# At the interface between living heritage and museum practice: dialogical encounters and the making of a 'third space' in safeguarding heritage

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## Learning from the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project – www.ICHandmuseums.eu

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## ABSTRACT

In the complex web of actors and processes that exists around safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH), museums occupy a special place. The *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* (IMP) has attempted to tackle a range of these issues, and searched for windows of opportunity that emerge where living heritage and museums meet. This paper presents an overview of the themes and issues that informed this networking initiative, and shares key insights that are of wider interest for those engaged in safeguarding ICH and in museums worldwide. IMP aimed to be an incentive to connect the safeguarding of living heritage more closely with museum work, as well as to bring about a better understanding of the questions that arise through dialogue and collaboration between the different stakeholders and perspectives. Throughout the trajectory, a 'third space'[1] was uncovered and explored at the intersection between museum and ICH activities. Here, opportunities and risks in the interaction between ICH and museums are negotiated, and moulded into a mutually beneficial platform for all involved. Insights here relate to sustainable development, to ethical questions and concerns, and to the potential of learning networks.

## Keywords

museums, learning networks, safeguarding measures, museum functions, barriers and ways forward, sustainable development, 'third space', *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* (IMP), UNESCO, NEMO, ICOM, ICH NGO Forum

## Introduction

In the complex web of different actors and processes that exist around safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH), museums occupy a special place. Museums offer a space – either physical or metaphorical – where heritage practices can be studied, strengthened, and communicated to a wider audience. At the same time, the interaction between communities, groups and individuals who practise or cherish ICH, and museums, brings about many challenges. Questions arise, for example, over power relations between individual or small-scale practitioners and institutionalised museums, or over the effect of the commodification of traditional heritage practices. Between 2017 and 2020, the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* (IMP) has attempted to tackle a range of these issues, as well as exploring the windows of opportunity which come about where living heritage and museums meet. The main aim of IMP was to be an incentive to connect the safeguarding of living heritage more closely to museum work, as well as to bring about a better understanding of the questions that arise, towards and through a process of dialogue and collaboration between the different stakeholders and perspectives. Throughout the IMP trajectory – perhaps most importantly – a 'third space'[2] was discovered and explored at the intersection of both museum and ICH activities. Here, opportunities and risks in the interaction between ICH and museums are negotiated and moulded into a mutually beneficial platform.

In this paper we present an overview of the themes and issues that informed this European networking project, and invite you to learn from some key insights that were uncovered over the course of the past few years, and that are of interest more broadly for those engaged in safeguarding ICH and in museums worldwide.

## The UNESCO 2003 *Convention*: a new compass for global heritage actions in the 21st century

Over the course of the past few years, the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (hereinafter: the 2003 *Convention*) has shifted the focus away from solely preserving built heritage, objects, monuments, archaeological and/or natural sites. Within the so-called UNESCO 'ICH-paradigm' (by which we refer to the whole of the *Convention*, its related *Operational Directives* and *Ethical Principles*,

national legislative frameworks and the practices that have arisen around them worldwide, etc.) *material or physical manifestations* of ICH are perceived as more or less secondary, however there is also a *deep-seated interdependence* between tangible and intangible cultural heritage, given that *the instruments*, *objects*, *artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith* are also part of the definition of ICH.[3] Nonetheless, the 2003 *Convention* shifts the focus towards also safeguarding the *skills*, *expressions and knowledge of people*. The participation and active involvement of these communities, groups and individuals – who are the bearers or practitioners of ICH – are therefore inherent, central features of the 2003 *Convention*.

Dynamic and adaptive processes are intrinsic to ICH, which is not something fixed in form that remains constant forever, safeguarded when found only in its pure, essential form.[4] Intangible cultural heritage is not static and does not need to stay *preserved in its most authentic form*. An important and defining characteristic of ICH, on the contrary, is that it evolves along with the times, and ICH communities, groups or individual ICH practitioners adapt to ever-changing (societal) circumstances.

Within IMP, the above-mentioned characteristics of the ICH-paradigm – as developed and agreed upon in the international community – have been adopted as a reference framework in which all actions and events, outcomes and outputs of the project would be conceived. A series of persistent common misunderstandings related to the concept of intangible cultural heritage and its scope also fed a strongly-felt need to initiate a shared working process, including the museum sector and ICH actors, in order to benefit from mutually developed experiences and knowledge, from co-operation and networking. Later on in the process, these collaborative efforts for better understanding the ways forward, were recognised as a so-called 'third space': a space where museums and safeguarding ICH intertwine. The intersections open up actual renewed experiences, approaches and practices in contemporary heritage work.

## Understanding the context: the legacy and evolution of museum practice in the European context

Considering that the scope was to set up IMP as a

European laboratory involving partners from Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, France and Switzerland as well as the Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO), together with other international associated partners[5], it is crucial here to give a sense of the museum scene and its development in the European region before detecting perspectives and insights that may be more widely applicable outside of the European context.

Geoffrey Lewis's article *The Role of Museums and the Professional Code of Ethics* provides a brief history of the earliest collections of artefacts.[6] But it was modernity that inspired the great desire to accumulate material evidence from the ancient and more recent past, and princely collections, *Kunstkammers* and cabinets of curiosity, were formed during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries that are seen as precursors to the public museums in Europe we know today.[7] Because – as Léontine Meijer-van Mensch and Peter van Mensch have stated in their article *From disciplinary control to co-creation – collecting and the development of museums as praxis in the nineteenth and twentieth century* – ... *the history of museums is*, first of all, *the institutionalisation of collecting.*[8]

Several authors distinguish between the different types of public museums that developed during the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries in Europe. From the encyclopaedic museums originating from the European Spirit of Enlightenment to the (local, regional and learned) society museums that have their origin in the collections of antiquarian, philosophical or natural history societies; to national museums, established in the 18th century by newly-emerging nation states to induce national pride, consciousness and identity among the inhabitants of these newly-founded entities; to specialised museums (e.g. museums of industrial design, technical achievement or anthropology); local museums; (ethnographic or historical) open-air museums which emerged in the late 19th century and focused on preserving aspects of traditional folk-life, collecting traditional buildings as well as introducing costumed persons into their presentations; the eco-museums of the 1970s driven by local communities, focusing on social subjects and concerns; site museums, where sites are being preserved in their own right and for which (unobtrusive) interpretative facilities needed to be developed; cyber museums, inspired by

recent developments in information and communication technologies; and identity museums (e.g. Jewish museums or women's museums) and memorial museums.[9] But today, generally, *despite increased specialisation ... a basic distinction is still being made according to the French scheme*: art museums, *natural history museums*, *museums of science and technology*, *and history museums.*[10]

*By the mid-nineteenth century, the idea of a public museum had taken root throughout Europe. During the second half of the century, the museum model became more or less standardised*, according to Meijer-van Mensch and van Mensch. But in the second half of the 20th century debates about the museum profession emerged, involving 'traditional' scholar-curators as leading professionals vs. the 'new professionals' who were engaged in such new museological disciplines as collection management, conservation, exhibition design and education. As a result, the organisational structures of museums also changed, with the introduction of the 'business management model for museums' of the 1990s.[11]

Several other transformations occurred in museums at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries: from *attention* [that] *was placed on the needs of various user groups* (*as targets of educational activity*) *and the accessibility of museums*, to a focus on enhancing the experiential and sensory aspects of museum visits, the extension of visitor facilities – restaurants, cafés, bookstores, gift shops - and an interest in participatory museology and the inclusion of audiences, in which shared governance, shared creation of content, a redefining of the notion of expertise, and the relation with and (self-)representation of (source) communities of an astonishing diversity, were important aspects.[12] Nonetheless, ...*examples of truly participatory actions in cultural institutions are still scarce*[13] and several commentators affirm the continued focus that museums place on objects rather than on people.[14]

Based on decennia of accumulated practice in collecting material artefacts, the core functions of museums can still be summarised as acquiring and conserving, scientific research, and communicating and exhibiting those collections of artefacts that are in their care. However, today several additional tasks are laid in

the hands of museums - playing a role with regard to social functions, wellbeing, education, shaping a sense of civic identity, city development, etc..[15] Most recently, the attention of museums has also been drawn towards sensitive issues like restitution and the decolonisation of collections, multi-perspectivity and providing room for empathy and emotion, in a response to current questions and expectations in society.

