

ICH NGO Forum Steering Committee

Mission and tasks of the Committee

General profile of members of the Committee and election process

The ICH NGO Forum Steering Committee (Committee) was established at the ICH NGO Forum (Forum) meeting held in June 2015 in Cataluña. Its composition was endorsed at the Forum General Meeting during the 10 COM meeting in Windhoek, Namibia, in 2015. The members that were proposed to compose the Committee were then ratified. By 2018, these members will have been replaced by elected members under this document.

The purpose of using masculine in this text is only to lighten its form and facilitate its reading, without any prejudice of its eventual interpretation in using the feminine.

A. Committee's mission

The Committee's mission is to coordinate, for the benefit of the accredited NGOs, the activities of the Forum and especially:

1. Establish and maintain the link with the 2003 Convention Secretariat for collective matters dealing with civil society organizations and especially accredited NGOs,
2. Coordinate activities of accredited NGOs at time of sessions of the Convention Governing bodies (General Assembly, Intergovernmental Committee),
3. In a spirit of transparency and good governance , develop communication around the Forum activities, including those of the Committee such as communicating minutes of its meetings, invitations, etc., through, amongst other means, the newsletter, the website, the facebook page, twitter and other social networks,
4. Develop the network of accredited ICH NGOs facilitating dialogue, exchange of information and best practice, drawing on practical experiences and exchanges with other ICH networks,
5. Initiate thematic activities through, amongst others, the organization of workshops,
6. Organize capacity building activities, as the case may be, in coordination with the Convention Secretariat,
7. Coordinate collective link with State parties or other entities to foster the financial sustainability of the collective activities of the accredited NGOs,
8. Manage funds that have been raised for the Forum activities,
9. Promote the participation of civil society to the safeguarding of ICH, beyond the accredited NGOs.

B. Composition and election of the Committee

The Committee is composed of seven members;

- A. one member for each of the six UNESCO electoral regions (Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, Western Europe and North America, Arab States, Africa, Eastern Europe) representing an NGO with its headquarters in that region and, in absence of a representative of an NGO with headquarters in that region, then a representative of an NGO with main activity situated in that region, and in absence of a representative of an NGO either with its headquarters in that region or an NGO with main activity situated in that region, then a representative of an international NGO with activities situated in that region, and
- B. one member representing an international NGO.

For purposes of the above paragraph the term “international NGO” is understood as UNESCO applies this term in its official partnership relations with UNESCO, ie. umbrella organisation.

NGOs presenting a [statutory] candidate can also present the candidature of an alternate member. Only persons who are present at the Forum General meeting can be elected Committee members. In case of absence of the statutory candidate at that meeting, the alternate candidate will be the candidate for his NGO to be elected as a member of the Committee, if he is present at the meeting.

In case that for some unforeseeable, unavoidable and external reason, a candidate whether statutory or alternate cannot be present at the meeting, his candidature will remain valid and he will be eligible, provided the Election board will have decided that this force majeure (vis maior) situation applies and after having received some kind of proof from the candidate.

When a region is not represented at the election, the member of the Steering Committee to be elected can be chosen amongst any of the NGO delegates present at the Forum General Meeting that will come as close as possible to the desirable profile, as described here under.

Committee members are elected, for only one renewable two-year period, by the NGO representatives present at the Forum General meeting which meets every year prior to or during the IGC sessions. The mandate of the new Committee shall start at the end of the IGC session, during which the Forum General meeting session took place.

The election of one member of the Committee from three regions, takes place every year. As an interim measure, the Committee members designated in 2015 from the three regions Europe and North America, Africa, and Asia and the Pacific, will remain members of the Committee until the end of the 2018 IGC session. The first election of a member representing the international NGO will take place for the first time at the 2018 IGC session.

A member of the Committee who, during his mandate, would have lost contact with the NGO he represented at the time of his election, or who would not represent anymore this NGO, will immediately lose his qualification to be a member of the Committee, and be substituted by the alternate member, if any. Any vacant position on the Committee shall be filled at the next closest Forum General meeting for the time remaining for this position.

C. Election Board

An Election Board composed, preferably of seven members, and in any case of a minimum of three members, one of each region, and one from an international NGO will make a call to all accredited NGOs for candidatures, prior to each Forum General meeting. The Forum General meeting will nominate members of the Election Board at the meeting prior to the elections. In the absence of this Election Board, a month and a half prior to the date of the Forum General meeting, the Steering Committee will make a call to all accredited NGOs for candidatures. Members of the Election Board cannot be candidates to the Committee.

The Electoral board will make all possible efforts to ensure gender equality in his selection of candidatures.

D. Committee meetings

The Committee will meet every month through Skype communication or by any shared mean of communication, and also during the Convention governing bodies' sessions. The meetings will be held in English and/or in French.

Meetings of Committee members with the 2003 Convention Secretariat, will be held at least twice a year.

Minutes of the Committee meetings, meetings with the Convention secretariat and any other relevant information will be communicated to the accredited NGOs.

E. Profile of Committee members

The desirable profile that we seek for candidates to the Committee is the following:

1. Be a representative of an NGO that has been accredited to the Convention,
2. Have participated to a minimum of two sessions of the Governing bodies of the 2003 Convention,
3. Have a good working knowledge of English and/or French, both oral and in writing,
4. Have access to a good internet connection,
5. Have a reasonable knowledge and be well connected to ICH NGOs, accredited or not, in his region,
6. Be willing to draft and review documents connected with the communication tasks of the Committee,
7. Be willing to moderate sessions of the Forum,
8. Be willing to undertake representation activities for the Committee and for the Forum.

This text was (i) adopted by the General Meeting of the ICH NGO Forum in Addis Ababa on November 28, 2016, (ii) then amended by the General Meeting of the ICH NGO Forum in Jeju on December 6, 2017, and is subject to possible future developments.