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World Heritage Convention

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The UNESCO World Heritage Centre is looking for a team of experts/evaluators to carry out a renewal evaluation of the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH), a UNESCO Category 2 Centre based in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Proposals should reach UNESCO (arab.states@unesco.org) no later than **22 October 2023 (midnight, Paris time)**.

Context

Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO are a global network of institutions of excellence in the Organization's domains of competence. Given their expertise, these institutes and centres contribute to the implementation of UNESCO's priorities, programmes, and global development agendas during a defined period. They foster international and regional cooperation, research, knowledge production, policy advice, and capacity enhancement. Though independent of UNESCO, category 2 institutes and centres are a privileged partner of the Organization with access to international and intergovernmental bodies and networks, and may leverage UNESCO's international reach and convening powers. Category 2 institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO are an integral part of the Organization's Comprehensive Partnership Strategy.

The UNESCO Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO¹ provides that an agreement for the establishment of a category 2 institute or centre is for a defined time period, not exceeding eight years. The agreement may be renewed by the Director-General, with the approval of the Executive Board, in light of an evaluation of the activities of the institute/centre and of its contribution to the strategic programme objectives of the Organization and the aforementioned Strategy.

The 35th session of the General Conference, in its 35 C/Resolution 53, approved the establishment in the Kingdom of Bahrain of the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage, (hereafter, 'the Centre'). An agreement between the Government of Bahrain and UNESCO was signed accordingly. Following the first evaluation undertaken in 2017, a new agreement was signed between UNESCO and the Government of Bahrain for the period of six years (2018-2024). The Government of Bahrain submitted a request for renewal of the agreement. To this end, an evaluation of the Centre will be carried out.

The Centre mission is to strengthen the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the Arab States region by strengthening the application of the decisions and recommendations of the World Heritage Committee for the benefit of World Heritage sites in the region.

The main functions of the Centre are:

- the provision of information relating to the World Heritage Convention and its application, including the development and management of an Arabic language website, the translation and publication of relevant documents, and the promotion of the establishment of new conservation programmes at universities in all the Arab States region*²;

¹ Available at: <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/46612-EN.pdf>

² "Arab States region" refers to the following Member States: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

- the provision of assistance to Member States of the Arab States region to improve their capacity to implement the World Heritage Convention (including understanding of World Heritage policy, concepts, rules of procedure, preparation of tentative lists, preparation of nominations, monitoring of state of conservation, education programmes, etc.) by facilitating the organization of appropriate World Heritage training at the Centre's premises or anywhere else in the region, and responding to requests for assistance by Member States of the Arab States region; and,
- the provision of logistical and financial support for regional activities in support of the World Heritage Convention, including the hosting of meetings, conferences, training workshops or exhibitions in the region; the identification of appropriate facilities and services (lecture rooms, equipment, competent translators, etc.) for planned meetings of UNESCO and other relevant institutions in the region; and the fundraising to support World Heritage activities in the region.

The Centre shall pursue the above objectives and perform the above functions in close coordination with existing UNESCO entities, initiatives and programmes concerned with the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the Arab States region

Purpose

The main objectives of this evaluation are to assess the Centre's performance with respect to its objectives and functions (see above), and its contribution to UNESCO's Approved Programme and Budget (C/5), including global strategies and action plans as well as sectoral programme priorities. The conclusions of the renewal evaluation shall be submitted to the UNESCO Intersectoral Review Committee that will make the recommendation to the Director-General as to whether an agreement with the Centre should be renewed or not. Based on this recommendation, the UNESCO Executive Board will examine the renewal request, decide on the renewal or non-renewal of the designation of the Centre as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO and authorize the Director-General to conclude an agreement with the Government of Bahrain.

The conclusions of the renewal evaluation shall be shared with the Government of Bahrain and the Centre, and will be made available on the website of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (whc.unesco.org).

Scope

The following parameters shall be considered by the independent experts contracted to undertake the renewal evaluation. The independent experts shall have had no prior affiliation with the Centre, nor its partners in the carrying out of its activities and shall draft the renewal evaluation in English:

1. the extent to which the Centre's objectives as set out in the agreement signed with UNESCO were achieved;
2. the relevance of the contribution of the Centre's programmes and activities to the effective implementation of UNESCO's 1972 Convention for the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage as well as related sectoral programme priorities, as specified in the Approved Programme and Budget covering the period under evaluation (39 C/5, 40 C/5 and 41 C/5), and in particular to act as a relay for the action of the World Heritage Centre and its partners in the Arab States region by federating regional energies around the conservation, management, promotion and presentation of the region's cultural and natural heritage, in order to increase balanced representation of Arab States properties on the World Heritage List; promote better protection and management of such World Heritage properties; mobilize regional and international financial support for these purposes; and, raise awareness of World Heritage in the region, in accordance with the agreement;
3. the relevance of the contribution of the activities of the Centre to global development agendas, notably to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the related SDGs;
4. the quality of coordination and interaction with existing UNESCO entities, both at

