



National Commissions of Member States
and Associate Members for UNESCO

Cc: Permanent Delegations of Member
States and Associate Members to UNESCO

27 September 2023

**The Assistant Director-General
Priority Africa and External Relations**

Ref.: CLT/CPD/23/26

**Subject: Consultation among Member States and Associate Members on the draft
UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education (ref. Decision 211 EX/39)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Following my letter dated 5 January 2023 on the global consultation process for the UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education, I am pleased to share with you the first draft Framework for comment by your country's competent authorities in the fields of education and culture.

This draft Framework is the outcome of an inclusive and participatory process that took place between March 2022 and July 2023. I would like to thank you for your engagement in this process, which has allowed us to collect inputs from a wide range of stakeholders, including intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, cultural and educational institutions, experts in the field of culture and arts education, educators and artists.

Consultation on the draft Framework among Member States and Associate Members will be conducted in two rounds, with a view to its adoption at the upcoming World Conference on Culture and Arts Education to be convened by the Director-General and hosted by the United Arab Emirates from 13 to 15 February 2024:

- **During the first round of consultation**, Member States and Associate Members are invited to provide their comments on the first draft of the Framework.
- **During the second round of consultation**, Member States and Associate Members will be invited to provide their comments, if any, on the second draft of the Framework, which will take into account the feedback received during the first round.

Your continued cooperation and feedback on the draft Framework will be instrumental in our efforts to foster an environment that nurtures creativity, appreciates cultural diversity, and promotes quality and inclusive learning. To this end, **it would be highly appreciated if you could send your comments on the first draft of the Framework to the address culture-education@unesco.org, by 3 November 2023.**

Please accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Anthony Kwaku Ohemeng-Boamah

Encl. Draft UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education

Zero Draft UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education

Preamble

1. **We, the Ministers of Education and Culture**, have gathered in February 2024 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, for the World Conference on Culture and Arts Education. We thank the UNESCO Director-General for convening this important and timely conference and the United Arab Emirates for having hosted it.
2. **We recall** the Preamble of the UNESCO Constitution affirming “*that the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of [humanity] and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfill in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern.*”
3. **We note** that in a context of unprecedented human mobility, rising inequalities, armed conflict, disinformation, hate speech, racism, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination that exacerbate the risk of social divisions and hamper sustainable development, it is necessary to strengthen efforts to reimagine and shape a peaceful, just, and sustainable future for all.
4. **We recognize** that education systems around the world are falling short of these aspirations, and **we echo** the Vision Statement of the United Nations Secretary-General on Transforming Education (2022), and **affirm** the urgent need for bold education transformation “to rethink the purpose, content and delivery of education to promote equity and inclusion, quality and relevance” and instill in learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to engage, participate and thrive in our diverse and rapidly-changing societies. **We commit** to taking actions to meet the needs of all learners across a vast diversity of contexts.
5. **We recognize** that culture and the arts are integral to enabling the holistic and inclusive development of individuals and societies, grounded in the recognition of cultural diversity, which is conducive to the flourishing of human imagination, creativity and self-expression, building critical-thinking and social-emotional skills, as well as empowering learners through opportunities for social and economic growth, notably through the cultural and creative industries.
6. **We commit** to engage the unique resources of culture and education to work in greater synergy to advance mutually-beneficial development outcomes, as affirmed in the MONDIACULT 2022 Declaration of Cultural Policies. **We stress** the critical need to enable generations of learners to fully benefit from the opportunities of culture and education through inclusive access to quality education, respecting and engaging with the diversity of peoples and cultures as a positive and transformative force, and expanding sustainable livelihoods, while heeding the fundamental changes brought about by the digital transformation and artificial intelligence (AI).
7. **We welcome** the commitments made by the international community for culture and arts education, notably enshrined in the UNESCO international Conventions, Recommendations, Declarations and initiatives in the fields of education and of culture,¹ as well as the two World Conferences on Arts Education in Lisbon in 2006 and in Seoul in 2010, whose respective outcome documents the *Road Map for Arts Education* and the *Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education* have laid the foundations for articulating evolving understandings of culture and education and fostering transversality in public policies.
8. We endorse the Framework for Culture and Arts Education grounded on a humanistic vision of culture and arts education, and **we entrust** UNESCO, as the United Nations’ specialized agency

