



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

Roundtable discussion
Consultation on Intangible Cultural Heritage in the UK

Jan / Feb 2024

A rough agenda for today's discussion

1. Introductions
 2. Background / Context
 3. Our approach
 4. Recap of ICH
 5. Key questions for discussion
 6. Any other questions
- + 10 min break

Our understanding of the opportunities and obligations of the Convention

- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, founded in 1945
- 6 'cultural' conventions - World Heritage, Cultural Property / Hague
- Countries become a 'State Party' to the Convention - voluntary commitment

Our understanding of the opportunities and obligations of the Convention

‘Each State Party shall...’

- **Identify and define** the ICH with the participation of communities, groups and relevant NGOs (*Article 11(b)*) /
- Draw up and update **inventories** of ICH (*Article 12.1*)
- Ensure the **safeguarding** of the ICH in their territory (*Article 11(a)*)

Our principles for the approach to ratifying and implementing

- 1 Community led, 'bottom up'
- 2 Inclusive and respectful, representative
- 3 Open and engaged

Convention definition

- Intangible cultural heritage is the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.
-
- Passed down from generation to generation
 - Also known as ‘living heritage.’
 - Living and practised as opposed to material, fixed heritage.
 - ‘Verb’ - but also knowledge to do something

Exploring Intangible Cultural Heritage

Some examples of Intangible Cultural Heritage

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- Eisteddfod, Storytelling, Lullabies, Legends
- Bell Ringing, Cerdd Dant, Pantomime, Punch and Judy
- Highland Games, Bonfire Night, Notting Hill Carnival
- Dry-stone Walling, Thatching, Beekeeping, Falconry
- Basket-weaving, Pottery, Knitting, Suit Tailoring

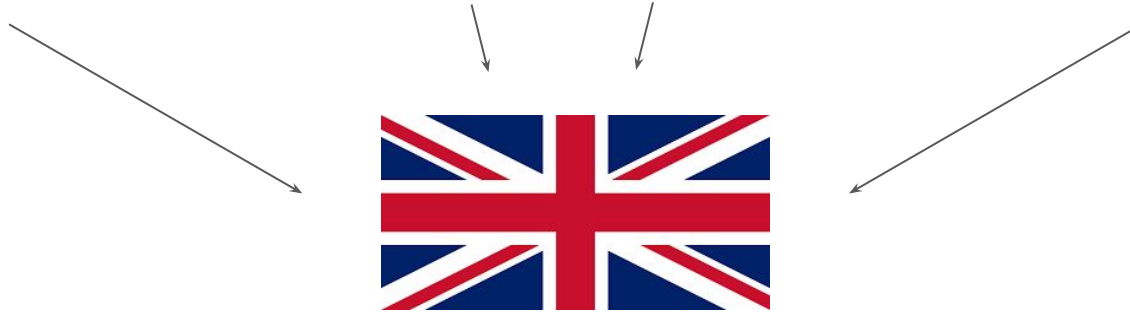


What is the Inventory?

- First stage of implementation - key obligation
- We must **identify and define** elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage
 - Describe the elements in their own context
 - Distinguish them from other elements
- Not an archive

How will this work across the four Nations?

- We will have four distinct Inventories for each of the four nations - England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland - which will combine into one Inventory for the UK



Lifting not listing

- We will **not** submit items to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity
- Focus should be the Inventory - lifting all rather than listing a few.
- Other 'lists'
 - Register of Good Safeguarding Practices
 - List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding

What is safeguarding and how do we do it?

Safeguarding means ‘measures aimed at ensuring the **viability** of the intangible cultural heritage, including the **identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission**, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.’ - *Article 2.3 of the Convention*

