

Call for proposal for the evaluation of the Regional Research Centre for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in West and Central Asia (UNESCO Category 2 Centre) based in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Closing date: 25 June 2018

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO form an important part of UNESCO's network and as a general rule represent an effective partnership model for UNESCO's programme delivery, significantly contributing to priority areas in UNESCO's fields of competence. Category 2 institutes and centres are intended to contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's strategic programme objectives and sectoral or intersectoral programme priorities and themes and to the attainment of programme results at the Main Lines of Action (MLA) level of the UNESCO programme and budget (C/5), whether through individual action, joint action with other category 2 institutes and centres or through joint implementation with the Secretariat. Category 2 institutes and centres can also play a considerable role in helping the Organization achieve programme objectives for which sectoral expertise or resources are not sufficient.

In order to enhance the operation and effectiveness of individual UNESCO category 2 institutes and centres, as well as the effectiveness of their network, a revised Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for institutes and centres under the Auspices of UNESCO, as contained in document [37 C/18 Part I and its annex](#), was approved by the 37th Session of the General Conference ([37 C/Resolution 93](#)). This strategy, among other elements, provides guidelines for renewal assessment procedures of category 2 institutes and centres.

Those guidelines provide that an agreement for the establishment of an institute or centre as a category 2 institute or centre is typically concluded for a definite time period, not exceeding six years. The agreement may be renewed by the Director-General, with the approval of the Executive Board, in the light of an evaluation of the activities of the institute/centre and of its contribution to the strategic programme objectives of the Organization and the aforementioned Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for category 2 institutes and centres.

The 35th session of the General Conference, in its 35 C/Resolution 57, approved the establishment in the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Regional Research Centre for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in West and Central Asia (hereafter, 'the Centre').

The objectives of the Centre are:

- (a) to promote the 2003 Convention and its implementation in West and Central Asia (hereinafter referred to as "the Region");
- (b) to strengthen capacities and cooperation in the Region for identifying, inventorying, documenting and studying intangible cultural heritage in order to contribute to its safeguarding;
- (c) to further and coordinate scientific and technical studies aimed at developing, managing and evaluating safeguarding measures for intangible cultural heritage present in the Region;
- (d) to reinforce capacities in States of the Region that are Parties to the 2003 Convention for actively participating in its implementation on the regional and international level, in particular concerning shared intangible cultural heritage elements present in the territories of two or more of the States concerned.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the specific functions of the Centre are:

- to create and keep up to date an automated information system registering and linking governmental and non-governmental institutions, research, educational and information institutions, community organizations and individual experts involved in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the States of the Region that have expressed the wish to cooperate through the Centre;
- to gather and disseminate information on legal, administrative, financial and other measures taken by the States participating in the Centre with a view to safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage present in their territory;
- to gather and disseminate information on safeguarding activities in the States participating in the Centre;
- to organize workshops and conferences in order to develop research methodologies and further studies concerning the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage as advocated in Article 13 of the 2003 Convention, including studies concerning the development of tourism that does not impair the viability of the intangible heritage, while being respectful of customary practices governing the access to this heritage;
- to organize workshops and seminars to identify and promote good safeguarding practices, and assist States Parties to the 2003 Convention that participate in the Centre to build their capacity to prepare files proposing such practices to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage established under the 2003 Convention (hereinafter referred to as “the Intergovernmental Committee”) for selection and further dissemination, as foreseen under Article 18 of the Convention;
- while maintaining a network of representatives of cultural communities, to coordinate activities aimed at awareness-raising and capacity-building among holders and practitioners of intangible cultural heritage, as advocated in the Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention, so as to allow them to participate actively, in the sense of Articles 2, 11 and 15 of the Convention, in the identification, inventorying and managing of their intangible cultural heritage;
- to organize workshops and seminars focusing on building capacities, in States Parties to the 2003 Convention that participate in the Centre, for drafting nomination files for inscription on the two lists of the 2003 Convention and for drafting requests and reports for submission to the Intergovernmental Committee, in particular concerning shared intangible cultural heritage elements present in the territories of two or more of the States participating in the Centre;
- to cooperate and exchange information with other category 2 centres in and beyond Asia that are active in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage;
- to inform the Intergovernmental Committee and the Secretariat of the 2003 Convention about relevant activities in the Region and to assist as appropriate in the implementation of the 2003 Convention.

Subsequent to the approval of the General Conference, an [Agreement concerning the establishment of the Centre](#) (hereafter, ‘the Agreement’) was signed between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNESCO on 30 August 2010. The Agreement is fixed for a period of six years as from its entry into force on 8 November 2012.

Purpose

The main objectives of this evaluation are to assess the Centre's performance with respect to its objectives and functions, as specified in the agreement between UNESCO and the host Government, and its contribution to UNESCO's strategic programme objectives and sectoral or intersectoral programme priorities and themes. The findings of the evaluation will serve as the basis for the Sector Review Committee's recommendation to the Director-General as to whether the Agreement should be renewed. The Director-General will then provide the results of these evaluations, including the endorsement or rejection to renew a specific agreement to the Executive Board. The approval of the Executive Board will be required before the Director-General can proceed with the renewal of an agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The results of this evaluation will be shared with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Centre, and presented to the Executive Board, as specified in the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy. They will also be made available on the website of the Culture Sector.