¹ Including *inter alia* in the field of culture the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), the Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist (1980), the Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society (2015), the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and its two Protocols (1954 and 1999), the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970), the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001), the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005). In the field of education, the Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments (2000), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015), in particular Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 (2015), the Futures of Education initiative (2021), Transforming Education Summit (2022), and the Recommendation on education for peace and human rights, international understanding, co-operation, fundamental freedoms, global citizenship and sustainable development (2023).

for education and culture, to foster the implementation of the Framework in its Member States and Associate Members, notably by providing operational guidance; undertaking advocacy and facilitating policy dialogue, knowledge sharing and standard setting, as relevant; convening global, regional, national and civil society stakeholders to guide the implementation of the Framework; and monitoring progress towards the strategic goals.

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, XX February 2024

Introduction

1. Unprecedented human mobility, digital transformation, inequalities and climate change, compounded by the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought to the fore new challenges and opportunities in the education and culture sectors. These disruptions have called for reinvesting in the cultural capital for resilience and new forms of partnerships, as well as rethinking the purpose, content and delivery of education to prepare learners of all ages throughout life with the skills and competencies to nurture social responsibility, innovation, creativity, critical-thinking, adaptability, and inclusivity, and to shape just, sustainable, healthy and peaceful futures.
2. Culture and the arts can enrich and revitalize education by integrating a greater diversity of cultural expressions and ways of knowing and being, histories and languages of peoples and communities in the curricula and teaching, giving diverse learners, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, a sense of meaning and self-confidence, improving their motivation to learn and succeed. Learning *in and through* the arts can strengthen social and emotional learning, as well as foster intercultural dialogue, cooperation and understanding, which are critical to sustainably address global challenges.
3. Against this backdrop, in March 2021, the UNESCO Executive Board mandated the Director-General of UNESCO to elaborate a framework for culture and arts education to promote greater access and inclusion in education and in culture; capture broadened understandings of culture and arts education; ensure effective integration of culture and arts education in relevant culture and education policies, strategies, curricula, and programmes; widen cooperation across public policy areas, disciplines and education settings; and support the role of culture and arts education in economic, social and environmental development.
4. The development of the Framework for Culture and Arts Education encompassed an inclusive and participatory consultation engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including intergovernmental, non-governmental and civil society organizations, national and local governments, cultural and educational institutions, UNESCO Chairs and partner networks, as well as educators, experts and professionals in the fields of education and culture.
5. For the purpose of this Framework, culture is defined as the “set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group, [which] includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs” as adopted in the MONDIACULT Declarations of 1982 and 2022 and that culture can be transmitted, expressed and experienced across time and space through words (literature and language), sound (music, radio, media), images (visual arts, media), movement (dance, theatre), monuments and objects (architecture, design, crafts) and traditional knowledge (environmental and living cultural heritage and expressions), among others. Education is defined as “an inalienable human right. This is a lifelong and society-wide process, through which everyone learns, and develops to their fullest potential, the whole of their personality, sense of dignity, talents and mental and physical abilities, within and for the benefit of local, national, regional and global communities, and ecosystems”, as adopted in the Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Co-operation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship, and Sustainable Development (2023).

