

Ireland's National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage

[Home](#)
[Inventory](#)
[Latest News](#)
[About](#)
[Apply for Inscription](#)
[English](#)



About

In December 2015 Ireland ratified the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Intangible cultural heritage 'refers to the practices, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity'.

Ireland's obligations under the 2003 Convention include establishing a National Inventory for Intangible Cultural Heritage to protect, promote and celebrate Irish living cultural heritage practices, customs, crafts and traditions.

Successful applicants to the National Inventory may also consider seeking nomination by the State for inscription on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, to which the State is entitled to make one nomination every year.

Following an open call for Expressions of Interest and the appointment of an Expert Advisory Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage, in July 2019 the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht approved the inscription of thirty cultural heritage elements on Ireland's permanent National Inventory.

The Department accepts Expressions of Interest for the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage on an ongoing basis, with the goals of acknowledging, safeguarding and promoting Ireland's living culture through official State recognition.

Forms may be downloaded [here](#) and submitted to nationalich@ccs.gov.ie

Vision for ICH in Ireland

Ireland's Intangible Cultural Heritage is widely recognised and celebrated internationally and nationally as a central expression of the richness and diversity of our culture and identity. Living heritage practices shall be safeguarded and sustained by practitioners and stakeholders working in mutual respect and cooperation for the benefit of current and future generations.

Department Mission

The Department of Culture, Communications and Sport works with the Convention bodies and State Parties, government departments, local authorities and agencies, professional representative organisations and individual practitioners to achieve recognition of Ireland's ICH internationally and nationally and to work to support the safeguarding, promotion and sustainability of Ireland's ICH in accordance with the principles set out hereunder.

Principles

1. *ICH practices are rooted first and foremost in the communities of practitioners*

The practitioners are the bearers and custodians of the inter-generational transmission of their practice. All initiatives to seek official recognition of a practice as part of Ireland's ICH must be rooted in the community and have the support of the community of practitioners.

2. *Living heritage is at the heart of Ireland's ICH*

The practices that form Ireland's Intangible Cultural Heritage are a living expression of their communities and are part of contemporary cultural practice, while also recognising the dynamic nature of the practice and the practitioners are dynamic and subject to evolution over time.

3. *Recognition of ICH practices is based on a policy of respect, inclusivity and diversity*

All practices that have and continue to give expression and meaning to a community of practitioners are eligible for recognition as part of Ireland's Intangible Cultural Heritage. ICH practices in Ireland are recognised according to the requirements for inclusivity and mutual respect among communities and for the rights of people from all cultures and backgrounds.

4. *Cooperation among stakeholders enhances safeguarding and transmission*

While safeguarding and transmission of their practice is led by practitioners, there are a range of stakeholders in Ireland that may provide support. Increased cooperation and policies, priorities and supports among practitioners and stakeholders, including government departments, State agencies, local authorities and representative organisations will enhance outcomes for practices and their communities.

5. *Mainstreaming recognition of ICH maximises its protection and contributes to sustainable development*

Recognition of Ireland's ICH should be mainstreamed to ensure that the potential impact on practices of relevant plans, programmes and schemes by individuals, groups or organisations is adequately considered, so that practices can continue in harmony with their environment and contribute to sustainable development.

6. *Public discourse is critical to awareness, understanding and appreciation*

Regular communication, discussion and research on the nature, evolution and diversity of Ireland's ICH promote greater awareness and understanding of its importance to communities and encourage the public to reflect on and appreciate the creativity, meaning and diversity of cultural expression in Ireland.