

**REPORT BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACCREDITED
TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE ON ITS
CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**Deadline: 15 February 2023
for examination in 2023**

File may be downloaded at:
<https://ich.unesco.org/er/forms>

*Please provide only the information requested below.
Annexes or other additional materials cannot be accepted.*

A. Identification of the organization

A.1. Name of the organization submitting this report

A.1.a. *Provide the full official name of the organization in its original language, as it appears on the official documents.*

Geleneksel Sanatlar Derneği

A.1.b. *Name of the organization in English and/or French.*

Traditional Arts Association

A.1.c. *Accreditation number of the organization (as indicated in all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)*

90408

A.2. Address of the organization

Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone number, email address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled. In the case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.

Organization: Traditional Arts Association

Address:	Gümüşsuyu Mah. İnönü Cad. İndigo Apt. No: 41/3 Beyoğlu/ İSTANBUL
Telephone number:	+90212 245 55 71
Email address:	info@gelenekselsanatlar.org
Website:	www.gelenekselsanatlar.org/en
Other relevant information:	

A.3. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this report.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):	Mr.
Family name:	Ahmet
Given name:	AKCAN
Institution/position:	Chairperson
Address:	Yeniköy Mahallesi, Taşocağı Sokak No:5 Kat:2 Daire:6, Sarıyer/ İSTANBUL
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Email address:	ahmet@gelenekselsanatlar.org
Other relevant information:	



B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national and international levels (Chapter III and Article 19 of the Convention, paragraph 156 of the Operational Directives)¹

Distinguish between completed activities and ongoing activities contributing to the eight thematic areas of the Convention's Overall Results Framework², as well as to the preparation of periodic reports, nominations, proposals and requests under the Convention's international cooperation mechanisms. If you have not contributed, this should be indicated. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.

B.1. Describe your organization's contribution to strengthening **institutional and human capacities** for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

Not to exceed 250 words

Since its accreditation (2018) to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Traditional Arts Association (TAA) has held many activities of training, online and/or in-person interviews, workshops, and seminars to strengthen both institutional and human capacities to keep ICH alive and transmit it to future generations.

TAA organized two series of talks and conferences in conjunction with two major art and culture institutions in Istanbul:

1. A series of "Terminology in Traditional Arts" seminars in collaboration with Pera Museum (2018) which was designed to discuss the terminological aspects and issues related to traditional arts and crafts with the participation of distinguished art historians and artists.
2. A conference series entitled "Traditional Arts Talks" with Yapı Kredi Art Culture and Art (2018) which constituted a discussion environment by bringing artists and scholars to talk on contemporary aspects and issues of the field.

During the COVID-19 restrictions, TAA organized myriad online programs in 2020-2022 via Instagram with expert guest speakers.

In Pursuit of Heritage Project (2021): TAA organized

- a. hybrid, open-access, and free conversation programs on mosques (Taksim Mosque, New Mosque Designs, Mosque in Islamic Civilizations, Islamic Mosque Architecture, and Mosque Decoration), music (Religious Music in Jews, Christians, and Muslims), and legal issues (Taxation in Art Activities, Copyright Problems in Artworks) as well as
- b. workshops on lithography and calligraphy.

B.2. Describe your organization's participation in activities related to the **transmission of and education** for intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

Since its establishment, the TAA has supported many theoretical and practical training activities in the field of traditional arts and crafts, either academic or practical. Through our grant programs, we offered a variety of rewards to students and organized art competitions under different categories of traditional arts and crafts for young practitioners and advanced artists. We work closely with the traditional arts departments in Turkish universities and provide support at the institutional and administrative level for the solution to the issues that they face. Moreover, we encourage these departments in enabling to enlarge their horizons in a challenging contemporary art market via arts and crafts fairs nationally. As a future activity, we designed "The Young-TAA Project" which is aimed to contribute to the development and support of education by establishing relations with the traditional arts and crafts student clubs at the universities. While the project encourages the young practitioners of the traditional arts field to hone their skills during the workshops, it

1. In case your organization operates in several States, please indicate clearly which State or States are concerned by your answers where appropriate.
2. For further information on the Overall Results Framework, please refer to the Chapter 8 of the Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/basic-texts-00503>

also enables the masters to experience the current artistic environment constructed by the younger generation and motivates them to continue volunteer activities designed by the TAA.

