

MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE: OPPORTUNITIES

*Why is safeguarding intangible cultural heritage valuable for museums?
And why are museums valuable for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage?*

SOCIAL RELEVANCE

Intangible cultural heritage can help museums in activating or intensifying their social relevance, while it in turn may contribute to the viability of ICH in a changing society. As a living heritage, ICH is part of the everyday lives of people. Museums too often are not. One way to bridge gaps between the museum and the larger society can be to work with heritage communities and practitioners. The authority and trustworthiness of a museum, in turn, may benefit undervalued or endangered ICH and contribute to its safeguarding.

PARTICIPATION

The participatory approach in ICH offers an opportunity for museums that wish to act more participatory and community-oriented. In an attempt to work (more) participatory, museums often look for possibilities for connection relating to the heritage they preserve. Intangible cultural heritage practices are deeply participatory: indeed, it is all about the people who embody and practice and relate to this living heritage. Hence, without having to invent new practices, any museum that cooperates with ICH communities and practitioners also enters into the process of participation.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development is a shared challenge and opportunity for museums and intangible cultural heritage. A museum that wishes to contribute to climate action, reduced inequalities, education for all, or any other issue relating to sustainability, will find ICH to be a treasure trove of approaches and experiences. Enhancing for example traditional skills, local production and economies, social practices and festivities, knowledge on cultivating the land or water management, and so forth ... Intangible cultural heritage thus provides a shared framework for relevant activities, advocacy, and social innovation.

SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Cultural entrepreneurship is a durable, responsible, and community-sensitive approach to entrepreneurship. Its objective is to share cultural heritage widely and keep ICH vibrant and relevant for future generations. New business approaches enable cultural entrepreneurship. Whether it is a traditional craft that finds a new workplace, or maybe a new application in the collaboration with the museum, or a new product for the museum shop based on an innovative co-creation with an ICH community, ICH provides countless opportunities to be entrepreneurial.

IMP TOOL KIT This tool was realized in the context of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project (IMP).

Main funding and support



Flanders
State of the Art

Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

IMP partners

Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed | Workshop Intangible Heritage Flanders (BE), Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland | Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage (NL), Maison des Cultures du Monde – Centre français du patrimoine culturel immatériel (FR), Società Italiana per la museografia e i beni demotnoantropologici (IT) and Verband der Museen der Schweiz | Swiss Museums Association (CH) & Swiss Confederation - Federal Office of Culture

With special thanks to: Jasper Visser (VISSCH+STAM)