I. Guiding principles

6. Culture and education are considered as **global public goods of humanity** accessible to all, which fosters well-being of individuals and societies as a whole. This recognition enhances the value given to culture and arts education within policy, education systems and societies at large requiring strengthened collective engagement and sustained public investment.
7. **Human rights and fundamental freedoms**, as defined by international human rights instruments, primarily the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and on Civil and Political Rights and other international conventions and treaties on human rights, are enabling conditions for the inclusive and sustainable development of individuals and societies.
8. **Gender equality** is mainstreamed in all aspects of policy planning, design and implementation, as well as countering gender discrimination and bias, harmful content and violence in all online and off-line education settings related to culture and arts education.
9. **Co-creation**, building on the diversity of culture and arts education experiences and actively involving and collaborating with learners, educators, artists, and cultural practitioners and other concerned stakeholders in the design, implementation, and evaluation of culture and arts education is meaningful and relevant.
10. **Lifelong and life-wide learning** is applied in a diversity of formal and informal educational settings and environments, such as local communities, public arts spaces and museums, faith-based organizations, media-based education forms, and local practices of cultural transmission.

II. Objectives

11. The Framework is intended to provide guidance and policy recommendations on culture and arts education to Member States and Associate Members for the following purposes:
 - i. Integrate effectively culture and arts education in relevant policies, strategies, curricula, and programmes, including with regard to regulation, teacher qualifications, extracurricular programmes, non-formal education, lifelong learning and talent development;
 - ii. Support Member States to harness contemporary advances and seize the opportunities, while being mindful of potential harmful impacts of digital technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), to support and promote reflection and initiatives in this domain, in particular to the benefit of the cultural and creative sectors;
 - iii. Contribute directly to the realization of present and future United Nations efforts for sustainable development and peace, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, in particular SDG 4 to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all, and SDG 8 to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

III. Scope

12. The Framework covers educational activities for all people, delivered in all contexts and in formal, non-formal and informal settings, using different pedagogies and modalities, such as offline, online, distance and hybrid, as well as at all levels, and of all types and provisions.
13. It is grounded on a broad understanding of culture as set out above, which includes living cultural heritage and cultural expressions, the cultural and creative industries, media and digital arts, intercultural dialogue, and linguistic diversity.
14. It embraces and promotes the value of multistakeholder collaboration and broad intersectoral partnerships among, *inter alia*, educational institutions, government bodies, cultural organizations, artists and culture professionals, researchers, local communities and the private sector.

IV. Strategic Goals

a) Access, inclusion, and equity in and through culture and arts education

15. Access is a critical foundation for exercising the right to education and to participate in and enjoy cultural and artistic life. Ensuring access should encompass addressing persistent challenges for learners, ranging from limited infrastructure and resources to vulnerability and exclusion by virtue of social status, race and ethnicity, gender, language, disability or geographical location.
16. Access to a broad range of artistic and cultural expressions is fundamental to realize the human right to participate in cultural life, which is an enabling condition for individual and societal well-being. This not only includes ensuring the availability of culture and arts education in schools but also quality formal education for the development of professional careers in culture and the arts.
17. Education must be democratized and decolonized to fully reflect learners in all their diversity. All learners, including marginalized, lower-income and those in vulnerable situations, such as refugees and learners in crisis-affected and post-disaster contexts, should be able to access education immediate to their cultures and thrive as a result.
18. Education must, therefore, provide diverse and inclusive approaches and methods to deliver culture and arts education of quality that contributes to addressing stigma, xenophobia and discrimination, while enhancing the knowledge and appreciation of cultural diversity, intercultural understanding, social cohesion, conflict prevention and post-conflict healing through culture and the arts.

b) Contextual, quality, lifelong and life-wide learning in and through culture and arts education

19. Education must encompass context and content-relevant perspectives, and enable adaptive approaches that foster the appreciation of cultural diversity, including indigenous languages and local traditions. This entails mainstreaming culture and the arts in formal education through culturally- and locally-relevant curricula, textbooks, pedagogies and settings, engaging local living cultural heritage and expressions, indigenous ways of knowing and being, mother tongue languages and linguistic diversity, and the local cultural and creative industries (CCIs). These perspectives further apply to non-formal contexts to sustain intergenerational transmission, peer-to-peer learning, professional skills development, and community learning and engagement, based on a lifelong and life-wide learning perspective.
20. Culture and arts education has the potential to promote intergenerational dialogue and the responsible stewardship of cultural and natural resources through learning with and for the environment. Therefore, culture and the arts should be integrated in teaching and learning by engaging with cultural institutions and cultural spaces - including a diversity of stakeholders, such as cultural heritage bearers and local community mediators – to expand learning settings and place-based learning that grounds a stronger connection between learners of all ages and backgrounds, their communities and environments. Such broadened cooperation will enrich the education experience, addressing education gaps and fostering the integration of marginalised learners, while strengthening cultural exchange to support the promotion of cultural diversity, creativity, innovation and co-creation.

