

**DECISION 14.COM 2.BUR 5.1**

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 LHE/19/14.COM 2.BUR/5 as well as International Assistance request no. 01525 submitted by the Cook Islands,
3. Takes note that the Cook Islands has requested International Assistance for the project entitled **Establishment of the Community-based ICH Inventory in the Cook Islands:**

To be implemented by the Cook Islands Ministry of Cultural Development, in partnership with the Island Governments, the proposed eighteen-month project is aimed at researching and recording intangible cultural heritage related to performing arts in Rarotonga and the eleven other inhabited islands. The Are Korero (Traditional Houses of Knowledge) on each island will be used to help gather information on performing arts from island elders and this information will then be collected, stored and shared to ensure its viability for future generations. In the short term, the project will identify knowledge-bearers in the communities, develop awareness among the communities about their own and neighbouring communities' performing arts, and manage a rich cultural resource for future generations. In the medium term, it will utilize members to research their own communities and recognize the Are Korero as an on-site location for research. The expected results of the project include twenty community members being trained in inventorying living heritage, a group of four community members being formed to assist with inventorying and research, and a database with all the knowledge stored in the Are Korero of each community being established before such information is lost. As a result, the Ministry of Cultural Development will benefit from a centralised resource containing data on performing arts around the Cook Islands.

4. Further takes note that this assistance includes the preparation of inventories and is to support a project implemented at the national level, in accordance with Article 20 (b) and (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 the Cook Islands has requested assistance in the amount of US\$100,000 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of this project;
6. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 01525, 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:** Community members are described in the request as key actors in the different phases of the project, especially for the inventorying of practices and knowledge related to performing arts foreseen to take place in each of the twelve inhabited islands. Even though the request highlights their possible participation and contribution in this sense, there is no clear information on their involvement in the preparation of the request itself. This gives the impression that no prior consultations took place either with the practitioners themselves or with the traditional leaders and local communities, and that they were not actively involved in designing the project. From the request, it is also not clear how the communities will be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

**Criterion A.2:** The budget is not presented in a detailed and comprehensive manner, lacking sufficient information to provide an adequate justification for the planned expenditures. More detailed information about the expenditures for each activity, avoiding lump sums to the extent possible, is needed to determine whether all the amounts budgeted for are appropriate. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy between the budget overview presented in Section 17 of Form ICH-04 and the overall amounts and contributions included in Form ICH-04, Timetable and budget. Due to the absence of a detailed breakdown and the discrepancy of information, it is difficult to assess the overall amount requested in regard to the objectives, activities and scope of the project.

**Criterion A.3:** In general, the request presents a series of activities articulated in a logical sequence, such as the identification of individuals in each community as 'ICH researchers', the organization of a capacity-building workshop, the establishment of a database and so on. However, most of the activities are not described in sufficient detail to allow for the assessment of their feasibility and associated costs. Furthermore, considering that the project covers twelve islands, the coordination strategy of the implementing organization with the different communities concerned needs to be further explained. It is also mentioned that the information stored in the database will be accessible by others with prior consent from the knowledge holders or Are Korero (traditional houses of knowledge) on each island. This important point needs to be elaborated to demonstrate how it will be made possible in concrete terms. Therefore, additional information is needed on the implementation modalities and the role of the various project stakeholders in each activity to demonstrate their feasibility.

**Criterion A.4:** The database to be created, in the language of the communities concerned and English, on performing arts practised among the communities in each of the twelve inhabited islands of the Cook islands will provide a useful source of information for future generations. However, the request does not fully describe how the data collected will be used to raise public awareness, in particular among youth, or how they will contribute towards the overall viability of the performing arts expressions.

**Criterion A.5:** The State Party would share the costs of implementing the project but there is a discrepancy in the information presented in the request. Form ICH-04, Timetable and budget, indicates that the State will contribute 41 per cent and the partner agencies will contribute another 5 per cent of the total amount of the project for which the International Assistance is requested. According to Section 17 of the request, the State will contribute 13 per cent and there will be no other contributions from partners.

**Criterion A.6:** The project includes the training of community members on community-based inventorying with the development of an inventory on performing arts. It is expected that the twenty community members as well as the four 'ICH overseers' from the Ministry of Cultural Development, with their enhanced knowledge, will be able to continue building up local inventories and safeguarding performing arts in the different islands. At the same time, staff at the Ministry of Cultural Development will also be trained and acquire competencies to further develop the cultural policy and strategy of the Cook Islands with the inclusion of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding.

**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 its implementation involves national and local partners, including the Ministry of Cultural Development, the Ministry of Education, Island Governments and community representatives.

**Paragraph 10(b):** The request is expected to raise interest among other similar research processes in the field of inventorying living heritage as well as safeguarding it. However, little information is provided on how the project activities would stimulate financial and technical contributions from other sources.

7. Decides to refer to the requesting State the International Assistance request for the project entitled **Establishment of the Community-based ICH Inventory in the Cook Islands**;
8. Takes note that the request is a revised version submitted by the State following support provided by the Secretariat to improve the initial request through an additional information letter and acknowledges the recurrent difficulty that the submitting State is facing in revising the request;
9. Invites the submitting State to request the Secretariat for technical assistance through the provision of experts, as described in Article 21 of the Convention, and requests that the Secretariat make timely arrangements for such assistance should the requesting State wish to receive it;
10. Encourages the State Party, if it wishes to resubmit its request, to revise the content of the project, taking into account the above-mentioned concerns, and ensure both that there is a clear correspondence between the overall objectives and the proposed activities, budget and timetable of the project, and that clear and sufficient details are provided through the presentation of a coherent budget.