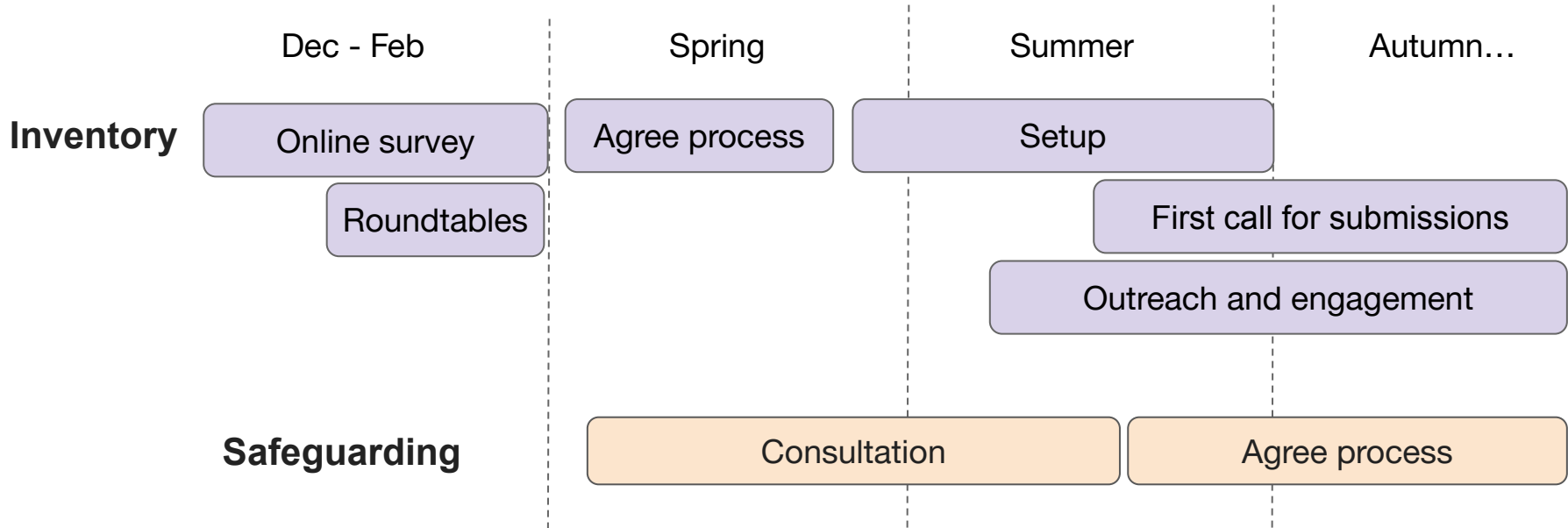
- **Identify** and document
- Raise **awareness**
- Pass on skills / knowledge (**transmission**)
- Increase **training**
- Make it **sustainable**



The consultation period

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Timeline for the consultations and implementation



Overview of what are we consulting on

The online consultation open until **29th February 2024**. Alongside we have **17 roundtable discussions** scheduled to discuss the following topics in more detail:

1. Inventory criteria
2. Community permission
3. Categories
4. Approvals process
5. Review of Inventory



For the purposes of the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the UK, we propose the criteria below, but would like feedback on these:

- Must be currently practised
- Can be from any time
- Can originate from anywhere
- Must be a living practice and can not be a material product or object.

- *Do you agree with these? Any comments?*
- *Are there any others that should be included?*

2

UNESCO's view is that **Intangible Cultural Heritage can only be heritage when it is recognised as such by the communities, groups or individuals that create, maintain and transmit it** – without their recognition, nobody else can decide for them that a given expression or practice is their heritage

- We propose that each individual submission contains evidence that the item is being submitted on behalf of the community that practises it.

- *Are you supportive? Any comments?*
- *What suggestions do you have for obtaining support for a community for a submission to the Inventory?*

3

Five 'domains' or categories suggested in the Convention:

- Oral traditions and expressions
- Performing arts
- Social practices, rituals and festive events
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- Traditional craftsmanship

We propose two more categories:

- Culinary traditions
- Traditional sports and games

- *Do you agree with these?*
- *Are there any others?*

The consultation period

Approvals process

4

- We propose that all items submitted for inclusion on the Inventory be checked to ensure they meet the criteria.
- Approval panels for each nation
 - Panels including practitioners and members from public bodies
- If an item is not approved to be included on the Inventory:
 - A reasonable level of written feedback will be provided explaining the decision.
 - There will be no restrictions on re-applying to submit an item to the inventory.
- In the event of a disagreement on an item not being listed:
 - A request can be submitted for a second opinion from a different approval panel to consider the item.

Are you supportive? Any comments?



5

- Intangible Cultural Heritage is **living cultural heritage that is continually evolving and being passed on**. The Inventory is **not intended as an 'archive'** of Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- We therefore propose that each item be reviewed every two years, by the community / group / individual who submitted the item in order for the entry details to remain up to date.
 - An additional grace period of two year
 - Moved to an 'inactive' part if still not reviewed after four years
 - An unreviewed item may signal a major safeguarding concern
 - Information about the review process should be provided to the Safeguarding Committees

Are you supportive? Any comments?