B.3. Describe your organization's participation in the *inventorying and research* of intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

TAA has a premium inventory project titled "Masters of Türkiye," which started in 2010 with Istanbul and continued in 2017 with the Marmara Region (11 cities). With this project, an inventory system is developed that includes the basic information (contact, resume, courses) of the traditional artists and craftspeople where several samples from each individual are presented. The inventory also keeps the data of institutions, non-governmental organizations, workshops, and university departments related to traditional arts and crafts. The inventory is published in Turkish, English, and Arabic and the project continues to be updated via online resources. The data collected via field scanning is processed regularly and transformed into a digital platform: mastersofturkiye.org.

A new protocol was signed for the inventory of the Aegean Region covering eight cities. The inventory research and data processing will be finalized and **Masters of Türkiye: Aegean Region** will be accessible by the end of 2023. This new project will include the Geographic Information System (GIS) data as well as enabling the visitors to create cultural routes, obtain regional and provincial statistics, and make assessments. The project, which currently has 26 branches, covers many artists at both professional and apprenticeship levels. In this way, it aims to create a memory. Thanks to the design of the website, all the bearers can be listed by filtering the province and/or art branch which will help the artists and craftspeople to receive recognition and in the long run it will increase the visibility of artists.

B.4. Describe your organization's participation in developing *policies, as well as legal and administrative measures*, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

TAA took part in a nationwide study which was initiated by the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Turkish Vocational Qualifications Institution under the leadership of the *Anatolian Handicrafts Conservation and Development Association (ANELSANDER)*, which was accredited in 2022, to recognize traditional arts and crafts as a profession and determine occupational standards for all branches of arts and crafts. TAA provided academic support on the definitions of the listed arts and crafts and in the phase of professional grading. For the definitions, traditional arts and crafts practitioners and scholars who are members of TAA and some from our board personally participated and contributed to the online interviews. Our association has encouraged all the artists and craftspeople from the members and contacts lists to participate in the talks and give the proper direction to the study which is expected to be concluded by the end of 2023.

In addition, we will organize a charette on the safeguarding action plans with the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism on the *Ebru-Turkish art of marbling*, which was presented by our country and inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2014. *Art of Miniature* was submitted as a multinational file and inscribed in the representative list in 2020, and *Hüsn-i Hat (Calligraphy)* was submitted and inscribed in 2021.

B.5. Describe your organization's participation in promoting the *role of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding in society*. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

One of the main aims of the founding charter of the TAA is to safeguard and transmit Traditional Arts (especially Turkish-Islamic) and crafts to future generations. In this context, every project of the association is initiated to serve this purpose. Therefore, we design and conduct various projects in cooperation with public and private institutions such as the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Youth and Sports, the European Union Grant Programs, Pera Museum, Yapı Kredi Cultural Center. TAA acted following the suggestions of scholars and artists who are experts in the field to form a platform for the exchange of ideas. TAA's main strength lies in its ability to bring the forerunners of the field to the benefit of our community. Therefore, we encourage the professionals to participate in both the development of project ideas as well as in the preparation and implementation processes. The element bearers were personally involved in the projects and formed the project's main body. They provided their

expertise starting from the planning of the project to defining the sections, and contents, to the implementation stages and the evaluation processes of each project. Element carriers are the natural components of events and projects in promoting, safeguarding, and transmitting traditional Turkish arts and crafts, both theoretically and practically, to future generations.

B.6. Describe your organization's participation in **raising awareness** about intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

To support and safeguard the ICH, the TAA follows events, exhibitions, meetings, screenings, and projects specific to traditional arts and crafts. It contributes to its visibility by sharing these activities on social media accounts. TAA has 12.000 followers on Instagram. The followers are aware of all the activities in our field via our regular posts. The posts are frequently reposted by our followers which enables us to gain more awareness.

Aside from the main activities, TAA also organizes inter-artistic events where it incorporates other art branches to promote traditional arts and crafts, such as Photography, Film, etc. With the support of the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism, TAA has launched the Intangible Cultural Heritage Photography Contest (April - September 2022). 156 people participated with 435 photographs, and a monetary award was given to the first 50 photographers after the jury's evaluation.

TAA launched <https://musannat.com/>. The platform is still young, yet active in including all the relevant events in its area of expertise, including but not limited to interviews, artist profiles, basic data on the arts and crafts, etc.

