

ICH NGO FORUM CODE OF CONDUCT

(Draft October 7, 2019)

General Principles

ICH NGO Forum shall:

- engage with UNESCO and other international organizations, state parties, the public, funders, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and other interested parties that share common values and objectives in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH);
- represent, in a fair and unbiased way, accredited NGOs in its interactions with the Convention's governing organs (General Assembly of the States Parties, and Intergovernmental Committee) and the Secretariat;
- work beyond borders of politics, religion, culture, race, ethnicity, gender and other power differentials;
- be open and accessible to public scrutiny regarding its governance structure, listing of officers and partnerships, activities, projects, policies it proposes or opposes, and the origin and use of its resources;
- be accountable for its actions and decisions to the communities, groups and, if applicable, individuals that it serves in safeguarding ICH, to its member NGOs, partnering organizations and the public at large;
- assure its member NGOs of confidentiality in bringing evidence to members of the Steering Committee of claims of misconduct by anyone associated with ICH NGO Forum;
- exercise prompt corrective action whenever wrongdoing is discovered among its Steering Committee, member NGOs and partners.

Integrity and Public Trust

- ICH NGO Forum is organized and operated as a not-for-profit association of NGOs accredited to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (the Convention). Any surplus generated through its operations is to be utilized solely to help its mission and objectives. No part of ICH NGO Forum's earnings is to inure to the benefit of its Steering Committee, Working Groups, member NGOs or any private persons.
- ICH NGO Forum shall not be controlled by, or determined by any intergovernmental or governmental entity or policy. It shall act independently yet collaboratively with all other ICH stakeholders, in accordance with the principles and objectives of the Convention. It shall govern itself autonomously, according to its governance structure, and control its own activities, which shall be consistent with its mission.

- Each member NGO will have one vote in elections of Steering Committee members and any other governing body to be constituted. Representatives of member NGOs who are at the same time members of delegations of State Parties at the sessions of the Convention's governing organs may not serve on the Steering Committee.
- Members of the Steering Committee and any other governing body to be constituted are to serve in a voluntary capacity, for no pay.
- Members of ICH NGO Forum are expected to support and adhere to the Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Through its website, the ICH NGO Forum shall make available to the member NGOs and general public the annual report on its programmes, services and partnerships, the annual financial report, and the annual plan of its activities, as approved by its governing organs.
- All official texts shall be in English and French, and general communication preferably in both languages.

Financial Matters and Fundraising

- Financial procedures shall be established for the receiving and disbursement of funds, including a protection against a person having the power to issue a check to himself or herself, such as requiring an additional signature.
- Members who are not a member of the Steering Committee can be reimbursed for participation in an event or another purpose only by decision of the Steering Committee.
- ICH NGO Forum shall only accept funding that is consistent with its mission, does not compromise its principles, and does not restrict its ability to address relevant issues freely, thoroughly and objectively. Programs shall never be designed simply to meet the needs of a funding source.

Partnership and Collaboration

- ICH NGO Forum shall collaborate with other entities only if the relationship is consistent with its mission.
- ICH NGO Forum shall enter into a partnership agreement with a governmental or intergovernmental body only when it is beneficial to its objectives and does not compromise its independence or self-control.

This Code of Conduct was adopted by the General Meeting of the ICH NGO Forum in Bogotá on 11 December 2019. It may be amended when necessary by a two-thirds majority of the Steering Committee and approved by a two-thirds majority of designated representatives of accredited NGOs present at the General Assembly of the ICH NGO Forum.