c) Appreciation of cultural diversity and the capacity for critical engagement

21. Culture, in its rich diversity, should be integrated in and across education as a powerful driver of inclusive dialogue and social transformation, enabling the inclusion of a plurality of individuals and groups and creating spaces of self-expression, discovery and experimentation.
22. Educational approaches, pedagogies and tools should equip learners with the critical knowledge, skills and agency to identify and challenge forms of instrumentalization of culture, and harmful social norms and stereotypes, while fostering the positive appreciation of cultural diversity as a constructive force to enable creativity and innovation, freedom of expression and artistic creation, cohesion and collaboration.

d) Skills to shape resilient, just and sustainable futures

23. Foster enabling educational environments and settings that nurture creativity, critical-thinking and specialized artistic skills and promote innovation through culture and the arts, in order to support talent development, employment and decent work in the CCIs (cultural and creative industries) aimed at sustaining the development of the creative economy at national and local levels.
24. Education systems should harness the potential of culture and arts education to nurture social and emotional learning (SEL) skills – ranging from empathy and solidarity to pluralistic thinking – with a view to strengthening the appreciation of cultural diversity, enhancing academic and job performance, as well as coping with future uncertainty and crises.

e) Formalization and valorization of culture and arts education ecosystems

25. Strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) strategies and programmes in the fields of culture and the arts to enable young people as well as adults to acquire knowledge and skills across various areas of culture and arts education in order to support their access to work and entrepreneurship opportunities in the CCIs.
26. Enhance awareness of the value of culture and arts education for holistic development bringing it forward from the margins of education systems, by allocating adequate resources. In addition, certification and recognition of cultural and artistic skills and competencies should be established for culture and arts professionals working as educators.
27. Planning and implementation of culture and arts education should overcome siloed approaches by broadening participatory approaches across ministries and other stakeholders, and establishing more sustained cooperation with informal and non-formal learning spaces and actors, such as museums, libraries, cities, local communities, cultural venues, cultural heritage sites, artists and traditional bearers and other relevant stakeholders in order to strengthen learning outcomes and address gaps in education curricula and training.

V. Implementation Modalities

a) Governance, legislation and policies

28. Transform governance and policies for culture and arts education through sustained and adaptive strategies that foster dialogue and collaboration between policy areas, mechanisms and structures, among practitioners, educators and development planners to ensure impact, the effective integration of culture and arts education in formal and non-formal education, the professionalization of culture and arts ecosystems, and the recognition of cultural and artistic skills. This should be supported by providing accessible culture and arts education resources and experiences for all, and devising measures for collaborative monitoring and evaluation across public policies.

b) Learning environments

29. Broaden the concept of learning environments by promoting the role of museums and cultural heritage sites as places of learning and exchange, and through various modalities, such as public and private partnerships, in order to contribute towards enriching educational experiences as a whole-of-community endeavour.

c) Learning experiences

30. Integrate local knowledge, tangible and intangible cultural resources, such as living heritage and cultural expressions, in and across formal, non-formal, and informal education – from curricula and pedagogy to the whole community dimensions of learning.
31. Engage cultural actors such as artists, culture professionals, practitioners and cultural heritage bearers, as well as other relevant stakeholders, in the development and review of the curricula and other components of the learning experience to enrich the design and implementation of culture and arts education.

d) Teachers and educators

32. Diversify the teaching profession to include culture and heritage bearers, artists and other culture practitioners, to encourage transformative learning experiences in diverse spaces of learning, and

foster the exchange of knowledge, communal care and support, as well as co-creation of educational services.

33. Revise teacher education and professional development to include culture and arts education. Furthermore, promote dialogues between education personnel and culture and arts practitioners to exchange and enrich educational, artistic and cultural experiences, including through the co-creation of learning activities.
34. Increase investment to address shortages of qualified teachers, especially in rural areas and small communities, and to provide quality teacher education and continuous professional development for lifelong and life-wide learning, which includes, *inter alia*, education on integrating languages and knowledge systems, local cultural values, identities and heritage, and harnessing digital technologies, as well as other emerging pedagogies to support creativity, building skills for the present and the future, and enriching the learning experience in and outside the classroom.
35. Improve the status and working conditions of teachers and educators in culture and arts education, including employment and remuneration through adequate measures, resources and infrastructure, flexible working modalities, and professional growth and well-being.

e) Digital technologies and AI

36. Leverage media, information and digital literacy to support effective provision of culture and arts education in the digital era, while promoting ethical and responsible use of digital technologies, ensuring protection of privacy, copyright, and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity online.
37. Broaden access to digital technologies for culture and arts education through, *inter alia*, investment in infrastructure, training and skills development.
38. Invest in research and innovation to promote the development of diverse and bias-free digital tools for culture and arts education, including those for artistic creation and for knowledge sharing and learning *in* and *through* culture and the arts.
39. Harness human capacities to contribute towards the co-creation, use and delivery of digital contents, enriched by local and cultural resources, for culture and arts education.

f) Partnerships, interinstitutional coordination

40. Innovate and expand partnerships and coordination, at national and local levels, across governmental bodies, cultural institutions and schools, educators, artists, culture professionals and other relevant stakeholders, to incentivize collaborative approaches, foster knowledge sharing, exchange and co-creation.
41. Leverage cultural resources, including, *inter alia*, national, regional, and international fairs and festivals to maximize their transformative potential and social and economic impact.

g) Financing

42. Mobilize financing at the national, regional and international levels, including through public and private partnerships, for the development of collaborative infrastructures and mechanisms for the long-term sustainability of the culture and arts education ecosystem.
43. Develop financial and other in-kind mechanisms for the design and implementation of revised culture and arts education policies, encompassing the revision of curricula, pedagogies and frameworks.

h) Research, data and assessment

44. Establish robust and transformative mechanisms for collaborative, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and for the development of data collection, analysis and monitoring in a range of topics related to culture and arts education, with a view to supporting evidence-based policymaking, evaluation, investment and financing, and advocacy for culture and arts education.

VI. Monitoring, follow-up and review

45. With a view to advancing the strategic goals of the Framework and assessing the achievement and lessons learnt globally towards its implementation, Member States and Associate Members shall:

- i. Submit to UNESCO, on a voluntary basis, a progress report every four years on the implementation of the Framework at the national level starting from 2025.
 - ii. Explore the feasibility of establishing Centres at regional or global level under the aegis of UNESCO within the scope of culture and arts education to strengthen research and analysis on the nexus between culture and education, including training, data collection and analysis, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Framework.
46. To support Member States and Associated Members in the implementation of the Framework, UNESCO shall, within existing resources:
- i. Develop a specific global monitoring mechanism for the Framework to assess progress in its implementation for Member States and other stakeholders.
 - ii. Provide guidance for the development of regional roadmaps in collaboration with relevant intergovernmental organizations and partners to foster the implementation of the Framework.
 - iii. Engage UNESCO's networks across the education and culture ecosystems to advance research in areas of culture and arts education and to strengthen evidence-based analyses.
 - iv. Build and expand partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders that build on their expertise and experience to complement and advance the strategic goals of the Framework.
 - v. Collect and disseminate relevant research, progress reports, data and good practices across Member States, Associate Members and partners.