



GET INTO... the 2005 Convention

for the Protection and Promotion of
Diverse Cultural Expressions

The 2005 UNESCO [Convention for the Protection and Promotion of Diverse Cultural Expressions](#) is a commitment at the global level to culture, in recognition of its importance for creating a rich, varied world and driving sustainable development.

The Convention provides a framework by which governments can strengthen international cooperation and work towards policy provisions that will protect and promote cultural diversity, as well support the creators, knowledge-holders, and institutions that make and share culture.

Why is it important?

Promoting the diversity of cultural expressions is about allowing all people to express and to share their ideas, identity, traditions, and values, as well as access those of others. The freedom to create, disseminate, distribute and draw on cultural expressions can benefit all people in their development, but is too

often violated, especially in the case of disadvantaged communities and Indigenous peoples. Through its contribution to fulfilling the potential of individuals and societies, it is indispensable for peace and security at the local, national, and international levels.

Bolstering creativity and the creative sector can lead to sustainable development and poverty reduction, by allowing for more cultural goods to be produced and distributed. It involves building capacity via the exchange of information, experience, and expertise, and facilitating mobility while strengthening international networks.

Protecting and promoting diverse cultural expressions requires freedom of thought, expression, and information. Culture flourishes in a framework of democracy, tolerance, social justice and mutual respect between peoples and cultures. This Convention represents a commitment to building this framework and fostering conditions where culture can fulfil its potential for individuals, communities, and nations.

Libraries are Essential!

Libraries and their staff have a key role in preserving and providing the widest possible access to culture. They can foster an environment where diverse cultural expressions are encouraged, valued, shared, and protected – an environment in which a strong creative economy can thrive.

Core values that the Convention upholds are also values that libraries champion and enable. These include freedom of information and expression, participatory democratic societies, linguistic diversity, the fundamental role of education, and recognition of the importance of the digital environment in education, creating and providing access to culture.

How it Works

Take Action: assess what activities, programmes, and collections your library offers your users and community which can facilitate the protection and promotion of diverse cultural expressions.

Governments commit to the Convention by ratifying it, or otherwise approving it, through their individual ratification or accession processes. Once they have done this, they are known as 'States Parties'. See IFLA's [guide to reading policy](#) for more on how this works.

Such states must then enact regulatory measures and programmes to implement the principles of the Convention. Such measures can include

providing public financial assistance, establishing and supporting public institutions, and encouraging involvement of public and private institutions, artists, and cultural professionals. Enabling libraries to contribute, IFLA argues, is a key part of this.

What are States Parties committing to do?

1. Promote Cultural Expressions

States Parties are required to create an environment which allows individuals and groups to create, produce, disseminate, distribute, and have access to their own cultural expressions. They also commit to working internationally to allow access to diverse cultural expressions from around the world.

They commit to paying special attention to the needs of women, disadvantaged communities, and Indigenous peoples in this work.

Finally, States Parties are required to recognize the important contribution of artists, others involved in the creative process, cultural communities, and organisations supporting this work. **This includes libraries.**

2. Protect Cultural Expressions

State Parties are required to identify and report on cultural expressions at risk of disappearing, under serious threat, or otherwise in need of urgent safeguarding.

As memory institutions, **libraries can contribute to identifying and preserving at-risk cultural expressions** through their material collections, as well as through engaging with their local community's history and heritage.

3. Education and public awareness

States Parties must encourage public understanding of the importance of diverse cultural expressions through support of educational and awareness-raising programmes.

As lifelong learning providers, **libraries can have a direct impact** here. Consider this commitment to education and public awareness-raising about diverse cultural expressions when planning activities for your library and/or when applying for funding.

Who's Who and How to Take Action

1. The Conference of Parties

This is the highest-level body of the Convention and is made up of all States Parties. It meets in ordinary session every two years. See the list of current States Parties [here](#).

Take Action: Check to see if your country has ratified the 2005 Convention. Find your national point-of-contact, as well as reports on their activities, [here](#).

If you do not live in a UNESCO Member State – The Convention is still open to accession by non-Member States of UNESCO and regional economic integration organisations.

2. The Intergovernmental Committee

The Committee is made up of representatives of 18 States Parties to the Convention, who are elected for a term of four years by the Conference of Parties. They meet annually to promote convention objectives and monitor implementation.

Take Action: Check if country is on the Intergovernmental Committee, access information on their contributions and activities, and find your national point-of-contact [here](#).

3. UNESCO Secretariat

Based at UNESCO Headquarters, the Secretariat assists the Conference of Parties and the Intergovernmental committee with reporting, document preparation, connecting with international partners (like IFLA), and promoting the Convention.

The International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD)

The Convention has established a fund to be used to support activities to protect and promote cultural diversity. The Intergovernmental Committee determines how these funds will be used.

The IFCD is partially made up of voluntary contributions made by Parties.

Take Action:

- You can learn more about the IFCD [here](#) and see your county's past contributions [here](#).
- Do you have a proposal that may qualify for funding? [Click here to see past funded project](#) and learn more about [how to apply here](#).

Collecting Data

UNESCO aggregates data on different sectors and governmental, private and non-profit organisations involved in the area of cultural expressions.

Periodic Reports

States are required to produce a report every 4 years on the policies and measures they have adopted and challenges they have faced.

Take Action: [Click here to check](#) if your country has submitted their 2020 annual report.

Begin to think about on how your library may be able to contribute to the next periodic report (2024) with the following actions:

- Plan for how the promotion and protection of cultural diversity can be integrated in your activities.
- When planning future activities, consider including monitoring and record-keeping processes that can aid in reporting.
- Email your [national point-of-contact](#). Discuss how your library's activities may be able to contribute to the next annual report. IFLA can help with this.

Policy Monitoring Platform

Explore the [Policy Monitoring Platform](#) to see what policies and measures are being implemented in your country and around the world.

The Benefit of an International Network

Although local action and national connections are important, international exchange is both mandated by the Convention and beneficial for all involved.

By participating in regional and international networks (like IFLA), library professionals can help with implementation of the 2005 Convention through projects that inspire dialogue, facilitate professional cultural exchange, share best practice, take part in training activities such as those that promote the use of new technologies, and explore opportunities for co-production and further collaboration.

Take Action: Let us know how IFLA can support your activities in promoting and protecting diverse cultural expressions.

If you have questions, ideas, or feedback, contact claire.mcguire@ifla.org

Action Checklist

- Assess what activities, programmes, and collections your library offers may relate to the protection and promotion of diverse cultural expressions

- Check to see if your country has ratified the 2005 Convention. Find your national point-of-contact, as well as reports on their activities [here](#).
- Check to see if country is on the Intergovernmental Committee and find your national point-of-contact [here](#).
- Learn more about the IFCD [here](#) and see your county's past contributions [here](#).
- [See past IFCD-funded projects](#) and learn more about [how to apply here](#).
- [Check](#) if your country has submitted their 2020 annual report.
- Think about on how your library may be able to contribute to the next periodic report (2024). Plan for how the promotion and protection of cultural diversity can be integrated in your activities and consider including monitoring and record-keeping processes that can aid in reporting.
- Email your [national point-of-contact](#). Discuss how your library's activities may be able to contribute to the next annual report. IFLA can help with this.
- Contact IFLA with ideas, questions, or feedback