Dear Ms Kayumova,

I am writing with reference to the request for financial assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund in the amount of US$44,500, submitted by Tajikistan to implement a project entitled ‘Study, description and preservation of Tajik heritage ornamental embroidery’.

The Secretariat has carefully read and analysed your request and considers that additional information is needed to provide the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee with all the necessary information to examine your request and decide on the granting of assistance.

Enclosed with this letter, you will find the Secretariat’s technical assessment of the sections where we believe that revision will help ensure your request meets the selection criteria.

We hope that this analysis will be useful in your revision work. However, you may also wish to refer to the Aide-mémoire for completing a request for International Assistance. This is available at www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms.

I invite you to submit a revised version of your request in electronic format (standard .rtf or .doc format) to ich-assistance@unesco.org. This request should address the issues raised by the Secretariat and be submitted as soon as possible, and in any case no later than 6 April 2018. The Secretariat will then substitute it for the request previously submitted, assess it one last time and transmit it to the Bureau with a recommendation to approve or not to approve it, or to refer the request to you for additional information.

Please note that if a revised request does not reach us by the above-mentioned deadline, the Secretariat shall then consider that the initial request may be submitted to the Bureau, as it stands.
Should you require further clarifications, the regional officer responsible for your country in the Intangible Culture Heritage Section, Ms Helena Drobna, can be contacted at the following email address: h.drobna@unesco.org or by telephone: +33(0)1 45 68 09 82.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Curtis
Secretary, Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
Chief, Intangible Cultural Heritage Section

Enclosures: Secretariat’s technical assessment
Example of Timetable and budget Excel form

cc: Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Tajikistan to UNESCO
Tajikistan National Commission for UNESCO
REQUEST FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM
THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT FROM THE SECRETARIAT

General

- While the request makes it clear that that viability of embroidery traditions in Tajikistan merits attention, it is not clear that the approach proposed is most suited for redressing the issues. The proposed project focuses principally on scholarly studies and archival conservation of information on traditional ornaments in Tajikistan, rather than on active transmission and the safeguarding of a living practice in question. The request as proposed, therefore, does not seem to fully conform to the spirit of the 2003 Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage.

- When revising the document, it is essential to define clearly the intangible cultural heritage element to be safeguarded (e.g. traditional embroidery in Tajikistan), its social and cultural functions, the communities concerned, its viability in terms of its practice and transmission (risks and threats). Based on these elements, you can then propose appropriate safeguarding measures and revise the project document accordingly.

- The document should provide explicit information on how bearers and practitioners participated in the preparation of the request and how they will participate in the implementation and evaluation of the proposed activities.

- Ensuring coherence throughout the request is an important requirement for international assistance requests. Sections 14, 15, 16 and 17 must follow a logical sequence as they are crucial elements for examining the feasibility of the overall project and the appropriateness of the amount of financial assistance requested.

- The text in section 13, 18 and 22 of the current form is not long enough and should be revised to respect the indicated word limits. The submitting State is encouraged to take advantage of the maximum word limits to provide clear and detailed explanation in each section.

- The 2003 Convention speaks about 'safeguarding' of living heritage in order to underline the living and evolving character of intangible cultural heritage. Terminology such as 'preservation' or 'conservation' is not appropriate in this context and should be avoided.

- The document may also benefit from linguistic editing.

Section 4. Summary of the project

- This section should be revised to better describe the project, its overall objectives, expected results and main modalities of action.

Section 10. Location of the project

- This section should provide more information on the selected areas in which the project will be carried out. The reasons for selecting such locations might also be described here.

Section 12. Forms of assistance requested

- This section will be pre-filled by the Secretariat.
Section 13. Background and rationale

- This section should provide a short description of the element of intangible cultural heritage to be safeguarded; its social and cultural functions, an account of the current situation, the element's viability in terms of its practice and transmission and why safeguarding measures are required (see also ‘General’ comments above).

- The document should describe how the proposed actions (studying the history of the ornaments, reviving scientific interest, conducting multi-disciplinary studies, creating a database, etc.) would contribute to the safeguarding of the element.

- The description of the experiences of the implementing agency should be removed from this section, and, if relevant, included in section 19.

