World to foster the documentary heritage.

Memory of the World is guided by an International Advisory Committee (and four sub-committees) of experts, that give advice to the UNESCO Secretariat and cooperate closely with it. In some parts of the world Regional Committees work for the tasks of the programme, keeping an eye on the special needs and interests of their region; similarly 65 Memory of the World Committees in the National UNESCO Commissions around the world.

Education and Research: A new initiative of Memory of the World

Since the beginning of the programme, archives and libraries have played a key role in it. Later on museums joined in the movement. And now the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme is interested in winning partners in the academic world, institutes and individuals, in all disciplines and institutions of knowledge in which documents play a major role for research and teaching - like history, different historical sub-disciplines, philologies, and – in their own way – engineering/technology; and, of course, research and teaching by and for archives, libraries, and museums.

This may be most interesting especially for those who see the importance of and the chances for **interdisciplinarity** and **international orientation** in working for and with **documents** and the relevance of the **Internet** and other **ICTs** as major future tools for education and research. The growing number of digitization projects gives clear evidence of their importance. They open local and national sources and knowledge to the world. This process – common to archives, libraries, museums, universities - requires new strategies for education and research, f.e. a new ways of mediating documents to a worldwide audience with its linguistic and cultural diversity.

And we want to help building bridges between: - old and new forms of documents, joining knowledge on paleography and digital heritage under one roof, - tertiary education and the institutions of memory, - scholarship and the general public.

Schools, teachers, pupils, of similar importance for Memory of the World, will be treated in a special paper.

How can you join our efforts?

1. If you had or have research or teaching programmes (courses, seminars, lectures) in your institution that include Memory of the World or even just elements coming close to our tasks, please, let us know (address at the end).
2. Think about new ways of implementing Memory of the World and/or go news ways of education and research on documents in your work and institution. There are two major ways, both of equal importance:

1. Incorporating Memory of the World into established disciplines

The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme or parts of it (its context, tasks and values; items of the Registers; special questions of digital heritage, etc.) or just questions derived from it can become objects of research and teaching, f.e. by partial implementation into courses and lectures or research projects in different disciplines.

A good context might be Heritage Studies, especially those inspired by the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Intangible Heritage. But many other academic contexts could provide good preconditions for Memory of the World scholarship, too, like History, Political Science, Philologies, Pedagogy, Library and Information Sciences, or Museum Studies.

2. Helping to create Memory of the World Studies

As soon as the share of elements related to the Memory of the World Programme and its tasks grows, we come closer to a discipline on its own: Memory of the World Studies, that is interdisciplinary and internationally oriented research and teaching on documents, with special regard of the Internet. This could lead into a **Master** programme (or as a **second discipline** accompany Heritage Studies, History, Library Science, etc.). **International joint degrees** would fit very well to the idea of Memory of the World Studies, and so would **e-learning** courses.

The Memory of the World Programme, its contents like the registers, its network, publications, and the questions that it raises, can provide valuable material and help for international projects while respecting and fostering cultural diversity. And, of course, documents and collections not yet being a part of the Memory of the World Programme could be included into research and teaching as well, thus combining global and local content.

Network of Cooperating Institutions and Corresponding Members

The Memory of the World Education and Research Sub-Committee develops and fosters a network of “Cooperating Institutions and Corresponding Members” that are ready and in the position to work sustainably for the tasks referred to above. They come from different disciplines and regions. They cooperate with the Sub-Committee. Your institution or you yourself could become a member of the Network if you share our goals.

Further Information

General Information on the Memory of the World Programme:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/>

On the International Register:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/flagship-project-activities/memory-of-the-world/register/>

“Memory of the World and the Academic World: A Proposal to Introduce Memory of the World Studies”. In:

http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/mow/mow_studies_proposal_en.pdf (May 2011).

Book: *Memory of the World. (The Treasures that Record Our History from 1700 BC to the Present Day)*.

Paris: UNESCO Publishing/ Glasgow: HarperCollins, 2012.

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