

UNESCO Memory of the World Initiative to Safeguard Documentary Heritage at Risk *Call for proposals*

Context

UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme's mission is to facilitate preservation of the world's documentary heritage, enable its universal access and enhance public awareness of its significance. Anchored on the 2015 UNESCO **Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form**, the issue of preserving documentary heritage allows for a further linkage to other international development agreements, notably the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030**, which provides a useful mechanism for discussing possible policy actions for the preservation of documentary heritage.

This linkage allows to raise awareness among policymakers, memory institutions and other global stakeholders on the need of incorporating a disaster management approach into the legislation and practices for the sustainable preservation of documentary heritage. In this context and with the support of the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, the Memory of the World Programme has implemented projects that advance on promoting disaster management strategies into safeguarding practices through policy development, capacity building and enhanced international cooperation.

Nevertheless, given escalating global challenges, conflicts, wars and environmental issues, to which Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States are especially vulnerable to, the Programme has launched the UNESCO Memory of the World Initiative to Safeguard Documentary Heritage at risk, focusing on responding to localized needs and issues. The initiative aims to support pressing on the ground issues by granting financial aid to local, national, regional, and international projects based on a global call for proposals.

Geographical scope

- The Call for proposals is global in scope. However, special attention and priority will be given to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Proposals from other countries are expected to be received. Nevertheless, proposals from developed countries should have a focus on and be beneficial to LDCs and SIDS (e.g. piloting applications, including the use of Artificial Intelligence, that can enhance digital preservation of documentary heritage at risk in LDCs and SIDS).

Scope of the projects

The Call for proposals covers the following activities in three main areas, which are not exhaustive:

1. Mitigation and Preparedness

- Operational activity for preservation of documentary heritage (e.g. digitization, cataloguing, etc.)
- Capacity building (e.g. workshops, training, expert exchange to support assessment, planning and training.)
- Research activity for emergency preparedness.

- Development of disaster plans.
- Deployment of early warning system.
- Awareness-raising and advocacy.
- Measures to mitigate the impact of climate change and/or reduce carbon footprint.

2. Response

- Rescue of damaged documentary heritage.
- Emergency digitisation capacity building.
- Deployment of rapid assessment and advisory missions.
- Documentation and monitoring.

3. Recovery

- Equipment for preservation/digitisation of documentary heritage.
- Activity in a post-disaster/conflict environment.
- Documenting disasters, generating social memory by community engagement.

Duration of project

The activities described in the proposal must cover a **minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 18 months** of implementation.

Financial modality

An estimated 10 to 20 grants will be distributed under this Call. Amounts allocated will range from a **minimum of USD \$15,000 up to a maximum USD \$70,000**.

Eligibility

The Call for proposals is open to legal entities such as:

- Memory Institutions. These include but are not limited to archives, libraries, museums and other educational, cultural and research organizations.
- Professional associations and networks, academic and research institutions, NGOs, and other documentary heritage holding entities.

Please be notified that the candidates, once selected, are required to comply with the “General terms and conditions for implementation partners” in the [Implementation Partners Agreement](#) with UNESCO.

Requirements

Selected implementing partners should:

- Have at least 2 years of proven work in the field of identification, preservation, accessibility or awareness raising of documentary heritage.
- It is beneficial if the candidate has experience in a disaster risk reduction (mitigation, preparation, response and/or recovery) in any field that would make a significant contribution to the sustainable preservation of documentary heritage (cultural heritage, environmental, etc).

- Display basic managerial and record-keeping competencies, as well as appropriate internal control procedures.
- Have proof of legal status of an entity independent to UNESCO
- Have a sound financial status: applicants must prove they have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the project period.
- Have the capacity to:
 - Manage the volume of funds and implement the agreed-upon activities in an efficient and effective manner.
 - Participate in planning, monitoring, and evaluation activities (the latter, if applicable).
 - Assign a staff to carry out or lead the implementation of the project (if applicable).

Application process

Candidates shall:

- Duly complete the project proposal template without omitting information in the indicated fields. Incomplete applications cannot be processed. Project proposals must be submitted to mowifit@unesco.org no later than **16 February 2024 at 23:59 CET**.
- It is desirable, where possible, for project documents to be endorsed by national Memory of the World committees or, where absent, by National Commissions for UNESCO.
- Evaluation of proposals will be conducted by UNESCO through the Memory of the World Programme. The Preservation Sub-committee of the UNESCO Memory of the World International Advisory Committee (IAC)¹ will be called upon to provide technical advice as part of the evaluation teams.
- Selected projects shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of a signed [Implementation Partners Agreement](#) with UNESCO.
- Selected partners will be fully responsible for the implementation of the project in the framework of the Memory of the World Initiative to Safeguard Documentary Heritage at Risk, including its associated risks.
- Partners will be financially responsible for the utilization of funds granted by UNESCO.

Reporting

Selected partners shall submit to UNESCO the following documentation during the timeframe of the partnership:

1. A detailed finalized work plan of all activities for final approval after selections.
2. A progress report on the implementation of the project to monitor the achievement of targets, including data on the documentary heritage preserved and challenges faced during implementation.
3. A final report including the above data and overall conclusions on achievements and challenges.

The dates of submission for the documentation will be determined following the proposed timeline and workplan.

From the above, partners will share knowledge, including achievements, overall experience, risks encountered, and lessons learned across the global Memory of the World network by:

¹ [1] IAC is the the peak body responsible for advising UNESCO on the planning and implementation of the Programme as a whole. More about: <https://www.unesco.org/en/memory-world/iac-committee>



- Participating in meetings and workshops planned within the wider Memory of the World Programme activities, such as the 4th Memory of the World Global Policy Forum, if requested.
- Providing photographs and/or multimedia material, as well as written content as requested, for the dissemination of information through UNESCO's communication channels.

Key partners

- The Preservation Sub-Committee of the UNESCO Memory of the World International Advisory Committee (IAC)
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT)

For more information on the Memory of the World Programme, please consult the official website at <https://www.unesco.org/en/memory-world>