

DECISION 13.COM 2.BUR 4.3

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
2. Having examined Document ITH/18/13.COM 2.BUR/4 as well as International Assistance request no. 01423 submitted by Kyrgyzstan,
3. Takes note that Kyrgyzstan has requested International Assistance for the project entitled **Safeguarding of practices and rare rituals related to sacred sites in Kyrgyzstan: preparation of an inventory and safeguarding measures:**

Implemented by the Aigine Cultural Research Centre (CRC), the proposed project is aimed at compiling a unified national inventory of sacred sites and rare ritual practices in Kyrgyzstan, as well as developing effective related safeguarding measures in the form of a national manual on safeguarding sacred sites and rare ritual practices. Such practices form an integral part of people's traditional belief systems in the country, shaping their attitudes to each other and nature. Nonetheless, in the past decade or two they have been threatened by rapid urbanisation, technological advancements, the marginalisation of indigenous belief systems, and the generation gap between elders and youth. To tackle this situation, the key objectives of the project are to identify elements of living heritage related to sacred sites in the country and ensure their continued viability, improve public awareness about the importance of living heritage, increase stakeholders' capacities to safeguard it, and ensure its successful transmission. Based on the findings from extensive research fieldwork carried out by the Aigine CRC from 2004 to 2014, the inventory will strengthen the visibility of sacred sites, pilgrimage practices and the network of traditional practitioners and guardians, and will be integrated into formal and informal education, serving as a tangible tool for teaching younger generations about intangible cultural heritage.

4. Further takes note that this assistance is to support a project implemented at the national level, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the provision of a grant, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;
5. Also takes note that Kyrgyzstan has requested assistance in the amount of US\$99,950 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of this project;
6. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 01423, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

Criterion A.1: The communities concerned by the request include sacred site guardians, custodians, traditional practitioners, healers, epic chanters, pilgrims, scholars and intangible cultural heritage experts. Their representatives were involved in the preparation of the request and will actively participate in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the proposed project either directly or through the Steering committee;

Criterion A.2: Although the budget reflects the planned activities, the expenses should be presented with more detail to ensure that the budget is transparent and realistic; the activities should be named in a homogenous way in Section 15 and in the budget, and calculation errors also need to be corrected (e.g. Stage II of the project shows an error of US\$675);

Criterion A.3: The project proposes carrying out a series of activities including capacity-building workshops, the community-based inventorying of practices and rare rituals in all seven regions of Kyrgyzstan and the publication of a unified inventory and a manual on safeguarding sacred sites and rare ritual practices. While the request suffers from the

confusion generated by repeated mentioning of tangible forms of heritage (e.g. the 'manual on safeguarding and development of sacred sites'), the proposed activities are reasonably well conceived in relation to the objectives and expected results. The duration of the project seems to be sufficiently long for the project outputs to be the result of genuine participatory processes with key stakeholders;

Criterion A.4: The two main outputs foreseen by the project are an up-to-date inventory of practices and rare rituals related to sacred sites in Kyrgyzstan and a manual on their safeguarding. Both will be available in printed format, as well as in online versions to allow for better access to all the information, including the audiovisual materials available. Both documents are to be presented not only to communities concerned across Kyrgyzstan, but also to schools, clubs and institutions associated with UNESCO and public audiences. The project also intends to build the capacities of sacred site guardians, custodians, traditional practitioners, healers, epic chanters or pilgrims to safeguard their intangible heritage, thereby ensuring the longer-term viability and transmission of the elements concerned;

Criterion A.5: The submitting State will contribute 16% and the implementing partner another 14.5% of the total amount of the project for which International Assistance is requested, which together accounts for 30.5% of the total project budget;

Criterion A.6: The assistance aims to build the capacities of stakeholders involved in safeguarding practices and rare rituals related to sacred sites in Kyrgyzstan. The project plans to raise awareness about the 2003 Convention among the project teams and organize capacity-building workshops on community-based inventorying for guardians of sacred sites, practitioners and intangible heritage experts in each of the seven regions of Kyrgyzstan. In this way, the project directly addresses the capacities of those communities who create, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage and whose widest possible participation in safeguarding activities States shall endeavour to ensure, in accordance with Article 15 of the Convention;

Criterion A.7: The State Party has not previously received any financial assistance from UNESCO under the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund of the 2003 Convention to implement similar or related activities in the field of intangible cultural heritage;

Paragraph 10(a): The project is national in scope and, in addition to involving community members from all seven provinces, cooperation with national implementing partners such as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Education, the National Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic for UNESCO, the National Academy of Sciences, State TV and radio channels is foreseen;

Paragraph 10(b): The project is expected to increase awareness of the importance of intangible cultural heritage among the communities concerned, but also among the general population. The project results will be presented to practitioners and communities concerned in each of the seven regions, as well as to a wide audience on public TV.

7. Approves the International Assistance request from Kyrgyzstan for the project entitled **Safeguarding of practices and rare rituals related to sacred sites in Kyrgyzstan: preparation of an inventory and safeguarding measures** and grants the amount of US\$99,950 to the State Party to this end;
8. Requests that the Secretariat reach an agreement with the requesting State Party on the technical details of the assistance, paying particular attention to ensuring that the detailed work plan of the activities to be covered by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund is specific enough to provide a sufficient justification of the expenditures;
9. Invites the State Party to use Form ICH-04 Report when reporting on the use of the assistance provided.