

Supplementing the National Inventory of Living Heritage

The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2003. Finland ratified the Convention in 2013, and the Finnish Heritage Agency is responsible for its implementation in Finland.

The aims of the Convention are to promote the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of different communities, groups and individuals, and to increase awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage. The Convention emphasises the transmission of heritage, cultural diversity, and people's participation in cultural heritage.

The UNESCO Convention also includes inventorying intangible cultural heritage at both the international and national levels. Inventorying is a tool that makes it possible to identify, describe and transmit information about living heritage.

In Finland, inventorying began in 2016 with the opening of the Wiki-Inventory for Living Heritage, where different communities can freely record information about living heritage that is meaningful to them. The Wiki-Inventory now includes more than 280 articles submitted by around 480 organisations and communities. Articles have been compiled in seven different languages. The Wiki-Inventory is a continuously updated information resource on living traditions in Finland. The platform is moderated by the Finnish Heritage Agency.

It is possible to apply from the Wiki-Inventory to the National Inventory of Living Heritage. Earlier application rounds were organised in 2017, 2020 and 2023. The current round was open from 28 January to 16 March 2026. A total of 30 applications were received by the deadline. Following the technical review carried out by the Finnish Heritage Agency, 28 applications passed to the next stage. A commenting round open to communities and experts working in the field of living heritage was open from 17 March to 8 April 2026. A total of 85 comments were received from eleven different organisations and individuals.

The Expert Group on Intangible Cultural Heritage considered the applications at its meetings on 20 April and 27 April 2026. The applications were assessed on the basis of the criteria of UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the specified national criteria. The proposal of the Finnish Heritage Agency is based on the recommendations of the Expert Group. The National Inventory is supplemented at regular intervals, and the next application round will take place no earlier than 2029.

Sites proposed for UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding must

already be included in the National Inventory. The Register of Good Safeguarding Practices may also include practices that are not in the National Inventory.

In this connection, the communities behind the elements have the opportunity to submit an expression of interest to the Finnish Heritage Agency through a separate call. The previous call was organised in 2018, and the next call will be organised in autumn 2026. Decisions on the nominations to be submitted to UNESCO are made by the Ministry of Education and Culture on the proposal of the Finnish Heritage Agency, with the support of the Expert Group on Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The Finnish Heritage Agency proposes that the 22 elements listed in the appendix be approved to supplement the National Inventory of Living Heritage.

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APPENDIX 1 Proposal of the Finnish Heritage Agency for elements to be added to the National Inventory of Living Heritage

Crafts

Relocation of log buildings

The relocation of log buildings refers to dismantling a building made of logs and reassembling it elsewhere. For centuries, this has been a common practice in the case of traditional hand-hewn log houses. Today, relocations are carried out by private heritage-minded builders and communities, and the projects are often local and based on voluntary work. Builders share knowledge and transmit the tradition, and associations organise lectures and workshops. The tradition supports the intergenerational preservation of built heritage and related know-how and emphasises the longevity and reuse of materials. The relocation process and related knowledge are documented in connection with building projects, and the relocated buildings themselves also form a living archive of the tradition.

Proposed by Talonpoikaiskulttuurisäätiö rs, INTBAU Finland ry, Lapua-seura ry, Rakennusperinteen ystävät ry, Rautajärven seudun kylät Oy, Seurasaarisäätiö – Fölisöstiftelsen sr, Stundars rf, Suomen saunakulttuuri ry and Virkkalan perinnesseura ry.

Restoration and use of steam yachts

Steam vessels became an important mode of transportation in Finland from the nineteenth century onwards, and in the 1960s a new interest arose in their restoration. Finland still has more than 80 operational steam vessels, of which 55 belong to the traditional vessel register maintained by the Finnish Heritage Agency. In Finland the steamship tradition is practiced by a wide range of actors from private enthusiasts to nationwide expert organisations. The aim is to preserve and develop old skills and to support communal activity across generations. Many actors also operate public route and cruise services and public sailings. The tradition is transmitted through practical work and courses, and new technologies such as 3D modelling are also used in its practice and safeguarding.