## Incentives for museums to engage with ICH and its practitioners

### The ICOM definition of museums, the Shanghai Charter and the Seoul Declaration

ICOM, the International Council of Museums, is a network organisation – by and for museum professionals – with more than 40,000 members worldwide who represent the global museum community. Numerous museums across the globe use the ICOM museum definition as a standard and endorse the ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums*.[16] In 2001 this museum definition used to read:

*A museum is a non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment.*[17]

In 2007 however, the definition was altered and a reference to intangible heritage was included:

*A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.*[18]

This alteration of the definition of a museum was made in the wake of ICOM's 7th Regional Assembly, titled *Museums, Intangible Heritage and Globalisation* held in 2002 in China. This resulted in the *Shanghai Charter for the Protection of Intangible Heritage*.[19] The 21st General Assembly of ICOM held subsequently in Seoul (Republic of Korea) in 2004 was dedicated to the subject of *Museums and Intangible Heritage* and the

*Seoul Declaration of ICOM on the Intangible Heritage*[20] was adopted during this General Assembly. With this *Declaration*, ICOM endorsed the 2003 *Convention* on ICH, and *urged all governments to ratify this Convention* (paragraphs 1 and 2). Also included in the Seoul Declaration were the following recommendations:

- *that museums give particular attention and resist any attempt to misuse intangible heritage resources;*
- *that all training programmes for museum professionals stress the importance of intangible heritage;*
- *that Curricula Guidelines for Museum Professional Development need to be adjusted accordingly.*[21]

The *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums* also incorporated relevant statements with regard to intangible cultural heritage:

1: **Museums preserve, interpret and promote the natural and cultural inheritance of humanity**
*Principle*
*Museums are responsible for the tangible and intangible, natural and cultural heritage ...*[22]
7: **Museums operate in a legal manner ...**
**7.2 International Legislation**
*Museum policy should acknowledge the following international legislation that is taken as a standard in interpreting the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums: ... Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003).[23]

So – at least in principle – museums worldwide are expected to take a role in safeguarding intangible heritage.

### UNESCO's *Operational Directives*

Another incentive for museums to take up a role in safeguarding ICH comes from UNESCO. In the *Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* a role is envisaged for museums in relation to ICH:

*Research institutes, centres of expertise, museums, archives, libraries, documentation centres and similar entities play an important role in collecting, documenting, archiving and conserving data on*

*intangible cultural heritage, as well as in providing information and raising awareness about its importance. In order to enhance their awareness-raising functions about intangible cultural heritage, these entities are encouraged to:*

*a) involve practitioners and bearers of intangible cultural heritage when organising exhibitions, lectures, seminars, debates and training on their heritage;*

*b) introduce and develop participatory approaches to presenting intangible cultural heritage as living heritage in constant evolution;*

*c) focus on the continuous recreation and transmission of knowledge and skills necessary for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, rather than on the objects that are associated to it;*

*d) employ, when appropriate, information and communication technologies to communicate the meaning and value of intangible cultural heritage;*

*e) involve practitioners and bearers in their management, putting in place participatory systems for local development.*[24]

## Overall Results Framework

Another, more indirect incentive is to be found in the *Overall Results Framework* (ORF) for monitoring the global implementation and outcomes of the 2003 *Convention*, launched in 2018. The ORF is set up to monitor eight thematic areas, such as 'transmission and education', 'engagement of communities, groups and individuals as well as other stakeholders', 'policies' and so forth.

The ORF cites museums in relation to Core Indicator 1: *Extent to which competent bodies and institutions and consultative mechanisms support the continued practice and transmission of ICH.* The degree to which *Cultural centres, centres of expertise, research institutions, museums, archives, libraries, etc., contribute to ICH safeguarding and management* [emphasis by author] is put forward as an assessment factor for States Parties to the *Convention*. This assessment factor forms an unseen incentive for states to design policy implementation and evaluation strategies in which museums begin to be reviewed for their contribution to safeguarding and management of ICH.

## 2015 *Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity, and their Role in Society*

In 2015 UNESCO adopted a *Museum Recommendation*[25] at its 38th session of the General Conference. The *Recommendation* originated from the desire to supplement and extend the application of standards and principles laid down in existing international instruments, referring to the place of museums and to their related roles and responsibilities. This issue was increasingly called for, noting especially that the last international instrument wholly dedicated to museums dated to 1960! The interplay of this text with respect to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage remains at first sight quite limited, ICH mainly being addressed therein through an inclusive, integrated perspective summing up all types of heritage equally and by repetition. Nonetheless, the reference of this *Recommendation* to the diversity of museums and to their role in society demonstrates the general shift towards more community engagement by, and a greater variety of types of, museums, that is also in tune with the requirements for safeguarding ICH.[26]

## Increasing attention in Europe for the societal relevance of the ICH-paradigm in museum practice and policy

The initiative-takers behind IMP aimed to explore and contribute to genuinely inclusive policies and practices on the margins of museums' work, and to the increasing commitment to safeguarding intangible heritage, and have offered the tools needed for this. This collaborative effort took place not only against the backdrop of the above-mentioned international reference frameworks, but also in the context of European resolutions, and with funding to realise this multi-annual co-operative project among ICH and museum actors from the *Creative Europe* programme of the European Commission.

In the European context, there was a communication in 2015 from the European Commission[27] to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, on the European Commission resolution *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe*[28] (adopted on September 8, 2015), to which the following introduction was provided:

*Europe's cultural heritage, both <u>tangible and intangible</u>, is our common wealth – our inheritance from previous generations of Europeans and our legacy for those to come. It is an irreplaceable repository of knowledge and <u>a valuable resource for economic growth, employment and social cohesion.</u> It <u>enriches the individual lives</u> of hundreds of millions of people, is a source of <u>inspiration</u> for thinkers and artists, and a <u>driver for our cultural and creative industries</u>. Our cultural heritage and the way we preserve and valorise it is a major factor in defining Europe's place in the world and its attractiveness as a place to live, work, and visit.* [emphasis by author]

The text of this resolution, namely paragraph H, again affirms the importance not only of tangible heritage, but also that of intangible heritage for European culture, values and for the formation of people's identities:

*... whereas cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, plays a significant role in creating, preserving and promoting European culture and values and national, regional, local and individual identity, as well as the contemporary identity of the people of Europe.*

In addition, the Council of Europe's resolution *Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe*[29] (adopted in March 2019) recognises:

*... the influence that intangible cultural heritage can have on society and the economy, fostering a sense of belonging and well-being of people, underpinning the cultural and creative sectors and offering a playing field for the micro-economy with small and medium-size enterprises from local communities,* and considers *the contribution that ICH can make to sustainable health and well-being...*

**Perceived barriers in relation to safeguarding ICH in/together with museums**

Notwithstanding the encouragement given to museums by both ICOM and UNESCO to play a role in the safeguarding of the ICH of communities, groups and individual practitioners, and although its relevance towards peoples' identity formation, sustainable development and cultural diversity (among other things) has been highlighted, museums have not collectively taken ICH on board.

