



UK National Commission for UNESCO



United Kingdom
National Commission for UNESCO



We work with

the UK's 150+ UNESCO sites and projects

as well as a dynamic network of experts working in UNESCO's field of competency



Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast UNESCO World Heritage Site in Northern Ireland is made up of some 40,000 massive black basalt columns sticking out of the sea Photo: jon_chica

Who are we?

We are the **UK National Commission for UNESCO (UKNC)**.

We support the UK's contribution to UNESCO and bring the benefits of UNESCO to the UK. We are the hub for all UNESCO-related matters in the UK.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) is the United Nations body responsible for coordinating international cooperation in education, science, culture and communication. Its goal is to help **prevent war by building the defences of peace in the minds of men and women**.

UNESCO works towards this goal by strengthening the ties between nations and societies through its international networks. It aims to ensure that each child has access to quality education, may grow and live in an environment rich in diversity and dialogue, can fully benefit from scientific advances, and can enjoy full freedom of expression.

Founded in 1946 by the UK government and established under Article VII of UNESCO's Constitution, we are a vital part of UNESCO's unique global network of 190+ national cooperating bodies known as National Commissions. We work to support the UK government's Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, and to strengthen the ties between the UK's educational, academic, scientific, cultural, creative and artistic communities and UNESCO's global programmes and policies.

We are an independent not-for-profit organisation, supported by grant funding from the UK government.

We have four core functions:

1. To provide expert, independent policy advice to the UK and devolved governments on UNESCO related issues.
2. To support the UK government's agenda to help UNESCO achieve its core goals.
3. To advise and assist individuals and institutions in the UK, and its' Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, on accessing UNESCO accreditation and prizes.
4. To support and enhance the value of the UK's 150+ UNESCO sites and projects.



At the heart of UNESCO for over 70 years - UNESCO was founded in London in November 1945. The UKNC was established in early 1946. UNESCO/Keystone Photo: UNESCO Archives

Our Advisory Services

We advise the UK and devolved governments on policy relating to education, science, culture and communication and information.

The range of UNESCO's global programmes and activities are substantial - from media literacy and the safety of journalists, protecting cultural heritage, gender equality, facilitating international cooperation in science, to driving forward and monitoring the Education 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goal targets. We work with experts across the UK to ensure the advice provided on UNESCO's programmes and activities is of the highest-quality and offers practical recommendations.

Our role is to:

- Provide independent advice to the UK government and devolved governments in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, and assess the merit of UNESCO's various programmes.
- Provide independent advice in the development of the UK government's policy on UNESCO's programmes, and support its agenda to help UNESCO achieve its core goals.
- Advise the UK Permanent Delegation to UNESCO during UNESCO's bi-annual Executive Board and the biennial General Conference.
- Represent the UK and advocate its priorities and needs at UNESCO meetings.
- Draw on the UK's expertise to contribute and help shape UNESCO's global policies and programmes and exchange expertise with its 195 Member States.

Our work helps to ensure that the UK and devolved governments attain maximum value from their UNESCO membership. It also demonstrates that by working with UNESCO, the UK and devolved governments can complement a wide range of policy areas including scientific innovation, community integration, tourism and the protection of our culture and environment.

All the advice we share with UNESCO is available to all on our website: www.unesco.org.uk.

We provide independent advice to the UK government and devolved governments in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.



Bradford is the world's first UNESCO Creative City of Film. The title bestows international recognition on the City as a world centre for film due to its rich film heritage, inspirational film locations, its film festivals and unique approach to learning. Photo: Bradford City of Film

Apply for UNESCO Accreditation and Prizes

We provide an **independent accreditation and recommendation service** for UK organisations and individuals seeking to become a UNESCO designation or applying for UNESCO Prizes.

Recognised internationally as shorthand for high-quality, the **UNESCO 'badge'** demonstrates to a national and international audience that a place is unique and of global significance and interest. UNESCO Prizes recognise the outstanding achievements of individuals and organisations that work to further UNESCO's goals. Our research shows that affiliating with UNESCO can help to attract funding, to broker local partnerships, engage the local community, forge international partnerships and build global visibility and influence.

We **advise and support** individuals and institutions in the UK, its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies to access UNESCO accreditation.

These include:

- UNESCO Biosphere Reserves
- The UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Network Programme
- UNESCO Creative Cities
- UNESCO Global Geoparks
- UNESCO Memory of the World Register
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites

We also advertise and support opportunities to apply for UNESCO Prizes, including the UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development and the L'Oréal for Women in Science Programme.

All UK applications are **independently peer reviewed** before they are recommended for submission to the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris. This process ensures all UK nominations sent to UNESCO are of the highest quality while providing the applicant with the specialist and tailored support they need.

All information on applying to become a UNESCO designation or applying for UNESCO Prizes, including our independent accreditation process, is available at www.unesco.org.uk/engage.

