

Terms of Reference for a UK National Commission for UNESCO Memory of the World Working Group

Name

The committee, which shall be known as the **UK National Commission for UNESCO (UKNC) Memory of the World Working Group**, and will operate within the framework and objectives specified in the General Guidelines of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme (MOTW) and also internal UKNC procedures and guidelines.

The geographical area of responsibility of the Working Group will be the United Kingdom.

Context

UKNC is an independent organisation which is the focal point for UK Government, civil society and UNESCO on policy and activities relating to UNESCO in the UK. UKNC's work is founded substantively on four Committees covering UNESCO's major programme sectors – Education, Natural Sciences, Culture, and Communication & Information.

Unique in the UN system, UNESCO has an international community of 194 National Commissions which act as partners of the Organization in its engagement with civil society.

The Working Group will be part of the Communications and Information (C&I) Committee. Other working groups of the C&I Committee are: Freedom of Expression, Media in the Public Interest and Information Society.

The vision of the Memory of the World Programme is that the world's documentary heritage belongs to all, should be fully preserved and protected for all and, with due recognition of cultural mores and practicalities, should be permanently accessible to all without hindrance.

The mission of the Memory of the World Programme is:

- To facilitate preservation, by the most appropriate techniques, of the world's documentary heritage.
- To assist universal access to documentary heritage.
- To increase awareness worldwide of the existence and significance of documentary heritage.

Role

The Working Group will be a working group of the UKNC Communications and Information (C&I) Committee. The Working Group will have the responsibility for the overall management and monitoring of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme in the UK and will:

- Work to preserve the documentary heritage of the UK and to improve access to it through establishing and maintaining the UK National Memory of the World Register
- Raise awareness of and promote the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme in the UK
- Encourage, coordinate, receive and assess nominations of documentary heritage from the UK before recommending a shortlist to the Memory of the World Regional and International Registers
- Develop a process with the UNESCO MOTW Secretariat, other relevant sectors, and the UK Permanent Delegation to UNESCO to coordinate UK nominations
- Work in close co-operation with governmental and non-governmental organizations in the UK to develop the National Register and contribute to the Regional and International Registers
- Encourage and seek government and private sector support or sponsorship for specific Memory of the World projects and activities in the UK, in accordance with relevant UKNC procedures
- Maintain regular contact with the Secretariat for the Memory of the World Programme and work in close collaboration with the Regional Memory of the World Committee
- Coordinate with international counterparts in the event of joint nominations
- Offer advice to applicants on the MOTW nomination process
- Input [as required] to the MOTW Secretariat in the Programme's its operations, implementation and evaluation
- Report regularly to the UKNC C&I Committee

Membership

- The Working Group shall [normally] have between five and ten members, including representatives from across the UK and members of sectoral Committees of the UKNC.
- Members will be nominated in their personal capacity, *ad hominem*, by the Working Group to be approved by the UKNC C&I Committee and ratified by the UKNC Board of Directors.
- Members are encouraged to draw from their access to colleagues and networks in-country and internationally, as well as their general expertise and policy background that can help in the progress of the Working Group's objectives.
- Members will be chosen on the basis of their knowledge of the field and on their ability to contribute to the achievement of the Working Group's objectives.
- Membership is on a voluntary basis. Reasonable expenses, including travel, accommodation and hospitality, incurred when conducting Working Group business will be reimbursed.

Composition of Working Group

The Working Group will have regard to the requirements for diversity of interests and expertise among its members and will also represent the interests of a number of stakeholders.

The Working Group may include individuals who fulfill more than one category in this sample list:

- A Member of the International Advisory Committee or the Regional Memory of the World Committee (if available).
- A professional from the traditional archival community.
- A professional from the traditional library community.
- A professional from the audiovisual archive and library community.
- A professional from the museum community.
- A professional with Conservation/Preservation expertise.
- An official from the government department responsible for heritage or culture (may attend in a representative rather than personal capacity).
- Other persons with relevant specialist skills or experience.

Term of Office

Appointment is for a period of three years with an option for further terms to ensure continuity. This renewal option is to be used with awareness of the need to balance continuity with the refreshment of the Committee.

Of the first Working Group, half will be appointed for an initial term of two years and the other half for four years. Thereafter, all appointments will be for three years.

When membership expires or vacancies occur, the Working Group will submit nominations for new members of the Committee to the UKNC C&I Committee.

Rules

Office Bearers

A Chairperson elected from the Working Group will be subject to approval by the UKNC C&I Committee and ratification by the UKNC Board of Directors. A Deputy Chair and a Rapporteur/Secretary shall be elected by the members of the Working Group from their ranks. Secretariat support may be provided by the UKNC.

Legal Responsibilities

The Working Group will not enter into any contractual arrangements between the owners and custodians of documentary heritage and commercial organisations.

Evaluation of Nominations

To form a panel to develop a set of assessment criteria and process in reviewing nominations received.

National Memory of the World Register in the UK

The Register will be compiled by the Working Group and maintained by the UKNC.

Meetings

There will normally be a minimum of two meetings held each year, but the main form of communication is electronic.

Quorum

Half the membership of the Working Group will constitute a quorum. A member is deemed to be present at the meeting if they participate through telephone or video-conference.

Wherever possible, decisions are taken by consensus, if this cannot be achieved, a decision by majority vote of the full committee is required, if necessary communicating electronically.

Minutes

Minutes of each meeting will be taken and will be available to the MOTW Secretariat and the UKNC.

Reporting

A formal annual report of the activities of the Committee will be provided to the MOTW Secretariat and the UKNC.

Amendments

Amendments to these Terms of Reference will be approved by the UKNC C&I Committee.

Adopted 30 April 2008