There appear to be different ways in which museums seem able to engage with safeguarding ICH and interact with its practitioners and related objects, artefacts, etc.:

(1) a smaller number of museums take as a starting point the initiative, vision, needs and choices of ICH-communities, groups and individual practitioners (who see a certain living ICH-practice as theirs and who embody and perform it actively), and subsequently include all aspects of this practice into the scope of their museum work (including the tangible heritage that is part of the ICH practices).

(2) a larger number of museums take as a starting point the objects and collections in their care or possession, and subsequently involve the intangible aspects associated with them.

Both are, in a way, integral or integrated approaches to cultural heritage, albeit that they have distinctly different aims and starting points:

1. In an <u>ICH-oriented approach</u> the process of safeguarding ICH is central. What matters is taking the appropriate actions and creating desirable conditions for practising and transmitting ICH, based on a dynamic approach and starting from a future-oriented and sustainable perspective. The ICH-approach works with, from and for ICH communities, groups and individual practitioners. Collections and objects have a subsidiary status in this approach. But in current western societies the supremacy of material culture has become mainstream and embedded as a part of the basic western worldview, with the result that ICH communities, groups and individual practitioners attach great importance to the material(ised) aspects of their practice. It is important that the initiative, and the right to decide on all matters relating to these practices, lies with the practitioners themselves.

2. In a <u>collection- or object-oriented approach</u> the care of the collection takes precedence. Acquisition and conservation, research, communication and the exhibition of these collections is what is central and has developed as a function of this collection. An important (and commonly perceived) pitfall of this approach is that ICH is often only *seemingly* integral to museum work;

relegating and limiting only certain aspects of ICH to having the function of adding an experiential layer to museum displays (e.g. in the form of audio-visual documentaries), directed towards visitor and audience satisfaction – as opposed to having the intention of involving the producers and practitioners of this heritage in the safeguarding of their practices and transmitting and continuing these practices in the future, in the spirit of the 2003 *Convention*.

Interrogating different aspects of these current approaches more profoundly was an integral part of IMP. However, throughout the trajectory of the project, the potential of a 'third approach' came to the forefront: the more dialogical process between museums and ICH, not favouring one approach over the other, but looking for ways of mutual reinforcement for the sake of caring for heritage. The 'third space' or 'intersection' approach that emerged as a result will be elaborated on further in this article.

Next to understanding that both museums and ICH practices could benefit from integrating elements of prevalent methodologies for heritage care, it is relevant in this context to understand some of the barriers impeding the immersion of safeguarding ICH in museum practice and policy. Of course, such generalisations do not apply to *all* museums, even if they are quite commonly observed. But for some museums (for example eco-museums, historic museums, city museums and museums that have a thematic link with one of the ICH domains (e.g. a museum dedicated to a specific craft or procession), taking part in safeguarding ICH appears to be easier than it is for others (e.g. for museums of fine arts). The full meaning and reach of what safeguarding ICH in a museum context could mean is often not entirely grasped and has regularly proven difficult to apply. We distinguish some commonly perceived obstacles:

Firstly, the <u>word 'intangible' in the phrase 'intangible cultural heritage' is still fraught with a lot of confusion</u>. Not every type of cultural heritage work relating to the non-material aspects of cultural heritage falls under the rubric of 'intangible cultural heritage' according to the definition stated in the 2003 *Convention*, and the specific characteristics associated therewith. There continue to be several

common misunderstandings with regard to the term:

- What appears confusing is that <u>intangible cultural heritage is, of course, only relatively intangible</u>: most ICH practices have tangible components (e.g. a procession may involve relics and shrines; a craftsman or woman has tools, materials and the objects that they create). What is important here is the agency of the ICH community, group or individual practitioner in making decisions relating to the care of the material objects that are part of their ICH practice. Often, conflicting interests and questions of power come to the surface when museums are custodians of these objects, but there are various opportunities for deepening partnerships between museums and ICH communities, groups or individual practitioners.

- <u>The contextual background information</u> relating to a certain item from the museum collection ('the story behind the object') is often described as 'intangible cultural heritage', but this interpretation differs from the interpretation in the 2003 *Convention*.

- <u>Oral history</u> interviews that are conducted, or the recordings thereof that are put on display in museums, are not in themselves manifestations of ICH, but are often considered as such. Oral history is a documentation and research methodology that *can* provide information on a certain ICH practice, but does not necessarily do so. Additionally, if oral history projects document practices from the past that are no longer performed today, or practices that are not situated in one of the five (*inter alia*) ICH domains, these do not fall under the rubric of ICH according to the UNESCO definition.

- <u>Audio-visual or digital material</u> (images, movies, music, voice recordings, etc.) can document a certain ICH practice, but merely collecting or displaying these materials – to enhance the visitor experience, for example – does not guarantee the actual safeguarding of the practices they document or portray, nor are these audiovisual or digital materials – however non-tangible they might be – in themselves intangible cultural heritage, according to the spirit of the definition of ICH provided by UNESCO.

Building knowledge and capacities with museum professionals and experts (and even more widely, among cultural heritage workers in general) was tackled by IMP throughout five international conferences and expert meetings between 2017 and 2019.

Secondly, when looking at the different safeguarding measures for ICH we can conclude that museums possess great skills in organising exhibitions on topics related to ICH which might deepen understanding of that ICH and how it functions in society, and assist in communicating this to larger audiences, that is to say, in promoting and raising awareness. They are also good at identifying, documenting and researching aspects of ICH, but find the <u>participatory aspects of ICH-safeguarding</u> substantially more difficult to implement:

- The participation of communities, groups and individuals in all safeguarding efforts relating to their heritage is a prerequisite, integral to safeguarding ICH, but it is time-consuming, which in turn makes it unattainable for many museums.
- The focus on objects/collections that has traditionally informed museum practice sometimes clashes with the people-oriented and participatory aspects of safeguarding ICH.
- Active community participation and community agency[30] is fundamental to safeguarding ICH, but participatory museology internationally is often still located on the margins of museum practice. Perceived barriers are numerous: there is, for example the question of sharing authority, of conflicting strategic agendas and of staff resistance, etc..[31]
- Additionally, with ICH, it is not so much about the participation of museum audiences or the museum public at large, e.g. by making exhibitions more experiential or visually attractive and engaging. Safeguarding ICH in the context of museums is about the active participation of those people who are *producers or bearers* of heritage, in museum actions.
- Participation requires museum staff to possess skills and attitudes that differ from the ones more traditionally associated with museum work. These skills have to do with managing long-term human interactions, processes of action learning, multi-stakeholder dialogues and mediation and sharing authority, as well as involving competences from the field of anthropological research.

Investigating these issues relating to the participatory aspects of ICH has been an essential part of the scope of IMP, and analysing the necessary professional skills and attitudes has been an integral part of the process. One of the international meetings focused particularly on this dimension of the ICH-paradigm.

And thirdly, on top of all the tasks of taking care of vast collections of objects that inspired their development, museums today are faced with a multitude of urgent challenges – from digitising to sustainability, professionalisation, collection development, acquisitioning and de-accessioning, challenges regarding illicit trafficking and restitution, the need for local, cross-sectoral and international co-operation, scientific research, infra-structural and museum storage issues, taking up a role in terms of education and wellbeing, monetary cutbacks from governments, an increasing need for self-sufficiency and the need to comply with the demands of commercial culture, etc.. Incentives to reflect on or develop new aspects of their work, such as ICH, therefore fade into the background (or in some cases can also be contested).