Proposed by Suomen Hörypursiseura ry and Riihisaari – Savonlinnan museo.

Felting

Felting is a centuries-old technique known worldwide, in which wool fibres are made into durable felted fabric. It became widely established in Finland in the late nineteenth century. There are many techniques and forms of application. The tradition is vibrant and widespread, and it is practised by people of all ages. It is transmitted both through formal education and between private practitioners. Over time, felting has changed from a necessity into a hobby and a material used by artists. Felting is based on a renewable natural material, wool, and it

highlights slow working methods and appreciation of materials. The felting tradition has been extensively documented especially in the Craft Museum of Finland and on the internet.

Proposed by Suomen huopayhdistys Filtti ry, Käsi- ja taideteollisuusliitto Taito ry, Taito Keski-Suomi ry, Suomen käsityön museo, Pirkanmaan muotoilu- ja taideteollisuusyhdistys Modus ry, Suomen Lammasyhdistys ry, Lapin yliopiston taiteiden tiedekunta, Pohjoismainen geenivarakeskus (NordGen), Koulutuskuntayhtymä Sasky / Petäjä-opisto, and two private individuals.

Making and wearing the Jussi sweater

The Jussi sweater is a traditional sweater worn especially in South Ostrobothnia and characterised by its traditional burgundy and grey colour scheme and diagonal check and stripe patterns. Jussi sweaters have been made in South Ostrobothnia since the early twentieth century. With its distinctive visual design, the wool sweater has become part of local culture and South Ostrobothnian identity among people of all ages. Despite its wide use, the visual style remains strongly and recognisably rooted in Ostrobothnian tradition. The sweaters are made by private individuals and weaving mills, and industrially manufactured versions are also sold in supermarkets. In recent years, the tradition has been documented especially by the Seinäjoki Museum.

Proposed by Taito Etelä-Pohjanmaa ry, Seinäjoen museot, Helsingin yliopiston Etelä-Pohjalainen Osakunta, Seinäjoen Maila Jussit, and two private individuals.

Spinning

Spinning means twisting a bundle of fibres into yarn by hand, with a drop spindle or with a spinning wheel. The most common material is sheep's wool. The history of hand spinning goes back thousands of years, and interest in it has revived since the late twentieth century. The tradition is practised by enthusiasts of different skill levels, various craft circles and textile professionals. There are thousands of practitioners in Finland. The activity is both organised and informal and takes place both in person and digitally. The spinning tradition is vibrant and developing. It highlights transparency in production and appreciation of materials while strengthening cultural heritage awareness and self-expression.

Proposed by Käsi- ja taideteollisuusliitto Taito ry, Suomen käsityön museo, Taito Pirkanmaa ry, Taito Pohjois-Pohjanmaa ry, Kehrääjien kilta ry, Kansalaisopistojen liitto KoL ry, Medborgarinstitutens förbund MiF rf, Vanajaveden Seudun Kisällit ry / VasKi ry, Tampereen seudun kehrääjät, and five private individuals.

Tablet weaving

Tablet weaving is a worldwide craft technique dating back thousands of years. It flourished in the area of present-day Finland during the Late Iron Age. The tradition disappeared with the

adoption of rigid heddle band weaving, but it was revived in the 2000s. There are hundreds of practitioners in Finland, and tablet-woven bands from the area of Finland are also of interest abroad. The tradition is practised especially by historical re-enactors. Traditional craftspeople, researchers, craft associations and vocational education also transmit and develop knowledge and skills related to tablet weaving. The tablet-weaving tradition is growing and developing continuously through new archaeological knowledge and new applications. The tradition is ecologically sustainable, supports cognitive skills and enriches regional culture.

Proposed by Esittäjinä Kalevalaisten Naisten Liitto, Raision seudun koulutuskuntayhtymä Raseko (Taideteollisuusalan perustuskinto – muinaistekniikan osaamisala), Muinaisaikayhdistys Birckalaiset ry, Historianelävöitysyhdistys Iloinen Joutsen, and three private individuals.