TAA has participated in UNESCO's General Assemblies and Intangible Cultural Heritage Intergovernmental Committee Meetings through its accreditation process and after it is accredited. TAA announces these meetings on its social media accounts to maintain awareness and create interest in the Association's international activities among its members and related parties as well as getting more involved in ICH mentality.

B.7. Describe your organization's participation in facilitating the engagement of communities, groups and individuals, as well as other stakeholders, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

Not to exceed 250 words

TAA provides consultancy to non-governmental organizations in Türkiye and abroad that are willing to be accredited by UNESCO. Accreditation-related activities are essential for representing our country, one of the under-represented regions, in terms of unbalanced regional representation, which is one of the issues the ICH NGO Forum cares about. In this regard, TAA has provided a two-day workshop in Baku-Azerbaijan following an invitation by Azerbaijan Creative Industries Federation in October 2022. TAA also works in close collaboration with other NGOs operating in the field. A recent collaboration is with a Van-based NGO "Eastern Culture and Art Association" in terms of know-how, experience, and artistic advice.

Although TAA does not have a regular grant program or financial aid system for the heritage bearers, it is the main body to refer to in Türkiye when it comes to traditional arts and crafts. Therefore, TAA acts as a facilitator between the members of the community and other institutions. However, TAA financially supports artists by acquiring their artworks and adding them to its collection, and posting their activities via its social media accounts.

TAA has carried out over 70 projects, events, and publications for preserving, promoting, and transmitting intangible cultural heritage, funded through grants from public institutions and its financial resources. Recently, TAA's funding supported and brought to life nearly all the publications including a Festschrift in honor of Professor Zeren Tanındı, a preeminent art historian in Türkiye, and a new series on ICH: "Türkiye's Heritage: Intangible Cultural Heritage."

B.8. Describe your organization's **engagement in cooperation at the bilateral, subregional, regional or international levels** for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives.

Not to exceed 250 words

TAA has implemented and carried out many projects to make the ICH visible and promote and transmit it accurately. For instance, TAA plans to implement the International Hüsn-i Hat - Meeting, a project which

will bring calligraphers and their works from all over the world in 2024. Hüsni Hat was inscribed on the Representative List of ICH from Türkiye in 2021.

TAA also cooperates with local governments and the bearers of these arts to promote, safeguard, and raise awareness concerning traditional arts and crafts. Regarding this aim an exhibition reflecting the Art of the Seljuk Period (Tile, Ceramic, Miniature, Calligraphy, Illumination, Marbling, Handmade) was organized with the "In Pursuit of Heritage Project" in 2021.

One of the important collaborations in this aspect is our Association's cooperation with the Türkiye Design Foundation (TTV-Türkiye Tasarım Vakfı) which we were the national partner to their EU project entitled: "From Ancient Anatolian Crafts to Contemporary Design" in 2021-2022. The main objective of the project was to develop international collaborations across Europe and the world to promote the traditional crafts which are one of the cultural heritage of Anatolia and raise awareness by setting a precedent for how these crafts can be combined with contemporary design practices. Two designs were selected from pre-designated five crafts (ceramics, mother-of-pearl inlaying, felt making, stone-carving, and quilting) have been produced by European designers with the help of our element bearers in their local workshops, two of whom are our members and also Living Human Treasures of Türkiye.

B.9. Describe your organization's involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the national Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention.

Not to exceed 250 words

TAA is one of the seven non-governmental organizations accredited in Türkiye by UNESCO. Türkiye national periodic report was presented in 2021. As one of the five non-governmental organizations accredited on this date, it supported the periodic report on all its activities in traditional arts and other institutions, individuals, NGOs, or universities. We contributed to the periodic report with 30 items under 17 main headings on promoting intangible cultural heritage, education, transmission, existing incentives, supports, inventory studies, and open or closed access resources. We significantly contributed to the national periodic report with our experience with the help of our project collaboration with our members (traditional arts and crafts bearers). On the other hand, with our active role in the traditional arts and crafts field, we contributed to all activities, workshops, and education programs related to arts and crafts on the periodic report. Moreover, we also contributed to translating the periodic report into English.

B.10. Describe your organization's participation in the preparation of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, requests for International Assistance or proposals of Good Safeguarding Practices.