IMP hereby provided museum professionals and experts with concrete opportunities and incentives to reflect on the topic of ICH and their possible role(s) therein, and provided them with inspiration about the possibilities and opportunities that lie in the ICH approach, alongside – of course – inspiring each other and heritage workers at large (including ourselves) on ICH.

## On the way forward: the 'Third Space' or intersection approach

Through the resources IMP produced – a book, executive summaries in different languages, a toolkit and a declaration prepared by all the parties involved – the project brought forward a methodology at the interface of ICH and museums. This 'intersection methodology' balances out the 'preservation-approach' and the 'safeguarding-approach'.[32] Preservation is most closely related to traditional museum functions such as acquisition, collection management, object restoration and conservation. It aligns with traditional museum functions such as documenting and inventorying, activities that form one end of a spectrum in the intersection matrix [See Figures 1a and 1b]. The
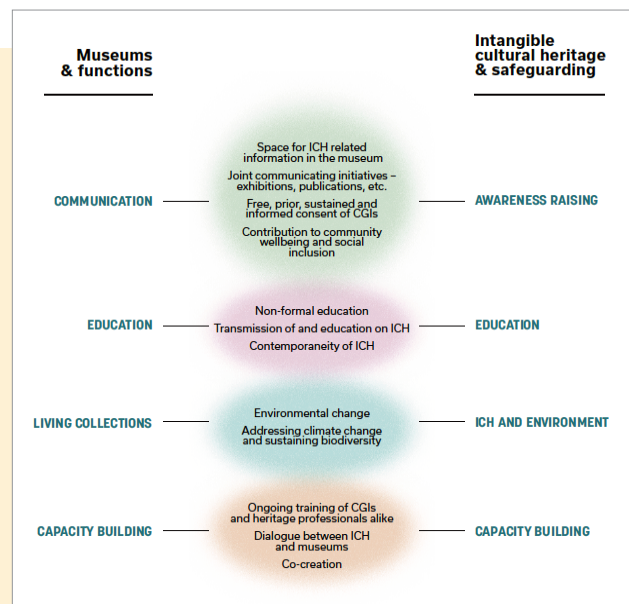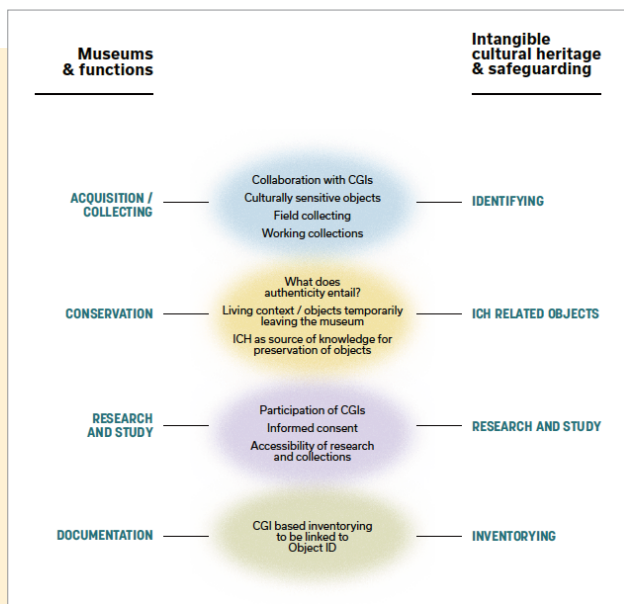
**Figures 1a and 1b**
The intersection matrix
(c) Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project, 2020.
This table illustrates the intersection matrix. On each left hand side, it shows museum functions. On the right-hand side it lists ICH safeguarding measures. In the centre of the matrix, fruitful interfaces emerge when both approaches are connected. This table is featured and explained in more detail in the IMP book *Museums and intangible cultural heritage: towards a third space in the heritage sector. A companion to discover transformative heritage practices for the 21st century.* p.72 onwards.

preservation approach is at odds with ICH, for which the keyword is 'safeguarding', as endorsed by the 2003 *Convention*. Safeguarding is specifically aimed at the living dimension of ICH, emphasising the need to protect and support ICH practices as vital aspects of communities made up of their bearers and practitioners. ICH is much less object-based, and often eludes more traditional classification methods. Safeguarding measures include identification, documentation and transmission, and figure at the other end of the spectrum in the intersection matrix.

Despite the conceptual differences between the (generally speaking) more object-oriented approach of museums and the emphasis on living, intangible aspects in ICH safeguarding contexts, a comparative analysis of both gives rise to a range of intersections. These intersections are situated in the centre of the matrix; the 'third space' where mechanisms related to museum functions and ICH safeguarding measures find common ground, and new approaches appear. It is here that various opportunities for future practices in heritage care can take root.

The field of research and study, for example, is present both in traditional museum practices and in

safeguarding activities for ICH. At the intersection of museums and ICH, traditional research methods are still employed, but with particular consideration for the premises of the 2003 *Convention*, such as the prior and informed consent and the active engagement of heritage communities, groups and individual practitioners. Considering the strong roots of ICH in society, it is crucial that during and after these research and study activities, ICH practices themselves, as well as any museum collections associated with them, and the outcomes of any research on either, are available to everyone involved, and to the wider public.

Another example of the intersectional methodology developed within IMP centres around museums' acquisition strategies, which are often object-based. This intersects with the identification of ICH which is impermanent in nature. The intersection between these two can include, among other things, the active practice of collecting 'in the field', i.e. gathering both intangible practices and their tangible correlates within the living contexts in which they occur, such as intangible heritage traditions that are still ongoing. This intersection also highlights the relevance of considering – from an acquisition or collection management point of view – the cultural sensitivity that characterises some instances

of ICH. While this issue is also present in relation to collections in general, especially when items originating in non-western cultures are in western institutions, the living dimension of ICH presents an additional challenge that requires the active consideration of potential ethical issues.

Through a mutual dialogue with all parties involved, IMP developed a platform embodied in these intersections that honours and connects both the spirit of the 2003 *Convention* and the contents of ICOM's *Code of Ethics for Museums*, for the benefit of everyone involved.

## Insights from the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project*

IMP started in Europe, as a result of experiences, insights and case studies on the topic of ICH and museums in its five partner countries. Ensuring that the contents and results of the project would be widely applicable and could resonate more broadly, NEMO (with a European-wide focus on museums), and ICOM and the ICH NGO Forum (both active worldwide, with a focus on museums and a focus on ICH respectively) were also involved from the onset. The potential of this type of collaboration – a learning network with geographic and thematic axes – is explored below, as one of the key insights coming out of this project. We set out what, with sharing, was striking in relation to sustainable development, and in relation to ethical questions and concerns, in the context of safeguarding ICH in collaboration with museums.

## On sustainable development

In the 'Preamble' to the 2003 *Convention*, ICH is cited as a guarantee of sustainable development. The domains of culture that are traditionally understood as being part of ICH are a source of cultural identity and diversity, which in turn can contribute to several domains listed among the major goals of the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs). For example, *knowledge and practices concerning nature* can help combat climate change and can increase communities' resilience to environmental transformations. Safeguarding and supporting traditional craft skills and activities often results in a socio-economic revival through new work opportunities, the increased resilience of communities, and a boost to tourism in a particular region. In addition, ICH practices

can provide a reflective space for negotiating troubled histories and disputes, thereby contributing to peace and post-conflict resolution.