Section 14. Objectives and expected results

- The current text does not clearly distinguish ‘objectives’, ‘activities and ‘expected results’. Please note that ‘objectives’ are the medium-term effects that would be achieved through the implementation of the project. The project's expected results need to refer to concrete accomplishments of the activities described that are visible, measurable and verifiable within the project's implementation period. In turn, ‘activities’ should be devised to help achieve the objectives and expected results identified in a logical sequence and in a consistent manner with the timetable and budget.

Section 15. Activities

- This section should provide a description of the key actions to be carried out in order to achieve the expected results identified in section 14. Activities need to be described in their sequence, explained in a detailed and narrative manner and their feasibility should be demonstrated. Furthermore, the information included in this section should be consistent with that provided under section 16 and 17.

Section 16. Timetable

- The timeline attached to the project proposal does not indicate the timing and the duration of each of the proposed activities. Please revise the activities according to the proposed suggestions and indicate their timing and duration.

Section 17. Budget

- The budget should show coherence between the activities proposed (section 15), the timetable (section 16) and the budget (section 17). All activities with a budget implication should be included in section 15 as well as in the ICH-04-Timetable and budget form with a homogeneous naming (same name of activity in all sections of the document). The attached form is an example of a possible budget structure.

- The budget should be filled in by using the pre-programmed functions in the EXCEL table (buttons ‘Add an activity’, ‘Add an expenditure’, etc.). If the timetable is created first, the list of created activities will be available in the budget table through a drop-down list (when creating an activity with the button ‘Add an activity’, a new line coloured in blue will be automatically created in the drop-down list). Each of the proposed activities should have a breakdown of specific related expenditures. If an expenditure is associated to more than one activity (e.g. a project manager) part of the cost should be proportionally assigned to each of the activities.

- The presentation of the budget should be sufficiently specific and detailed in order to provide an adequate justification and allow the actual expenses to be matched
directly against the projections. The ‘Description’ column should specify the details of the calculations (number of units x unit cost) and avoid lump sums.

• The column ‘Total’, should express the exact addition of all the sources of funding. As an example, the expenditure related to the purchase of equipment has a total of $6,800 while the only source of funding is US$4,400 financed by the Stare Party. Consequently, the total amount of the project (US$53,700) is also higher than the one proposed in the budget overview (US$51,300).

• Once the budget is correctly filled, the green cells at the top of the excel file should reflect the total amount requested to each of the source of funding. In this case, $44,500 for the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund and US$6,800 for the State Party. All these amounts will be automatically calculated, if the budget is correctly filled, as the Excel file is already programmed.

Section 18. Community involvement

• Communities should not only be seen as informants of the research to be carried out, beneficiaries of the project or of financial support. This section should also describe the roles and aspirations of bearers and practitioners, as well as the mechanisms for fully involving them in the preparation of the request as well as in the implementation of all proposed activities, their evaluation and follow-up.

Section 19. Implementing organization and strategy

• This section should also demonstrate with concrete examples the experience of the implementing agency (‘Haft Pikar’) in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in line with the 2003 Convention.

Section 20. Partners

• Describe the coordination arrangements with any other partners (e.g. local artisan organizations, NGOs, ministries, etc.) and their concrete responsibilities in the implementation of the project. Identify the human resources available in each of the entities involved.

• The project team should be reviewed according to the activities to be proposed in the revised project proposal.

Section 21. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

• The monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism proposed for the project foresees a three monthly monitoring and reporting. Although a continuous monitoring and self-evaluation should be foreseen, drafting reports every three months does not seem to be necessary. A six monthly reporting period might be sufficient.

• Reports on the implementation of the project should be submitted to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at UNESCO Headquarters.

• Describe how the communities concerned will be involved in the proposed monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism.

Section 22. Capacity building

• This section should be revised in line with the suggested overall revisions.

• To better prepare communities for inventorying or safeguarding activities, specific capacity building workshops for bearers and practitioners could be included in the project. Training materials, developed by the Secretariat of the 2003 Convention, are
available in Russian and English and four Tajik experts have been trained to deliver such workshops.

Section 23. Sustainability

- This section should be revised in line with the suggested overall revisions.