Affiliating with UNESCO can help to broker local partnerships, engage the local community, forge international partnerships and build global visibility.





Panoramic of Edinburgh Castle from Calton Hill. Edinburgh is UNESCO Creative City of Literature, and the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site
Photo: Shahid A Khan



Using the UNESCO Brand

UNESCO Patronage is a recognised mark of quality which symbolises the importance of an event or activity to UNESCO's aims and objectives, and can act as a mechanism to enhance quality and create value.

There are two levels of UNESCO's Patronage:

- Patronage granted by the **UK National Commission for UNESCO** for activities of national scope.
- Patronage granted by **UNESCO** for activities of significant international or regional scope.

Patronage is UNESCO's highest form of support. UNESCO's Patronage may be granted to a range of one-off activities, such as scientific forums, conferences, international days, prize awards, exhibitions, and other national and international events. Please note, UNESCO Patronage is not granted to any commercial enterprise.

All UK applications for UNESCO patronage are **independently peer reviewed** before they are recommended for submission to the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris. This process ensures all UK nominations sent to UNESCO are of the highest quality **while providing** the applicant with the specialist and tailored support they need.

More information on applying for UNESCO and UKNC patronage is on our website www.unesco.org.uk.



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Marble Arch Caves
Global Geopark



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Marble Arch Caves
UNESCO
Global Geopark

The Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark is the first cross-border Geopark anywhere in the world, bringing together communities from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Ian Sturdee, Supervisory Assistant. Photo: Matthew Rabagliati



Professor Alison Phipps, UNESCO Chair in Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts at the University of Glasgow, at a workshop with Ignite Theatre and Tawona Sitolé, Artist in Residence
Photo: Robin Mitchell

Supporting UNESCO in the UK

We support UNESCO designations in the UK, monitoring the value they obtain from their association with UNESCO and helping them achieve their full potential.

The UK is home to a diverse network of UNESCO designations and projects. From UNESCO Biosphere Reserves which act as model regions for sustainable development, to UNESCO Creative Cities which draw together vibrant creative communities using culture to make cities thrive, we help the UK's existing UNESCO projects and designations make the most of their UNESCO status.

We also support the UK's 150+ designations to collaborate with the global UNESCO network so they can access new programme, partnership and funding opportunities and influence key decision makers.

Our role is to:

- Raise the profile of the UK's 150+ UNESCO designations and projects.
- Disseminate information on UNESCO's news, international days, activities and programmes in the UK and globally through our popular Network Link newsletter, website and social media channels.
- Collect extensive data on the value of UNESCO to the UK and communicate this to key stakeholders throughout the UK and globally.
- Develop research programmes and activities to support the work of UNESCO designations in the UK.

Wider Value Project

We research the wider value of UNESCO designations and projects to the UK's social and economic well-being. We also examine how the UK's UNESCO designations help the UK support and meet its commitment to the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Based on our most recent comprehensive study, published in 2016, we found three core benefits of UNESCO membership in the UK:

- **Financial value:** UNESCO helped UK affiliated institutions and bodies to attract at least £100 million in additional income in one year.
- **Wider, non-financial value:** UNESCO designation is a recognised mark of world-class quality and a mechanism to enhance quality. By leveraging the UNESCO brand and collaborating with the global network, the UK's UNESCO projects can access new programme, partnership and funding opportunities and influence key decision makers.
- **Support for UK government policy:** UNESCO activity in the UK complements a broad portfolio of UK government and devolved government policies.

More information on our Wider Value project is available at <https://www.unesco.org.uk/publications/>.

From St Kilda UNESCO World Heritage Site in Scotland to North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, we raise the profile of the UK's 150+ UNESCO designations and projects.





Professor Iain Stewart, UNESCO Chair in Geoscience and Society at the University of Plymouth, aims to develop interdisciplinary expertise in critical areas of sustainable geoscience including disaster risk reduction. Photo: University of Plymouth

The Expert Network

We work closely with a network of experts across the UK who work to support UNESCO's mission to build peace in the minds of men and women.

We have been tasked by the UK government to retain a **pool of high-level expertise**, with a mandate to monitor UNESCO's programmes and provide a forward-looking role in UNESCO's fields of competence at the national level.

Our **Expert Network** is a pro bono network of specialists working in the fields of education, culture, the natural and social sciences and communication and information from across the UK. The Network enables us to engage with the intellectual and scientific communities of the UK in producing policy advice and analysing UNESCO's programmes.

The Network is open to all who are based in the UK and are committed to furthering UNESCO's goals in the UK and worldwide.

More information about the UK's Expert Network is available at <https://www.unesco.org.uk/engage/join-our-expert-network/>.

Website: www.unesco.org.uk

Twitter: [@UNESCOUK](https://twitter.com/UNESCOUK)



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