Despite the UNESCO 2003 *Convention*'s mention of sustainable development in its preamble, and its prior references to this paradigm in earlier key texts,[33] the SDGs as we know them in their current form did not officially take effect until 2015,[34] leaving a significant gap between the intent of the 2003 *Convention* and the release of a structural framework for pursuing sustainable development. Moreover, culture is almost entirely absent from the overview of 17 Goals, each containing a list of targets and indicators. Its inclusion is limited to one target (11.4) within Goal 11 on 'Sustainable Cities and Communities' where it says that by 2030, we must *strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage*. This is to be achieved by following up on the indicator of *total expenditure* (*public and private*) *per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage*, taking into account factors such as different government levels and types of heritage (e.g. cultural, natural, mixed, etc.) being funded.[35] Efforts and outcomes towards achieving the Goals by 2030 are closely monitored by several entities and organisations, including the United Nations themselves. As yet, the UN's official progress reports do not mention any concrete points where activities for Target 11.4 have demonstrable outcomes. This may be partially due to the great complexity and diversity of the heritage field, especially considering the general sense in which it is defined in the formulation of Target 11.4. This leaves much room for interpretation, and complicates the development of consistent, trans-national monitoring strategies.[36]

In sum, we are confronted with a paradoxical situation in which ICH is widely recognised as both a vehicle and a catalyst of sustainable development, but where its concrete effects on humans are difficult to capture by data-driven, global-scale evaluation. At the same time, the principle investment in cultural heritage is expected to come from national and local government departments. Taking such a regional perspective allows for assessing more closely not only how we can evaluate, but also how we can safeguard and support cultural heritage, and ICH in particular, in relation to sustainable development.

**Plate 1**
Ecomuseo Casilino ad Duas Lauros, Italy.
Photo: Claudio Gnessi, 2019.
Through its Co.Heritage programme, the Ecomuseo Casilino ad Duas Lauros
Association (IT), supports newcomers to engage with their new place of residence.
Through sharing and uncovering their intangible heritage, they build up stronger
connections with the environment they inhabit, enhancing a sense of belonging,
overcoming prejudices and creating new bonds.

Over the course of the project, IMP explored approaches in which this goal left its global platform in the short term to return to the basics: communities, groups and individuals involved in the practice, safeguarding and transmission of ICH[37], with a particular emphasis on the mediating role of museums. Indeed, *as museums are at the nexus between tradition, innovation and communities, they have a part to play in nurturing sustainable futures and to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing*[38] (Plate 1).

In its focus and activities, IMP closely followed UNESCO's *Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, such as the principle on the inclusion of heritage communities: *All interactions with the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals who create, safeguard, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage should be characterised by* **transparent** *collaboration, dialogue, negotiation and consultation, and contingent upon their* **free, prior, sustained and informed consent**[39] (Ethical Principle 4/12). As outlined by Marc Jacobs, this principle goes beyond participatory paradigms by highlighting the requirements of mutual respect for, and active consultation with, heritage communities, groups and individuals, and through acquiring informed consent.[40]

Moreover, stemming from the IMP laboratory, we also learn from what Europe has to offer in this respect: there is the interesting notion of 'heritage community' borrowed from the Council of Europe 2005 *Framework Convention on the Value of Heritage for Society*.[41] A Flemish appropriation and redesign of the notion of 'heritage community' shows promising applications:

> A 'heritage community' consists of organisations and people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage, which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.

According to Jacobs, *the underlying idea is that of a network of different actors, both (groups of) living human beings and institutions. One of the consequences is that some museums (networks) can, as organisations, be part of the (heritage) community, and this changes the perspectives, alliances and assemblages therein. It helps to think outside the "museum" or "community" boxes and helps to embrace co-design strategies and practices,*[42] being of the utmost interest in developing sustainability strategies.

Elaborating on these key concepts and approaches makes us aware not only of the sustainable potential of co-operation between museums and practitioners of intangible heritage, but also of ways in which intangible heritage can contribute to sustainability on a global scale (e.g. by sharing knowledge and insights). Through, for example, interaction and joint initiatives with the powerful media of communication, museums embody and provide solutions to pressing issues provided through ICH can be spread more widely.

## On ethical questions and concerns

The interaction of ICH and museums comes with many opportunities and future-oriented perspectives, but inevitably also with ethical questions, concerns and debates (Plate 2). This is in part due to the complex web of actors involved in the interplay of ICH and museums, such as heritage practitioners (be it communities, groups or individuals), heritage workers ranging from all types of organisations (museums, ICH organisations, etc.), policy makers from the local to the global level, NGOs, the general public, and others. In addition, this matter relates to the many social, cultural and economic

**Plate 2**
IMP Conference on ICH, museums and cultural policies (Mechelen, BE).
Photo: Sophie Nuytten, 2019.
In an IMP-co-creation, the spoken word artists from A.kult.E started a process of dialogue with the Africamuseum in Tervuren (BE). Through their performance, set up in interaction with the museum, they negotiated the contents of the museum and its colonial past.
Photo taken during the presentation of the co-creation.

*Convention*, state that they should *play a significant role in determining what constitutes threats to their intangible cultural heritage including the de-contextualisation, commodification and misrepresentation of it, and in deciding how to prevent and mitigate such threats*[43] (*Ethical Principle* 10/12). Encompassing (the safeguarding of) ICH in museum contexts raises some particular, additional complications. For example, many museums adopt a classificatory, object-based focus on tangible aspects of intangible cultural heritage which can give rise to the ICH becoming apparently 'frozen' in time. In such cases, heritage communities, groups and individuals can feel as if the semantic value of their heritage has become de-contextualised. In cases where power relations become unbalanced, for example where small groups or even individuals interact with large, institutionalised museums, this can be a negative experience, inducing a feeling of loss of ownership over the heritage they perform and value.

dynamics that characterise today's world and that also come to the forefront in discussions about sustainable development, globalisation and commercialisation.

Key actors in the shared space of ICH and museums are the communities, groups and individuals who are involved in performing, cherishing and transmitting ICH. Their significance is put front and centre by the 2003 *Convention*. The *Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage*, connected to the 2003

Similar issues can occur when heritage communities, groups and individuals originate from cultures other than the ones where the museums that display elements of their heritage are located, with the added problems of inter-cultural communication and understanding. The ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* states that *Museum collections reflect the cultural and natural heritage of the communities from which they have been derived. As such, they have a character*



**Figure 2**
The IMP toolkit
(c) Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project, 2020.
The IMP toolkit is available through www.ICHandmuseums.eu/en/imp-toolkit and includes introductory publications on the topic of ICH and museums, as well as practical tools and inspiring case studies.

beyond that of ordinary property, which may include strong affinities with national, regional, local, ethnic, religious or political identity.

While several of the above-mentioned concerns about ethics and inclusivity were already known in the fields of ICH and museums, some became more prominent over the course of IMP, such as the heated debates in Europe around de-colonising collections and questions of restitution. In order to accommodate debate on these matters, the project actively endorsed a dialogical approach in which the voices of all actors and stakeholders were represented and acknowledged. IMP developed, for example, a tool that can help identify the communities, groups and individuals who would need to be involved in a particular museum's work, and it can also help decide on their level of participation, and another tool that encourages reflection on conduct and methods in the process of safeguarding.[44]

## On the power of fostering learning networks and reciprocity

The efforts delivered by IMP have been rewarding in multiple ways. On the one hand, of course – as projects are vehicles for 'tangible' results – it has successfully delivered a series of intended outputs:

- The expertise, knowledge and inspiration gathered form the basis of the book and an executive summary in five languages, entitled *Museums and intangible cultural heritage*: *towards a third space in the heritage sector. A companion to discover transformative heritage practices for the* 21*st century*.[45]
- The creation of an *online toolkit* [Figure 2], available on www.ICHandmuseums.eu/en/IMP-toolkit, that serves as an open knowledge-sharing repository with inspirational and methodological tools for museums to engage with, and support communities, groups and individual practitioners in safeguarding their ICH.