Not to exceed 250 words

Even before TAA was accredited, it has been working closely with governmental bodies. TAA has been and is still supporting the activities of cultural heritage on a national scale and is one of the main information suppliers on traditional arts and crafts. We represented the Association at the board level in all meetings that were arranged by the Ministry of Culture of Tourism in the process of preparing the files for "Ebru" (2014), "Miniature" (2020), "Calligraphy" (2021) elements that were nominated and inscribed to the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage by Türkiye and other related countries. We also acted as a major supportive body for the preparations of the "Tezhip" (Illumination) file. We encouraged the element bearers in our community to participate in these meetings by signing the letters of consent. Our Vice Chair, who is an academican of art history has been actively involved in the File Writing Group. Continuing to make the same effort for the items that are considered to be submitted to the Intangible Cultural Heritage lists in the coming period, TAA also supports the relevant national unit in translating the submitted and to-be-submitted files into English.



C. Cooperation with UNESCO

Has your organization carried out activities in cooperation with UNESCO? If yes, please tick the relevant boxes and provide information in the box below.

- Direct cooperation with UNESCO (Headquarters and Field Offices)
- Activities for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention
- Cooperation through the 2003 Convention's Global Network of Facilitators
- Cooperation with Category 2 Centres

Silk Roads Living Heritage Network bureau meeting: Hosting the second Bureau Meeting

- Cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO

Participating in the UNESCO Türkiye National Commission Meetings, contributing to the periodic report writing, and nomination files.

- Cooperation with UNESCO Chairs
- Financial support from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund
- Financial support from the Participation Programme
- Other types of cooperation

Not to exceed 250 words

D. Participation in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

D.1 Has your organization participated in the sessions of the Committee? If so, please indicate which sessions you attended and whether you had any specific role during these meetings.

Not to exceed 250 words

Since TAA was accredited in 2018, the Chair of our Association has participated at the 13th Intergovernmental committee meeting (2018) held in Port Louis (Mauritius), the 14th Intergovernmental committee meeting held in Bogotá (Colombia), the 15th and 16th Intergovernmental Committee held online. Most recently the Chair and General Coordinator of the TAA participated at the 17th Intergovernmental Committee Meeting held in Rabat (Morocco), following all its sessions. TAA also participates in all ICH NGO Forums and works at the group meetings in parallel with the international committee meetings.

Participating in the committees as an observer, TAA also supports the Turkish national commission when necessary.

Moreover, TAA has attended the 2018, 2020, and 2022 ICH General Assembly Meetings held in Paris since the accreditation.

D.2 Has your organization served as a member of the Evaluation Body (paragraphs 26 to 31 of the Operational Directives), or as a member of the Consultative Body (between 2012 and 2014)? If so, please indicate the period.

Not to exceed 100 words

Our organization is not a member of the contract's evaluation or advisory bodies. In the observation phase, our association is willing to and working on becoming a member of these bodies.

D.3 *In what way(s) has your organization provided advisory services to the Committee (paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?*

Not to exceed 500 words

It is important to note that while TAA has not provided advisory services to the committee so far, it has taken the UNESCO ICH Convention seriously from the year it was accredited and has rearranged all its working principles in the scope of this vision. In this regard, one of the association's employees has been working and specializing in ICH since 2021. She is reviewing our organization's regional and international files, examining all the decisions taken at the general assembly meetings, and becoming adept at the operational guidelines and the contract. In the future, TAA is intentional and willing to be both a consultant and evaluator institution as an NGO for advisory services, its approach to Committee, and NGO Forum activities.

E. Capacities of your organization to evaluate nominations, proposals and requests (paragraphs 27 and 96 of the Operational Directives):

E.1. *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff have a very good command of English or French? If so, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Generally, TAA executives have sufficient English knowledge to evaluate our organization's nominations, proposals, and requests. While the English proficiency of the president, vice president, and coordinator of the association is sufficient for these fields, our vice chair has an outstanding level of English proficiency. It is important to indicate that we have three English-speaking people at the administrative and academic levels who have a good command of the terminology of the convention and are actively involved in our association's UNESCO issues.

In addition, TAA has members on its board of directors and among its members who are proficient in both English and French languages. As a result, the association can review and evaluate nominations, proposals, and requests in both English and French.

