

**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/en/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.*

Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

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

Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

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

90391

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: Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage

Address: 600 Maryland Avenue SW, Suite 2001, Washington, DC 20010

Telephone number: 202-633-1141

Email address: Folklife@si.edu

Website: <http://folklife.si.edu>

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.): Ms

Family name: Butvin

Given name: Halle

Institution/position: Director of Special Projects

Address: 600 Maryland Avenue SW, Suite 2001, Washington, DC 20010

Telephone number: 703-915-2843

Email address: butvinHM@si.edu

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

From research and planning to implementation and evaluation, Center staff work collaboratively with community-based, academic, non-profit, and other partners to produce programs for the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Together, staff and partners create projects, including tools, materials, and networks to strengthen capacity for safeguarding ICH.

Some of the Center's recent work with partners in China resulted in the creation of a Tibetan-

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>

language MOOC, “Methods and Techniques for Documenting and Preserving Tibetan Culture,” a tri-lingual digital lectures series “Approaches to Cultural Heritage Presentation,” the Sino-Tibetan Language Research Methodology Workshop (with Nankai University) and accompanying tri-lingual website for digital access to materials, and the Himalayan Languages of Sichuan workshop.

In the United States, the Center partnered with the Institute on Collaborative Language Research (CoLang) to create a website, making past course materials digitally accessible; published *The Wolf Who Walks in Two Worlds*, a guidebook for leaders in language reclamation work; and developed a new *Video Production Handbook* for use in ICH documentation work. The Center also engaged in discussions about cultural stewardship with Asian American and Pacific Islander communities and cultural institutions with AAPI collections.

The Center’s archives assisted the Tbilisi State Conservatoire in Georgia to preserve unique AV collections and supported the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Armenia to establish and maintain digital a ICH archive. During this period the Center also strengthened its capacity for safeguarding, renovating the 2,500 square foot archives repository and expanding offsite collections storage.

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

Transmission and education are built into the Center’s approach, with an emphasis on multi-generational engagement across Festival programs (noted in B.5), research, and other community-based work. Recent examples include support for youth engagement in filmmaking at the Sakha Media School, a series of youth-focused virtual talks between American and Kazakh artisans and identifying new approaches to youth engagement in ICH through community-based cultural heritage tourism programs like My Armenia and Tunisia’s Living Culture.

Center staff also contribute broadly to ICH education efforts. Masters of Tradition: A Cultural Journey Across America presents an interactive education tool to learn about the lives and practices of National Heritage Fellows in the United States. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings continues to publish audio records with music and spoken word that is culturally and historically contextualized with well-researched liner notes and is working on making lessons plans related to catalog holdings available to the public. Finally, curators and others regularly contribute to university programs, providing lectures, courses, and residencies related to ICH, including for the Goucher College Master of Arts in Cultural Sustainability.

The Center’s robust internship and fellowship program creates opportunities for the next generation of practitioners working to research, present and safeguard ICH. Between 2018-2023, the Center hosted 618 interns and 53 fellows.

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

Center staff and community partners consistently engage in ICH research. All Folklife Festival programs (noted in B.5) are research-based.

In addition, curators, researchers, and Cultural Vitality Program teams engaged on a number of research projects, including American Ginseng, Brazil in DC, American Women’s Music, Sustaining Minority Language in Europe (SMiLE), Mother Tongue Media, African American Crafts Initiative, Crafts of African Fashion, DC Music Map: a community soundtrack, Building Arts and Traditional Architecture (BATA), Notable Folklorists of Color, identifying the culture of homelessness, Tibetan Nomad Material Cultural Documentation Project, Tibetan artisan documentation project, and wide-ranging ICH research and documentation for the My Armenia

Cultural Heritage Tourism Program and Tunisia's Living Culture project.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings continued to acquire significant record labels, working with the Ralph Rinzler Archives to process and digitize the records, making the audio ready for commercial distribution, and making associated label documents available for research.

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

Center leadership advises on domestic policy on a regular basis and is regularly called upon by Congress to address issues related to ICH. Leadership also participates in the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee, a pan-U.S. group.

The Center also contributes to the development of internal policies that influence the Smithsonian's approaches to safeguarding ICH. Through the Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative, the Center helps develop institutional policies and procedures for the migration and long-term care of a vast array of cultural heritage stored on obsolete media. The Center also developed the Institution's first Shared Stewardship of Collections Policy (July 2019), which affirms the commitment to consult with source communities and defines protocols for addressing collections-related inquiries in concerns. The creation of this policy catalysed the adoption of a pan-Smithsonian policy on Shared Stewardship and Ethical Returns (April 2022), formalizing commitments to culturally-respectful collections management, as well as increased access for and connections to source communities.

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

The Center produces the annual research-based Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., bringing hundreds of tradition bearers from the U.S. and around the world to share their music and dance, storytelling, craftsmanship, foodways, knowledge systems, and oral traditions with millions in person and online. The Festival plays an important role in the research, documentation, and promotion of ICH, while raising awareness of ICH in society.