Scope

In order to meet the purpose of the evaluation described above, the following parameters shall be considered by the expert(s) responsible for conducting the evaluation and writing a report that is consistent with UNESCO's reporting mechanisms:

- a. Whether the activities effectively pursued by the Centre are in conformity with its functions and as specified in the agreement signed between UNESCO and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran;
- b. The relevance of the Centre's programmes and activities to achieving UNESCO's strategic programme objectives and sectoral or intersectoral programme priorities and themes, as defined in the Organization's Medium-Term Strategy (C/4), and to attaining programme results at the Main Lines of Action (MLA) level, as defined in the Organization's Approved Programme and Budget (C/5);
- c. The effectiveness of the Centre's programmes and activities to achieving its stated objectives, as defined in the Agreement;
- d. The quality of coordination and interaction with UNESCO, both at Headquarters and in the field, with regard to planning and implementation of programmes, as well as with other thematically-related category 2 institutes or centres, with regard to planning and implementation of programmes;
- e. The quality of relations with the Centre's Member States, including its focal points, government agencies and UNESCO National Commissions, and with public or private partners and donors;
- f. The nature and quality of organizational arrangements, including management, governance and accountability mechanisms;
- g. The human and financial resource base and the quality of mechanisms and capacities, as well as context-specific opportunities and risks for ensuring sustainable institutional capacity and viability;
- h. The process of mobilizing extrabudgetary resources and to what extent such extrabudgetary funding is aligned to the strategic programme objectives of UNESCO.

In addition to the findings on each topic, the expert(s) shall offer four types of recommendations:

- 1) a general recommendation whether renewal of the Centre's status as a category 2 institute is warranted and would conform to the Integrated Comprehensive Strategy;
- 2) specific recommendations to the Centre for improving the effectiveness of its operations;
- 3) specific recommendations to UNESCO for improving the effectiveness of its coordination and interaction with the Centre;
- 4) specific recommendations for possible amendments to the Agreement, in the event it is to be renewed.

Methodology

The evaluation of the Centre will include:

- A desk study of relevant documents, provided by the Centre and UNESCO Secretariat;
- A visit to the Centre, including interviews with the Centre's management and staff;
- Interviews (telephone, online and/or via e-mail) with the Centre's stakeholders, collaborators, and beneficiaries as well as UNESCO staff concerned;
- Preparation of the evaluation report.

Roles and responsibilities

The evaluation will be conducted by a team comprising one or more independent experts/evaluators. Local travel, materials, secretarial support and office space will be provided by the Centre during the field visit. The evaluator(s) will be responsible for telecommunications and printing of documentation.

The UNESCO Culture Sector will facilitate and oversee the evaluation process, to the extent possible, by providing any relevant information, and will be responsible for evaluating and approving the final report.

Background documents

UNESCO shall make the following documents available to the evaluation team in electronic form:

- The Executive Board and General Conference documents concerning the establishment of the Centre;
- The existing Agreement between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNESCO concerning the establishment of the Centre;
- The Medium-term Strategy 2008-2013 (34 C/4), Medium-term Strategy 2014-2021 (37 C/4), Approved programme and budget 2012-2013 (36 C/5), 2014-2015 (37 C/5), 2016-2017 (38 C/5) and 2018-2019 (39 C/5);
- Relevant correspondence concerning the cooperation between UNESCO and the Centre.

The Centre shall make the following documents available to the evaluation team in English, in electronic or paper form:

- Annual progress reports and biennial self-assessment reports on the contribution to UNESCO's programme objectives;
- Periodic independent audit reports of the financial statements, financial reports;
- List of staff;
- List of key publications;
- List of donors and project partners;
- Minutes, decisions and working documents of the meetings of the Governing Council and Executive Board of the Centre;
- Report of support provided to or received from Member States;
- Available audit and evaluation reports;
- Account of networking achievements linked with other thematically related category 2 Institutes or centres and UNESCO's programmes.

Draft evaluation report

A draft report will present findings, conclusions and recommendations, with a draft executive summary. The UNESCO Culture Sector, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Centre itself will have the opportunity to comment and give feedback to the evaluation team.

Final evaluation report

The final report (max. 20 pages, excluding annexes) should be structured as follows:

- Executive summary (maximum four pages);
- Introduction (background, purpose and scope);
- Methodology;
- Findings;
- Recommendations (as described above);
- Annexes (including interview list, data collection instruments, key documents consulted, Terms of Reference).

The language of the report shall be English.

Evaluation team

The evaluation team will consist of one or more independent experts/evaluators. A single proposal/expression of interest must be submitted on behalf of the team, whether it is one or several persons, and a single contract will be executed.

Qualifications:

- At least 7 years of professional experience in research and/or capacity-building in the field of cultural heritage, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, cultural policy or culture and development;
- At least 7 years of professional experience in policy and programme evaluation in the context of international development;
- Fluency in English (written and spoken);
- Knowledge of the role and mandate of UNESCO and its programmes.

Schedule

The evaluation shall be completed no later than **7 September 2018**.

The schedule for the evaluation is as follows:

- A desk study of background documents (to be completed prior to the visit to the Centre);
- A mission to visit the Centre;
- Writing and submission of the draft evaluation report no later than 17 August 2018;
- Submission of the final evaluation report (before 7 September 2018).

The date of the mission to the Centre will be defined by UNESCO in coordination with the Centre and taking into account the Evaluators' availability.

Submission of proposals/expression of interest

Interested candidates should submit their applications in English, consisting of:

1. Curriculum vitae of expert(s)/evaluator(s) and, if applicable, a company profile;
2. Letter expressing interest and clearly identifying how the candidate/candidate team meets the required skills and experience;
3. An approach and methodology for the assignment, a Workplan and comments on the Terms of Reference if any (in brief);
4. A total cost (quoted in US dollars), distinguishing the fees for services from the travel expenses, with a breakdown of the cost and number of work hours required for each phase of the schedule.

Applications should be submitted no later than **25 June 2018**, midnight (Paris time) to Intangible Cultural Heritage Section (ich@unesco.org). Please note that applications submitted through other channels will not be considered. Selection will be made on the basis of best value for money.