E.2. *Does your organization have experience in working across several intangible cultural heritage domains? Please describe your experiences.*

Not to exceed 250 words

TAA specializes in traditional arts and crafts, however, TAA's work has spread to other areas where the Association has gained experience in these closely related and linked fields. Therefore, the Association's interests often overlap with other ICH categories which include but are not limited to Performing Arts (Shadow Play: Karagöz), Social Rituals and Practices (Traditional Attire), Oral Traditions (Instrument Making), Practices Related to Nature and the Universe (Root Dyeing). It is important to emphasize that TAA's institutional awareness to create and realize activities in all areas of ICH has increased after the accreditation.

Being aware of the other elements of ICH, the TAA follows the developments in related fields such as the weaving art produced in the "Sericulture and traditional production of silk for weaving" element inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2022; the engraving art of the "Traditional Ahlat stonework" element inscribed in the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding the same year; the art of arrow-making and bow production from the "Traditional Turkish archery" element inscribed in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2019; the "Turkish coffee and culture tradition" inscribed in the same list in 2013; puppet making, one of the primary materials of the Karagöz element, which was inscribed in the list in 2009.

To date, we have implemented nearly forty projects and published more than thirty books. The Association, having expertise in traditional crafts and including them in its charter, has launched "Turkey's Heritage: Intangible Cultural Heritage Book Series" in February 2023.

E.3. Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.

Not to exceed 250 words

Among the items to be presented to UNESCO by TAA Türkiye, it provides consultancy in preparing the files related to our area of expertise. It supports with all its strength, and this support is given to both the theoretical infrastructure and the application forms and methods of these elements in every aspect. Our association, which has approximately 900 members in this field, actively cooperates with over 100 academicians and artists.

The participation of the field practitioners strengthens the content and quality of the files and increases the bearer's awareness in the ICH field. Carriers examine the submitted files, make suggestions, and follow the file processes closely. In this way, the information exchange between the practitioners is ensured, and the sense of belonging is improved.

As in many similar organizations, TAA initiates project evaluation sessions after the completion of the activities where all the Board Members and TAA officials participate. In some cases, feedback is provided from the masters, bearers, scholars, etc. in relevance to the projects. An in-house report is prepared by the TAA officials for the files and the Board is informed of the results. Every evaluation meeting is regarded as a preparation meeting for the next project where the decisions are made according to the demands and needs of the community members as well as current trends and governmental advice. TAA also informs the Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism about its future activities and seeks their opinions.

E.4. Does your organization have experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French? Please describe your experience and indicate in which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.

Not to exceed 250 words

As it is emphasized in item E1 Taa is capable of writing synthetic texts both in English and French.

TAA supported the "Culture and Sustainable Development" report presented at the United Nations General Assembly held in the autumn of 2021 upon the call of the Culture Forum and prepared a report containing the Association's approach to the report.

At the same time, the association provided support in the translation process of the candidacy files and periodic reports submitted from Türkiye to UNESCO. The Association can prepare professional texts in English and French with the help of our association vice chair and other members.

E.5. Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to apply local experience to an international context? Please describe such experience.

Not to exceed 250 words

With the European Union Project co-carried out by the Traditional Arts Association together with the Turkish Design Foundation in 2021-2022, five of our traditional crafts were introduced to design institutions in Europe, documentaries were brought to life for this purpose, and a call was made for these institutions to blend our traditional crafts with contemporary designs. The call was open to students and professionals. The jury which was formed of designers, academics, artists, and craftspeople chose 10 designs out of 124 from 20 countries. These new-designed, Anatolian crafts-inspired products were made using the traditional methods in the local regions with the know-how of our craftspeople following the designs of European designers. At the end of the project, the products were exhibited in Istanbul and then in some other European cities after the project was over. With this project, intercultural interaction was enabled through our traditional crafts, and our crafts were widely recognized and contributed to their sustainability.

F. Membership in the ICH NGO Forum

Indicate below whether your organization wishes to (continue to) be part of the ICH NGO Forum. Please note that membership is contingent upon the decision of the Committee to maintain the accreditation of your organization.

For more information on the ICH NGO Forum and its activities, please see: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ngo-forums-00422>

Yes

No

G. Signature

The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of your organization.

Name: Ahmet AKCAN

Title: Chairman of Board

Date: 28.07.2023

Signature:

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