Headquarters and in the field; as well as with National Commissions, other thematically-related category 1 and 2 institutes or centres with regard to planning and implementation of programmes;

5. the partnerships developed and maintained with government agencies, public or private partners and donors;
6. the nature and efficiency of the Centre's governance, including organizational arrangements, management, human resources and accountability mechanisms;
7. the financial resources available for ensuring sustainable institutional capacity and viability, and,
8. the extent to which the Centre enjoys within its territory the autonomy necessary for the execution of its activities and legal capacity to contract, institute legal proceedings, and to acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property.

Methodology

The renewal evaluation of the Centre will include:

- A desk study of relevant documents, provided by the Centre and UNESCO Secretariat and
- Preparation of an inception report, including a methodological note, a workplan and schedule, and a travel plan;
- A visit to the Centre, including interviews with the Centre's management and staff;
- Interviews (telephone, online and/or via e-mail) with the Centre's stakeholders, collaborators, and beneficiaries as well as UNESCO staff concerned;
- Preparation of the renewal evaluation report and recommendations to be included in the draft agreement to be concluded between UNESCO and the Government of Bahrain, based on the model provided by UNESCO, in case the evaluation recommends the renewal.

Draft evaluation report

A draft report will present findings, conclusions and recommendations, with a draft executive summary. The UNESCO Culture Sector, the Government of Bahrain and the Centre itself will have the opportunity to comment and give feedback to the evaluation team.

Final evaluation report

The final report (max. 20 pages, excluding annexes) should be structured as follows:

- Executive summary (maximum four pages);
- Introduction (background, purpose and scope);
- Methodology;
- Findings;
- General recommendations to the Centre for improving the effectiveness of its operations and for UNESCO for improving the effectiveness of its coordination and interaction with the Centre; specific recommendations for amending the provisions of the agreement in order to improve the functioning and activities of the Centre;
- Annexes, including, interview list, data collection instruments, key documents consulted, and terms of reference as well as recommendations regarding the draft agreement to be concluded between UNESCO and the Government of Bahrain in case the evaluation recommends the renewal.

The language of the report shall be English.

Requirements for the renewal evaluation team

The evaluation shall be conducted by a team of 2 independent experts (ideally gender-balanced). A single proposal/expression of interest must be submitted on behalf of the team.

The team should have the following qualifications:

- At least 7 years of professional experience in research and/or capacity-building in the field of cultural heritage, cultural diversity, cultural policy or culture and development; experience in World Heritage will be an asset;
- At least 7 years of professional experience in policy and programme evaluation in the context of international development;
- Excellent knowledge of English (written and spoken),
- Knowledge of the Arabic language is desirable and will be an asset;
- Knowledge of the role and mandate of UNESCO and its programmes;
- Knowledge and experience in qualitative and quantitative data analysis
- Knowledge of UN mandates in gender equality and human rights will be an asset.

Roles and responsibilities

Local travel, materials, secretarial support and office space will be provided by the Centre during the visit. The experts will be responsible for telecommunications and printing of documentation.

The World Heritage Centre at the UNESCO Culture Sector will facilitate and oversee the renewal evaluation process, to the extent possible, by providing any relevant information, and will be responsible for evaluating and approving the final report.

Schedule

The renewal evaluation shall be completed by **26 January 2024**.

The schedule for the evaluation is as follows:

- A desk study of background documents (to be completed prior to the visit to the Centre)
- Writing and submission of the inception report no later than **10 November 2023**;
- Developing the questionnaire and conducting telephone/online interviews.
- Undertake a mission to Bahrain to visit to the Centre and conduct interviews (**between 10-26 November 2023**);
- Writing and submission of the draft evaluation report no later than **5 January 2024**;
- Submission of the final evaluation report (**before 26 January 2024**).

The date of the mission to the Centre will be defined by UNESCO in coordination with the Centre and taking into account the availability of evaluator(s).

Submission of proposals

Proposals should be submitted in English, consisting of:

1. Curriculum vitae of expert(s)/evaluator(s) and, if applicable, a company profile;
2. Letter expressing interest and clearly identifying how the team meets the required skills and experience;
3. An approach and methodology for the assignment, a Workplan and comments on the Terms of Reference if any (in brief);
4. On the basis of the proposed and required tasks, please prepare a budget estimate/budget proposal, including an indication of the travel expenses. Please provide the estimate in a separate document.

Proposals should be submitted no later than **22 October 2023**, midnight (Paris time) to the World Heritage Centre (arab.states@unesco.org). Please note that proposals submitted through other channels will not be considered. Selection will be made on the basis of best value for money.