



Museovirasto
Finnish Heritage Agency

Ambassadors of Living Heritage

Project Report

1. Background and Objectives

The project promoted safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in line with the UNESCO 2003 Convention. Its main aim was to **increase the visibility, diversity and inclusiveness of living heritage in Finland**, particularly by highlighting traditions from different immigrant communities.

A central tool was the **Wiki-Inventory for Living Heritage**, an open digital platform where communities themselves can document and present their heritage. At present, the Wiki includes 280 entries from 480 communities.

Before this project, there were already articles in the Wiki from the Sámi and Roma communities and the Swedish speaking minority. At present, articles include the Cultural days of the deaf, Pride Helsinki and Using and teaching Braille.

2. Key Partners and Stakeholders

The project was coordinated through multi-actor cooperation. Core partners included:

- [Finnish Heritage Agency](#) – overall coordination, training, and technical support
- [Finnish Arts and Culture Agency](#) – expertise in cultural diversity and artists / art communities (called Arts Promotion Centre Taike till 2025)
- [Culture for All Service](#) – NGO on accessibility and inclusion perspectives
- [Globe Art Point](#) – NGO of international and migrant artists in Finland

The project plan was made in partnership with all four participating organisations. Regular meetings were held and all partners participated in the selection of the Ambassadors. They also has a chance to comment on the articles before publishing.

The Ambassadors

- Acted as **knowledge holders and co-creators** of heritage content
- Facilitated **community workshops and participation**
- Ensured that minority and diaspora perspectives are represented

3. Project Process

1. Open Call and Selection

An open call invited individuals from diverse backgrounds (e.g. educators, artists, activists) to become ambassadors. A press release was sent through the networks of all participating organisations. The call invited around 30 applicants from diverse backgrounds. The project team comprising of one person from each organization selected six candidates.

Many of the candidates had roots in many cultures, which proved to be difficult in the light of inventorying. It is much easier to work on inventories when focusing on one cultural heritage group and their ICH, rather than hybrid forms of heritage. This is a pity and needs further development.

2. Training Phase

Selected ambassadors participated in half a day training workshops on safeguarding ICH, the UNESCO 2003 Convention, concepts, documentation methods and community-based approach.

They also received a powerpoint to be used in their own workshops. Furthermore, flyers of ICH Convention were shared for distribution.

3. Community Engagement and workshops

Ambassadors organized a similar workshop(s) in their own community. They collaborated with NGOs, associations or informal groups to meet up, identify meaningful traditions, select one of them and started collecting information on the tradition.

The Ambassador had the responsibility to collect necessary information, write the article, have round(s) of comments with relevant stakeholders. There was also active support from the Finnish Heritage Agency in editing the articles, when necessary. The Ambassador collected also photos for the article making sure of their licensing.

The articles were written mainly in English and some of them also in the original language. The Agency published them also in Finnish.

Results were shared publicly to increase awareness: a press release was distributed by the Agency and it was shared actively within the networks and social media of the participating organisations.

4. Results and Examples

The ambassador model has produced concrete outputs that broaden understanding of Finnish heritage. Examples include:

[Celebrating “el Dieciocho” the Independence Day of Chile in Finland](#)

[Challah bread in the Jewish culture](#)

[Día de Muertos mexicano en Finlandia](#)

[Iranian Classical Music in Finland](#)

[The Latvian tradition of colouring Easter eggs](#)

[Active Listening to Sharpen Self-Awareness of our Living Heritages](#) (Good practice)

These articles have paved the way for other communities to contribute to the Wiki. After the project, the following elements have been included in the wiki

[Indian Durga Puja in Finland](#)

[Celebrating Hanami in Finland](#)

[Bangladeshi Pitha Uthsob in Finland](#)

5. Methodology and Values

The project is based on the following principles:

- **Participation:** communities define their own heritage
- **Co-creation:** NGOs and local groups actively produce content
- **Multilingualism:** multiple languages are encouraged
- **Inclusivity and anti-racism:** diversifying heritage narratives challenges narrow national representations

Updating the Wiki-inventory is therefore described as a significant societal and anti-racist act, as it expands whose heritage is recognised and valued.

6. Practical Implementation Guidelines

Timeline example:

- Month 1: Open call and partner engagement
- Month 2: Training workshops
- Months 3–4: Community collaboration (NGOs and groups)
- Month 5: Content creation
- Month 6: Publication and communication

Key success factors:

- Active involvement of NGOs and community networks who reach out to the communities targeted
- Trust-building with participants, key role within the Ambassadors
- Flexible, inclusive working methods

- Good coordination between partners
- Using of communication channels of all partners for better reach out

Budget: around 4000 euros including the fees for the Ambassadors, also some coffees etc. were paid for the workshops. Spaces were mainly provided by various actors in the network, some of the workshops were organized at the Agency. The Finnish Heritage Agency took care of the costs.

7. Conclusions

The Ambassadors of Living Heritage project provides a **scalable and participatory model** for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Its strength lies in combining institutional coordination with strong NGO and community involvement. This ensures that heritage work becomes more **representative, inclusive, and socially impactful**.

Read more

- [Call for Ambassadors of Living Heritage](#)
- [Cultural heritage in Finland is also Iranian music and challah bread](#)
- [Wiki-inventory for Living Heritage \(background and principles\)](#)
- [Updating the Wiki-Inventory for Living Heritage is a significant societal and anti-racist act](#) (article by Koko Hubara, Special advisor in the Arts Promotion Centre in 2023)

More information

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[UNESCO 2003 Convention in Finland](#)

[Wiki-inventory for Living Heritage](#)

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