On the other hand, and probably more significant in the long run, IMP has been a vehicle driving more 'intangible' effects as well: impacting on growing understanding, interfacing multiple perspectives and approaches, and by doing so, impacting the course of the 'heritage paradigm' and heritage practice in a more general sense. The most tangible outcome in which this is embodied is the *Declaration on the dynamic engagement between*

a multiplicity of actors from the fields of museums and intangible cultural heritage[46] with which the multi-annual project concluded its final symposium in Brussels in 2020 (see Appendix 1). Being able to produce this shared declaration after several years of co-operation is a meaningful result in itself. It illustrates how the organisations involved, having entered the co-operation process and coming from different parts of the heritage sector, have been able to work across boundaries, formulating a shared network point of view.

From its outset, IMP aspired to bring together as many actors as possible from the fields of museums and intangible heritage, crossing boundaries literally (of countries) and figuratively (of different sectors in the heritage field). One critical success factor in reaching this goal, appears to have been the 'learning network' approach by which the process has been moulded. The partners co-ordinating this process acted as 'system conveners' according to Etienne Wengers' theory of learning in 'landscapes of practice'. System conveners act to reconfigure the landscape by forging new learning partnerships across traditional boundaries.[47]

In practice, this took shape through the layout of the activities and the journey IMP has completed. This included the organisation of five events: one in each partner country, focusing on building the capacity of all the parties involved, and on trans-national mobility. It did so by organising international conferences and expert meetings in each of the partner countries. These events included keynotes, the development of position papers, the presentation of over 60 inspiring examples of work by museum professionals, along with workshops, debates and panels with ICH practitioners. In the run up to these events, five calls for projects were published, targeting practitioners of ICH who were given the opportunity (and budget) to collaborate with a museum of their choice.

These international meetings were conceived to function simultaneously as networking occasions for cultural heritage professionals and served the overall goals of exploring the variety of approaches, interactions and practices of ICH in museums. They fostered the exponential development of new cross-sectoral connections that focus on safeguarding ICH, in and with museums, as well as creating and sharing knowledge and expertise.

Underlying and supporting IMP's journey, and adding to the networking layout of the aforementioned activities, was the joint commitment of a group of intermediary heritage organisations and heritage workers, in this case situated all over Europe. Each of them networks in their own national context. Working as intermediary heritage organisations[48] developing their roles as heritage brokers,[49] they each sensitised, activated and involved a series of players in their respective networks, incorporating existing contacts and introducing new ones, facilitating the multiplication of connections that are of the utmost value to this type of collaboration.

Adding to the axes of geographically-based intermediary organisations, another dimension of thematically oriented international networks around museums has been set up by including ICOM and NEMO; and around ICH by including the ICH NGO Forum of accredited NGOs in relation to the 2003 *Convention* in IMP. On top of that, we had moral support from the UNESCO Secretariat's Living Heritage Entity over the course of IMP. After several years of working together, expressing, listening and exchanging perspectives, challenges and possible approaches, solutions and alternatives, the networks operating in the ICH field on the one hand, and in the museum field on the other, have grown much closer, tackling challenges and uncovering opportunities together.

The methodology of combining mediation and cultural brokerage with the learning network approach has been the best way of realising the underlying aims of IMP: to foster new connections across traditional boundaries, providing for contact zones and immersive activities for the safeguarding of ICH and museums' work.

## Conclusion

IMP aspired to inspire, crossing boundaries and overcoming challenges through collaboration (Plate 3). The project enabled mediation processes to create new learning partnerships across boundaries, providing contexts for contact zones and the integration of the safeguarding of ICH and museums' work. In doing so, it allowed the coming about of reciprocal understanding of different methods, possibilities and approaches, and it fostered fruitful interfaces between museums' activity and ICH. It created, if not a 'free space', then at least a 'safe space' by offering an experimental zone in which diverging communities of practice from museums and ICH within the larger 'heritage sector' (however institutionally adjacent) could explore the variety of approaches, interactions and practices that come about and blossom when ICH and museums connect. In doing so, IMP yielded enhanced relations of trust and reciprocity in a learning network revolving around the intertwining of ICH and museums. The shared journey and its experience of co-operation, encounter and exchange, unlocked a so-called 'Third Space', and forged new learning partnerships across traditional boundaries, reconfiguring the landscape co-operatively. The main outcome of IMP is probably this learning network around ICH and museums that continues evolving, ensuring open access and reaching out to new partners and perspectives, who feel inspired to join the journey. ▣



**Plate 3**
IMP 2020 Concluding Symposium.
Photo: Sophie Nuytten, 2020.
The IMP Concluding Symposium *Museums and Intangible Heritage Sector: towards a third space in the heritage sector* (February 2020, Brussels), brought together stakeholders from the fields of intangible heritage and museums - heritage practitioners, museum professionals, policy makers, academics and representatives of trans-national networks - sharing key findings, future-oriented recommendations and methodologies.

〈Appendix 1〉

## DECLARATION ON THE DYNAMIC ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN A MULTIPLICITY OF ACTORS FROM THE FIELDS OF MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

<u>Preamble</u>

Taking into consideration, among others:
- the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), its related *Operational Directives and Ethical Principles*
   *and their focus on the living heritage, being constantly transmitted and recreated by communities, groups and individuals in response to their contexts, providing people with a sense of identity and continuity, forming an important mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development;*
- the ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums*
   *and the professional standards and principles it sets, as well as its emphasis on the use of museum collections to promote human well-being, social development, tolerance, and respect by advocating multisocial, multicultural and multilingual expression;*
- the UNESCO *Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society* (2015)
   *and the importance of taking into account the diversity of museums and their collections, as well as of their approaches and practices, and the growing emphasis on the social role of museums that it underlines;*
- the *FARO Framework Convention on the value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (2005) *and the Council of Europe's Resolution on safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe* (2019)
   *and the promotion of a broader understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society at the heart of a new vision for sustainable development, as well as the recommendation to enhance intangible cultural heritage policies and measures to their full potential, and to provide guidance to the multiple actors that are emerging across Europe committed to safeguarding intangible heritage;*
- the UN Sustainable Development Goals
   *and their potential to address the two main challenges faced by the society: the impacts of climate change and increasing inequality across and within countries;*
- and the achievements of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* (2017-2020).

1   With this Declaration we, the undersigned, express insights and hopes and share **inspiration** in **relation** to the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of communities, groups and individuals, through and together with museums.
   In the spirit of the collaboration that underpins this Declaration, it is composed **as an invitation**, as **a path to be explored**.
   Its contents are subject to an **ongoing work in progress**, namely the **dialogue** between all parties involved in safeguarding today's, and therefore tomorrow's, (intangible) cultural heritage. A work in progress that is taking place at the very **local**, and at the same time at **national** and **European levels**, as well as **beyond these borders**. This dialogue involves many **passionate amateurs, volunteers and professionals from both the fields of intangible cultural heritage and museums**. They strive for a sustainable future in which the heritage they cherish can thrive and flourish.

2    Intangible cultural heritage and museum practices alike, **connect people, as well as past, present and future**. Both are in **continuous change**, as a result of the interaction with society at large. They have continuously **transformed** and continue to fulfil, among others, significant **social, economic, creative and emotional roles** in people's lives.

3    We are well aware of the fact that there are **numerous museums that have long since included the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage into their practices**. We are also conscious of the fact that there are many still **looking for ways in which to engage with the participatory and future-oriented approaches** that are central to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. This might mean **enriching existing museum skills** in order to adjust them to the needs of the communities, groups and individuals that embody intangible cultural heritage.