In 2018, the Center produced *Armenia: Creating Home* and *Catalonia: Tradition and Creativity from the Mediterranean*, with *On the Move: Migration and Creativity* cross-programming, and a Marketplace program on *Crafts of African Fashion*. In 2019, the Center produced the *Social Power of Music* and *D.C. Music Preservation*. The pandemic halted the in-person Festival, but the Center continued raising awareness through digital programming in 2020 and 2021, with a new virtual *Story Circle* format, allowing for audiences worldwide to tune into presentations of and discussions on ICH. The Festival launched its first Spanish language series entitled "Encuentro en el Smithsonian," a platform for culture bearers and workers to discuss ICH-related issues. In 2022 the Festival returned to in-person programming with the *United Arab Emirates: Living Landscape, Living Memory and Earth Optimism x Folklife: Inspiring Conservation Communities*.

Since 2017, the Center has also produced the annual Mother Tongue Film Festival, which celebrates cultural and linguistic diversity by showcasing films and filmmakers from around the world, highlighting the crucial role languages play in our daily lives.

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

Festival programs, as noted in B.5, also raise awareness about ICH. The Center often conducts

complementary or additional community outreach, like the Brazil in DC program, which included connecting artists and educators, film screenings, workshops, and other events. Brazil in DC also worked with artists to develop new approaches to digital programming during the pandemic.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings' promotion for all releases and stewardship of the UNESCO series also contributes to raising awareness. In addition, the Center produces *Folklife*, a public-facing online digital magazine that centers first-person narrative on a range of ICH domains. Many of these articles are developed through the Center's Folklife Storytellers Workshop, which creates opportunities for interns and external writers to develop and share stories of their ICH with the broader Smithsonian audience.

Center staff also develop exhibitions, Music HerStory, at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, and its complementary digital exhibition, highlight women's impact on America's musical heritage. The World on the Move traveling exhibition, developed in partnership with the American Anthropological Association, explores the relationship between human migration and ICH.

Reach continues online, through digital exhibitions, including 50 years / 50 objects (an object-based exploration of 50 years of ICH practice at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival), Lag Zo: Making on the Tibetan Plateau (drawing on documentation projects mentioned in B.3), SomeVallBas | WeAreVallBas (a community-based exploration of ICH in the Vall d'en Bas region of Spain), American Ginseng, and Masters of Tradition: A Cultural Journey Across America

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

By mandate and intention, the Center's work is community-based and requires partnership. Through these partnerships, the activities listed in B.1 – B.6 all contributed to facilitating the engagement of communities, groups, and individuals, as well as other stakeholders, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

The Center also actively works to expand its community engagement work. For example, the recently launched Language and Archives Mentorship Program creates opportunities for members of existing Indigenous or minoritized language efforts to build skills in navigating digital libraries and archives while contributing to language work.

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

The Center has not been directly involved in implementation of the Convention. However, as noted above, in 1999, it hosted a seminar that informed the Convention's formation. Additionally, Center staff regularly engage in advisory activities and information exchanges with international, national, and local cultural heritage institutions and authorities. This includes hosting visitors, including international delegations organized by the U.S. Department of State, and participating capacity building work, with recent exchanges with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

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

The United States has not ratified the ICH Convention and therefore there is no such national report and no process for implementing the Convention. Accordingly, there is no formal role for the Center to play.

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

The Center has not been involved in the preparation of nominations during this reporting period.

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.

X 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

X Cooperation with Category 2 Centres

Cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO

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

Center leadership has engaged in direct cooperation with UNESCO headquarters, discussing American participation with UNESCO and UNESCO programs. The Center has historically written briefs for the U.S. Department of State and the White House addressing the issue of ratifying the ICH Convention and advising on the matter.

Center leadership also contributed to *Music, Communities, Sustainability* by Huib Schippers and Tony Seeger, which discusses a range of ICH topics and the Center's participation in establishing the 2003 Convention.

The Center also has ongoing engagement with ICHCAP, including participation in conferences and a five-year MOU for support of in-person professional exchange.

Consulted with UNESCO Chairs for the development of the 2018 Catalonia Festival Program.

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

No, not since our accreditation in 2018.

- 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

No, not since our accreditation in 2018.

- 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

The Center has not provided advisory services but would be open to discussing these services in the future.

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

English, all Center staff are fluent.

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

Not to exceed 250 words

Yes, the Center works across all domains of ICH, as outlined in detail in the earlier sections.

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

Not to exceed 250 words

The Center is not a grant- or award-making entity, but most research staff regularly participate in evaluating and analysing proposals or applications through their roles as members of external advisory boards.

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

No.

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

Yes, the Center works globally. The work outlined in the sections above—including Folklife Festival programs, Folkways Recordings, research, and other community-based projects—all serve as examples of this extensive experience. In particular, the Center’s Cultural Vitality Program has several projects—in Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Tunisia, and the United States—that apply the Festival’s research and community-based approach to cultural heritage representation to in-situ cultural heritage tourism.

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: Halle Butvin

Title: Director of Special Projects

Date: 15 February 2023

Signature:

