

Impact case study (REF3b)

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| <p>Institution: Edinburgh Napier University</p> |
| <p>Unit of Assessment: 36 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management</p> |
| <p>Title of case study: The Intangible Cultural Heritage Initiative</p> |
| <p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Initiative at Edinburgh Napier University researched the role and safeguarding of ‘living culture’ in Scotland based on the 2003 UNESCO Convention. As a result of this project, ICH in Scotland is now increasingly part of the agenda for organisations from museums to schools, stands high in public consciousness, and will represent a key element of cultural tourism. The team’s approach to ICH had a direct impact upon policy-makers, national and international, including UNESCO itself. It has informed initiatives from the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence to the Dutch Government’s strategy for ICH upon signing the Convention.</p> |
| <p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>ICH is an important feature of community (local, national, international) identity and cohesion and requires sustainable management frameworks to ensure living cultures remain protected. The project sought to establish strategies for the long-term safeguarding of ICH through partnerships with communities of practice and several regional and national stakeholders. The initiative emphasised: the importance of ICH as a key impetus of cultural diversity; its contributions to community (local and national) health, cohesion and identity; and the threats faced by ICH locally and globally.</p> <p>The Edinburgh Napier University (ENU) ICH team is led by its co-Directors, Professors Alison McCleery (2007>) and Alistair McCleery (2007>) and has included as Research Assistants, Dr Linda Gunn (2007-2011), David Hill (2008-2011), Dr David Bowers (2012>) and Elaine Lambie (2012>). It also employs as Research Fellow Kenneth Wardrop (2012>) and it has funded four student internships for periods of between two and three months. The team has worked in collaboration with external stakeholders including Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS), Creative Scotland, COSLA (Local Authorities) and the UK National Commission for UNESCO.</p> <p>Two key issues were identified in 2007/8 at the initiative’s inception: given UNESCO definitions, what should be considered, from a Scottish standpoint, to constitute ICH; and, what is being done/should be done to protect ICH [1]. After researching international practices and subsequently reporting [2] on findings to IFACCA (International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies), the decision was taken that Scotland’s living culture should be defined in the most inclusive way possible. This conclusion was reached through consultation with a range of bodies and communities of practice, but was important in a Scotland context because it underpinned a sense of civic – rather than ethnic – national identity by contrast with other European states [3, 5]. The initiative had also concluded by 2009 that ICH practices cease to exist not through the active choice of practitioners but rather by neglect. Another key finding was that safeguarding should co-opt existing mechanisms (such as education or tourism) to ensure that ICH survives and evolves, while retaining community ownership. An important research outcome was the creation of an online inventory shell from 2009-2011 for MGS [6]. The team’s research findings on ICH practices informed the strategy for data collection for the inventory, which had to ensure continuing ownership by those communities holding the knowledge of particular practices. The team used workshops and other forms of consultation to refine its approach to this inventory and to underpin community involvement before handing the inventory over to MGS.</p> |

This research had identified community involvement and educational opportunities as key factors and recognised the need for sustainable income sources. An outcome of this has been a commission from Creative Scotland, supported by Visit Scotland, to examine how ICH in Scotland can be most sensitively exploited to provide income through cultural tourism. Findings from this research (due in 2013) should enable the construction of national and international ICH development strategies for individual governments and tourism agencies that balance the cultural interests and revenue needs of communities.

3. References to the research

1. McCleery, A., McCleery, A., Gunn, L., and Hill D., *Scoping and Mapping Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scotland Final Report*. (Edinburgh. Museums Galleries Scotland, 2008)
<http://www.museumsgalleriescotland.org.uk/publications/publication/71/scoping-and-mapping-intangible-cultural-heritage-in-scotland-final-report>
2. McCleery, A., McCleery, A., Gunn, L., and Hill, D., *D'Art report 36: Defining and Mapping Intangible Cultural Heritage*. IFACCA D'Art Report 36, February 2009 [www.ifacca.org]
3. McCleery, A., McCleery, A., Gunn, L., and Hill, D., 'Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scotland: One nation, many cultures' in Lira, S. et al (eds.) *Constructing Intangible Heritage* (Green Lines Institute for Sustainable Development: Barcelos, Portugal, 2009) 141-154
4. Gunn, L., McCleery, A., McCleery, A. and Hill, D., 'On the Peripheries of a Periphery: Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scotland' in Jarazo Álvarez, R. and Montero Ameneiro, L.M (eds.) *Periphery and Centre IV* (Universidade da Coruña: A Coruña, 2009).
5. McCleery, A., McCleery, A., Gunn, L., and Hill, D., 'One World, New World: One Scotland, Many Cultures' in Munro-Landi, Morag J. (ed.) *L'Écosse et Ses Doubles: Ancien monde – nouveau monde/Old World - New World: Scotland and its Doubles* (L'Harmattan: Paris, 2010).
6. Hill D., Gunn L., McCleery, A. and McCleery, A., 'ICH Scotland: a Digital Heritage Project', *Levend Erfgoed: Vakblad voor Public Folklore & Public History*, 8,1 (2011) 14-21.

4. Details of the impact

Policy-makers: This research initiative supports the socio-cultural and economic development of (local and national) communities across Scotland. The research has been undertaken in collaboration with NDPBs and with local authorities (LAs), particularly within pilot areas of Inverclyde, East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire, appealing to them as a focus for social cohesion, for inclusion of elements of ICH sustainability within the development of the Curriculum for Excellence, and for cultural engagement programmes. 'Embracing the intangible' also contributes to economic development through cultural tourism in a relatively cost-effective manner. This theme became the subject of the most recent research commission – currently in-progress. The involvement of NDPBs and LAs, individually and through COSLA, enabled them to become stakeholders in the initiative, placing them at the forefront of national efforts to safeguard ICH in Scotland. After cross-party endorsement of the initiative at Holyrood, the ICH team at ENU also prepared a customised press statement on ICH for every MSP, so that they could in turn raise awareness of the topic within local media. Partnership with Museums Galleries Scotland also ensured the dissemination of research outcomes to all museum staff in Scotland.

Communities: The ICH team reached out to a wider range of community-based groups and the Scottish public. Promotional packs of leaflets (10,000 copies) and posters were distributed to all Scottish public libraries, Community Centres and Learning Resource Centres. Six short accounts of ICH in Scotland and its diversity were uploaded to YouTube. The team also sought out links with

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communities of practice such as Voluntary Arts Scotland and the Traditional Music Forum and gave presentations at their annual conferences. As stressed in section 2, the ICH team has worked to ensure that ICH in Scotland is defined in the most inclusive way possible so that all forms of ICH that contribute to national identity are represented. Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland (BEMIS) and the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations supported the ICH team in gaining access to the practitioner groups that they represented. The ICH team was invited to speak at several events including:

- The Edinburgh Mela Festival (2010) - also posted an article by the ICH team on their website and promoted its work through press releases to local media, including STV, BBC Scotland, Radio Forth, *Evening News* and *Metro*;
- Meetings (2010) for the Sikh Sanjob and the Saheliya Women and Girls groups; and
- Nari Khallyan Shango (Bengali and Pakistani groups)

This contributed to the involvement of BEM groups and individuals in the ICH in Scotland initiative and validated the concept of 'one Scotland, many cultures' promoted by the team.

Education: One of the most effective means of safeguarding ICH, the team concluded, was its embedding within the primary and secondary curriculum. The guidelines of the *Scottish Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE), noted above, demonstrated that there was considerable scope for the curriculum as a vehicle for dissemination of ICH-related knowledge and practice. Trevor Gray, Education Officer for Renfrewshire Council, and lead on development and implementation of the CfE, carried out a study on behalf of the initiative on ways in which knowledge, understanding and participation in ICH could form part of classroom practice for different age groups. In turn, this provided a robust foundation for classroom implementation. Meetings were held with GLOW, the intranet for Scottish schools managed by Learning Teaching Scotland. All 32 LAs have signed up to GLOW and, with GLOW mentors for every school in Scotland, GLOW offers support structures to host ICH-themed material and facilitate its educational exploitation. This now forms part of its agenda.

International: Different international organisations have also regularly invited the ICH team to undertake various events, including:

- giving public lectures (Vigo) and seminars (Museo do Poble, Santiago) in Galicia (2009);
- addressing the Dutch government and cultural organisations (Deurne, 2012);
- leading symposia at the Smithsonian, Library of Congress and NEA (Washington DC, 2013); and,
- speaking at a symposium to celebrate the UNESCO 2003 Convention's 10th Anniversary (Venice, 2013).

International impact was also ensured when UNESCO's Paris ICH division asked the ICH team in 2009 to lead in creating an ICH training kit in print and on CD. This kit was distributed to field offices and national commissions in sub-Saharan Africa for both local re-printing and distribution. The result was a comprehensive and comprehensible information package: brochures, addressing different audiences; inventories of intangible heritage and safeguarding examples; a chronology of evolution of the ICH programme; and a set of FAQs. The major beneficiaries are ICH communities of practice and policy-makers.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. Aileen Campbell MSP (South of Scotland) raised a motion for support of the project, and the recognition and promotion of ICH, at the Scottish Parliament in February 2010 after hearing about the team's work on BBC Scotland news and this attracted all-party support - <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&Refe>

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2. Cross-party support for the project and its goals was further underlined during debates on the Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill in early November 2010 -

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialreports/meetingsParliament/or-08/sor1030-02.htm>

3. The endorsement of the work of the ICH initiative within the Traditional Arts Working Group Report to the Scottish Parliament in January 2010 and the subsequent invitation to the team from Fiona Hyslop, Minister for Culture and External Affairs, to respond to her consultation on the future of the traditional arts in Scotland - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300460/0093769.pdf>

4. There was widespread coverage of the ENU initiative in the Scottish media. This was enhanced, after a workshop held by the ICH team at Holyrood, by the issuing to each MSP of a press release highlighting aspects of ICH within their individual constituency. Representative press cuttings are available upon request.

5. A workshop for all LA Chief Executives on ICH was held at Edinburgh Napier in May 2009 and, as a result of this, a pilot study began with a consortium of neighbouring LAs: Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. A number of training workshops were held in Paisley for officials from all three LAs with the enthusiastic support of John Laurensen and the other Heads of Library and Museum Services. A total of over 50 LA staff attended these workshops.

6. The invitation to give a presentation in December 2009 in Shetland to its Economic Development and Tourism Committee comprising representatives from Shetland Council, Shetland Tourism, other tourism bodies, and Up Helly Aa societies. This was illustrative of the general briefing work within all 32 individual LAs undertaken by the ICH team.

7. Invitations to present research outcomes and their implications for NDPBs to meetings of a number of Scottish organisations such as the East of Scotland Museum Partnership and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments Scotland.

8. The attendance of the Director General of UNESCO, at the launch in Edinburgh of the 2008 ICH Report and his endorsement of its conclusions and recommendations. The Director General has continued to be a supporter of the ENU initiative and ENU's Director of Research Strategy has given a talk on it to an audience in Kyoto in August 2013.

9. Over 5,000 copies of the UNESCO training kit, funded by the Norwegian Government, were distributed by UNESCO Paris to all sub-Saharan Anglophone countries. A copy is available upon request.

10. The invitation to speak to Proxecto Ronsel in Vigo, Galicia, and lead a seminar for policy makers and professionals at the Museo do Poble, Santiago de Compostela in October 2009 (<http://tv.uvigo.es/gl/serial/617.html>). This sister project to safeguard and enhance the value of ICH in Galicia also provided an interesting contrast in its deliberate efforts to resurrect defunct ICH practices and to recover wider registers of the Galician language partly through them.