4    **Tangible and intangible cultural heritage are intrinsically linked**. The care for material culture might be the most obvious point of convergence that comes to mind when imagining intangible heritage and museums. But this only represents one of the many ways in which **shared concerns and aspirations of the actions in museums and in intangible cultural heritage can be jointly addressed**. A multitude of other opportunities, ranging from strengthening the relation with society by broaching new topics, to decolonising perspectives on heritage, innovating governance systems, exchanging expertise and fostering curatorial cooperation, and the collective usage of physical resources are possible.

5    **All involved have differing but equal and complementary (levels of) capacity** in relation to the care for intangible heritage. It is therefore all the more **worthwhile to pool these existing skillsets and know-how**, for the common purpose of safeguarding this heritage, and by doing so, **develop newly applicable expertise**.

6    Experimenting with and developing the interactions and engagements between museums and intangible cultural heritage presents **great potential to address pressing issues in today's world** in innovative ways, and **to contribute to the identification and implementation of sustainable solutions**. At the same time, it promotes (cultural) diversity and contributes to building bridges across and between sectors.

7    We believe that **museums are privileged spaces for contributing to the safeguarding of intangible heritage**. They are among the first-choice institutions for **supporting practitioners of intangible cultural heritage** with the preservation, care, sensitisation and promotion of their heritage. They have a **vital interest in contextualizing and bringing together all aspects and types of cultural heritage**. Their competences in relation to heritage care and mediation, and their experience in collaborating with different types of actors, ensure that they can **contribute to highlighting the value(s) and relevance of intangible heritage**.

8    We acknowledge the fact that there are **many other parties involved in the care for intangible heritage**, and that real transformation of common approaches and discourses can only occur if and when all involved are prepared to **improve, mutate, dynamize or adapt that which is long seen as a given**.

9    Having experienced **surprising and extraordinary examples of collaboration between museums and practitioners of intangible heritage**, that have joined forces with an eye on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, we share with you what has struck us most:
     - Practitioners of intangible cultural heritage (communities, groups and individuals) and museums alike show great courage by trying to cross thresholds, and by expressing their willingness to cooperate, as this might be overwhelming at times.
     - Investing time, care and adequate funding, if not evident, is rewarding. Different levels and types of

engagement and collaborations will serve different purposes, that are all of importance when pursuing the viability of the intangible heritage concerned.

- An open attitude and the readiness to question yourself, and a spirit of mutual respect and reciprocity, is a key starting point. The sooner all parties get together, the more successful the collaboration will prove. Expressing readiness to engage in transformative processes is of great value.
- Advisory and mediation work is not unidirectional: practitioners of intangible cultural heritage and museums alike can benefit from the expertise of the other.
- As living and evolutive places, museums offer a space to explore and better understand yesterday's and today's reality. They seek new and effective ways to respond to changing needs. Their responsibility towards society, democratisation and inclusiveness, ensures that what practitioners of intangible cultural heritage are passionate about, is of interest. At the same time, the latter can find a space to reflect on their practice in (the process of collaborating with) museums, and have a platform to engage with those who are curious to find out more.

10 We strongly feel the need to stress that **intangible cultural heritage is connecting people**, from the very local level to the European and beyond. It connects the past, present and future, and it is strongly affiliated with the sense of **belonging, well-being** and **cultural identities** of people. Intangible heritage can be a valuable resource in relation to developing **social cohesion, economy**, and **sustainability**. Museums can act as fora, offering to the public a better understanding of these mechanisms.

11 Therefore, **we urge all policy levels to support actions that bring together museums and the communities, groups and individuals engaged in practices of intangible cultural heritage**. We stress the importance of **providing opportunities, space and financial incentives** for them to collaborate, so that they can **strengthen each other**, in a mutual quest to face present and future societal issues and challenges. Room for education, training, transnational cooperation and exchange are crucial to strengthen the capacities of all involved.

On our path towards a **growing number of connections and collaborations – diverse in form, shape, complexity and intensity – between practitioners of intangible heritage (communities, groups and individuals) and museums**, we invite all individuals and organizations involved in safeguarding this heritage, to walk along. We won't map out the road, but we have pointed out some interesting directions that deserve to be further explored. And we are ready to continue on this journey with you.

# On behalf of those engaged in the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project:

**\* The IMP project partner organisations and its Steering Group members:**
- Workshop intangible heritage Flanders | Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed (Belgium) | **Evdokia Tsakiridis, Jorijn Neyrinck and Eveline Seghers**
- Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage | Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland (the Netherlands) | **Sophie Elpers**
- MCM-CFPCI | Maison des Cultures du Monde-Centre Français du Patrimoine Culturel Immatériel (France) | **Séverine Cachat**
- SIMBDEA | Società Italiana per la Museografia e I beni Demoetnoantropologici (Italy) | **Valentina Lapiccirella Zingari**
- VMS | Swiss Museums Association | Verband der Museen der Schweiz (Switzerland) - **Cornelia Meyer**

**\* & the members of the IMP Think Tank:**
- NEMO - Network of European Museum Organisations - **David Vuillaume and Julia Pagel**
- ICOM - International Council of Museums - **Afşin Altaylı**
- ICH NGO Forum - **Reme Sakr and Meg Nömgård**

- **Hendrik Henrichs** (University of Utrecht)
- **Marc Jacobs** (University of Antwerp, and UNESCO Chair on Critical Heritage Studies and the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
- **Jorijn Neyrinck** (Workshop intangible heritage Flanders)
- **Rosario Perricone** (Museo internazionale delle marionette Antonio Pasqualino)
- **Florence Pizzorni** (General Curator of Heritage at the French Ministry of Culture, assigned as scientific director to the foundation for the memory of slavery)
- **Isabelle Raboud-Schüle** (Musée Gruérien Bulle and Swiss Museums Association)
- **Albert van der Zeijden** (Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage)

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> - the speakers that were engaged in the conferences and expert meetings through key notes and position papers;
> - the authors of and contributors to the IMP-publication: *Museums and intangible cultural heritage: towards a third space in the heritage sector. A companion to discover transformative heritage practices for the 21st century.*

DECLARATION ON THE DYNAMIC ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN A MULTIPLICITY OF ACTORS FROM THE FIELD
OF MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

PRESENTED ON THE OCCASION OF THE CONCLUDING SYMPOSIUM OF THE *INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND MUSEUMS PROJECT*

*BRUSSELS*
*26.02.2020*

# ENDNOTES

1   The notion of 'third space' was introduced by Jonathan Rutherford, 1990, in 'Interview with Homi Bhabha: The Third Space' in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. According to Homi Bhabha, it is *a space which enables other positions to emerge and which displaces the histories that constitute it and sets up new structures of authority ...*

2   Ibid.

3   Janet Blake, 2009. 'UNESCO's 2003 Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage. The implications of community involvement in 'safeguarding' in Smith and Akagawa (eds) *Intangible Heritage*, eds.: p.45.

4   Richard Kurin, 2004. 'Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in the 2003 UNESCO Convention: a critical appraisal' in *Museum international* LVI, no. 1-2: p.12.

5   These other international partners are ICOM – International Council of Museums, and the ICH NGO Forum.

6   Geoffrey Lewis, 2004. 'The Role of Museums and the Professional Code of Ethics' in Patrick Boylan (ed) *Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook*: pp.1-2.

7   Susan Pearce, 2010. 'The collection process and the founding of museums in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' in Pettersson et al (eds) *Encouraging collections mobility – a way forward for museums in Europe*: pp.12-32.

8   Léontine Meijer-van Mensch and Peter van Mensch, 2010. 'From disciplinary control to co-creation – collecting and the development of museums as praxis in the nineteenth and twentieth century' in Pettersson et al (eds) op cit.: p.33.

9   Lewis, 2010. 'The Role of Museums': pp.1-2; Meijer-van Mensch and van Mensch, 'From disciplinary control': pp.33-53: André Desvallées and François Mairesse, 2010. *Key concepts of Museology:* pp.56-60.; Nicholas Thomas, 2016. *The return of curiosity. What museums are good for in the 21st century*: p.26.

10  Meijer-van Mensch and van Mensch, op cit: p.36.

11  Julia D. Harrison, 2005. 'Ideas of museums in the 1990s' in Gerard Corsane (ed) *Heritage, Museums and Galleries. An introductory Reader*: p.43.

12  Kaija Kaitavuori, 2010. 'Open to the public – the use and accessibility of the object for the benefit of the public' in Pettersson et al (eds), op cit: p.268.

13  Harrison, op cit.: pp.44-45; Kaitavuori, op cit: p.266.

14  To name and cite just one of them: *The preservation and presentation of tangible heritage continue to be a defining feature, if not the defining feature, of a museum*, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2015. 'Inside the museum: curating between hope and despair: POLIN Museum of the History of the Polish Jews' in *East European Jewish Affairs* 45, no. 2-3: p.227.

15  Additional suggested reading: Sharon Macdonald and Helen Rees Leahy (eds.), 2015. *The International Handbook of Museum Studies* or Randolph Starn, 2005. 'A Historians' Brief Guide to New Museums Studies' in *American Historical Review* 110, no. 1: pp.68-98.

16  *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*, 2004.

17  'Development of the Museum Definition according to ICOM Statutes (2007-1946)', accessed April 7, 2020, http://archives.icom.museum/hist_def_eng.html .

18  *The 'Shanghai Charter' International Council of Museums*, accessed April 7, 2020, https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Shanghay_Charter_Eng.pdf

19  In 2004 ICOM also dedicated an issue of their *ICOM News Magazine* to this General Assembly on the subject of museums and intangible heritage and published a retrospective about the General Assembly.

20  *The 'Seoul Declaration', International Council of Museums*, accessed April 7, 2020, https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOMs-Resolutions_2004_Eng.pdf

21  These are paragraphs 6, 8 and 9 of the *Seoul Declaration*.

22  *ICOM Code of Ethics*, 1.

23  *ICOM Code of Ethics*, 11.

24  UNESCO, 2018. *Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage,* item 109.

25  '2015 Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections', UNESCO, Accessed April 7, 2020, unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/museums/recommendation-onthe-protection-and-promotion-of-museums-and-collections

26  Janet Blake, 2018. 'Museums and Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. Facilitating Participation and Strengthening their Function in Society' in *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* 13, no.1: p.28.

27  European Commission, 2014. *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of the Regions. Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage from Europe*, 2.

28  European Parliament, 2015. *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe,* 3 paragraph H.

29  Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, 2019. *Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe*, 3.

30  Referring also to the agency of ICH groups and individual ICH practitioners.

31  Piotr Bienkowski, 2014. *Communities and Museums as Active Partners: emerging learning from the Our Museum initiative*: p.5.

32  Nicolic Đerik, Tamara et al. (eds), 2020. *Museums and intangible cultural heritage: towards a third space in the heritage sector. A companion to discover transformative heritage practices for the 21$^{st}$ century* (Bruges: Workshop Intangible Heritage Flanders): p.73.

33  For example, the UNESCO *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of* 2001 (http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13179&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

34  For information on the Millennium Development Goals, see https://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/.

35  For a full overview of Goal 11 and its targets and indicators, see https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg11

36  Luigi Petti et al., 2020. 'Cultural heritage and sustainable development targets: a possible harmonisation? Insights from the European perspective' in *Sustainability* 12, no. 3: p.926.

37  Valentina Lapiccirella Zingari, 2020. 'Sustainable development: why is culture missing?' in Nicolic Đerik, Tamara et al, (eds) *Museums and intangible cultural heritage: towards a third space in the heritage sector. A companion to discover transformative heritage practices for the 21st century*, eds. (Bruges: Workshop Intangible Heritage Flanders): pp.57-58.

38  Afşin Altaylı, 'The social role of museums' in Tamara Nikolić Đerić et al. (eds) op cit.: p.45.

39  Ethical Principle 4/12: 'Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage', UNESCO, accessed April 7, 2020: https://ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866.

40  Marc Jacobs, 2020. 'CGIs and intangible heritage communities, museums engaged' in Tamara Nikolić Đerić et al. (eds) op cit.: p.39.

41  *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, 2005)*, Council of Europe. Accessed April 7, 2020, https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention.

42  Marc Jacobs, 'CGIs and intangible heritage communities' op cit: p.41.

43  Ethical Principle 10/12: *'Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage'*, UNESCO, accessed April 7, 2020: https://ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866.

44  'IMP-tool: Decide who to involve when working on ICH and on the Intensity of the collaboration', ICH&Museums Project, accessed April 7, 2020, https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/toolbox/brainstorm-decide-who-to-involve-when-working-on-ich-and-on-the-intensity-of-the-collaboration, and 'IMP-tool: ICH and Museums: ethics, deontology, instruments', ICH&Museums Project, accessed April 7, 2020, https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/imp-toolkit/search/content/ich-museums-ethics-deontology-instruments.

45 Available online: https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/toolbox/book-museums-and-intangible-cultural-heritage.

46 'Declaration on the dynamic engagement between a multiplicity of actors from the fields of museums and intangible cultural heritage', ICH&Museums Project, accessed April 7, 2020, https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/toolbox/imp-declaration.

47 Etienne Wenger-Trayner et al., 2015. *Learning in landscapes of practice: boundaries, identity, and knowledgeability in practice-based learning*: p.97.

48 *In casu*, the IMP partner organisations and its Steering Group members were Workshop intangible heritage Flanders, Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed (Belgium), Evdokia Tsakiridis, Jorijn Neyrinck and Eveline Seghers; Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage, Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland (the Netherlands), Sophie Elpers; MCM-CFPCI, Maison des Cultures du Monde-Centre Français du Patrimoine Culturel Immatériel (France), Séverine Cachat; SIMBDEA, Società Italiana per la Museografia eI beni Demoetnoantropologici (Italy), Valentina Lapiccirella Zingari; VMS, Swiss Museums Association, Verband der Museen der Schweiz (Switzerland) - Cornelia Meyer. The associated international networking partners were: NEMO - Network of European Museum Organisations - David Vuillaume and Julia Pagel; ICOM - International Council of Museums - Afşin Altaylı; ICH NGO Forum - Reme Sakr and Meg Nömgård. Additional thinktank members supporting the project throughout were Hendrik Henrichs (University of Utrecht); Marc Jacobs (University of Antwerp, and UNESCO Chair on Critical Heritage Studies and the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel); Rosario Perricone (Museo internazionale delle marionette Antonio Pasqualino); Florence Pizzorni (General Curator of Heritage at the French Ministry of Culture, assigned as scientific director to the foundation for the memory of slavery); Isabelle Raboud-Schüle (Musée gruérien Bulle and Swiss Museums Association); Albert van der Zeijden (Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage).

49 Marc Jacobs, Jorijn Neyrinck and Albert van der Zeijden (eds), 2014. Special issue of *Volkskunde. Tijdschrift over de cultuur van het dagelijks leven: Brokers, Facilitators and Mediation. Critical Success (F)Actors for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* 115, no. 3. See also 'mediators' or 'cultural brokers' mentioned in the *Operational Directives of* the UNESCO 2003 *Convention,* OD170 and 171.

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