Making reconstructed Iron Age costumes

The making of reconstructed Iron Age costumes involves reconstructing costumes and textiles based on burial finds from Finland's younger Iron Age, that is, from around the years 1000–1200. These costumes are made independently at home as well as in groups, training programmes and courses. The work is carried out by researchers, enthusiasts and craftspeople, and in the twenty-first century interest has increased especially among historical re-enactors. The tradition is also transmitted on social media platforms, where related groups have several thousand members. The tradition is living and growing, and it also arouses international interest.

Proposed by Kalevalaisten Naisten Liitto, Heinolan Kalevalaiset Naiset ry, Mikkelin Kalevalaiset ry, Muinaisaikayhdistys Birckalaiset ry, Historianelävöitysyhdistys Iloinen Joutsen, Perniön Maa- ja kotitalousnaiset ry, and Raision seudun koulutuskuntayhtymä Raseko.

Sarafan dress tradition and the making of sarafan costumes

The sarafan, or pinafore dress, is the dress of an Orthodox Karelian woman, and it is worn in different parts of Orthodox Eastern Europe. In Finland, sarafan dress is practised especially in Orthodox Karelian communities and also in Karelian communities and families belonging to other religious denominations in different parts of the country. The tradition is living and changes over time. In recent years, interest in sarafan dress has also increased among young people. Costumes are made by the wearers themselves or commissioned from specialised makers. The sarafan tradition is based on natural materials, reuse and locality. It also strengthens community life and the continuity of Orthodox Karelian cultural heritage. The tradition has been widely documented.

Proposed by Suomen ortodoksinen kirkko, Ortodoksisten nuorten liitto ONL ry, Karjalan Liitto ry, Karjalan Kielet ry, Suistamon Perinneseura ry, Salmi-Seura ry, Korpiselän Pitäjöseura, Korpiselkä-Seura ry, Impilahti-Seura ry, Suojärven Pitäjöseura ry, Helsingin Suojärvi-seura ry, Salmi-seura ry, Joensuun Kalevalaiset Naiset ry, Joensuun Seudun Suistamolaiset, Ilomantsin Kalevalaiset ry and Vaasan Kalevalaiset ry.

Festivities and practices

Celebrating Hanami in Finland

Hanami is an old Japanese tradition centred on admiring flowering cherry trees. People gather by the trees together with family, friends and work communities. In Finland, Hanami can be celebrated wherever there are cherry trees. Finland's largest annual Hanami festival has been organised since 2008 in the Roihuvuori Cherry Park in Helsinki. There are also cherry parks and Hanami events in other cities. The events often also include other programme related to Japanese culture. In Finland, the tradition is relatively new but widespread and communal. Distinctive local characteristics have also developed around it. Celebrating Hanami emphasises admiration of nature, brings together people from different cultures, and transmits intangible skills and heritage awareness.

Proposed by Roihuvuori-Seura ry, Suomalais-Japanilainen Yhdistys ry and Japanilaisen Kulttuurin Ystävät.

Indian Durga Puja in Finland

Durga Puja is an annual festival originating on the Indian subcontinent and celebrated by Bengali communities around the world. The festival has also been inscribed on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage. The celebration lasts ten days and includes religious rituals, cultural programme, shared meals and gift-giving. In Finland, the festival has been organised since 1999 in the Helsinki metropolitan area and nowadays also in Oulu. The celebration in Espoo is attended by 700 visitors from different communities and nationalities. The tradition is intergenerational and an important part of the self-expression and identity of the Bengali community in Finland. It lives and develops locally, nationally and internationally. In addition to the community's own documentation, the tradition has been documented in the Helinä Rautavaara Museum and the Espoo City Museum.

Proposed by Bengali Association of Finland ry, Helinä Rautavaaran museo and Espoon kaupunginmuseo KAMU.

Karelian Summer Festival

The Karelian Summer Festival is a national annual event that moves from place to place around Finland. It has been organised since the 1940s by the Finnish Karelian League and its partners. The emphases and contents of the festival have varied over the decades, but the tradition has remained strong. There are about 10,000 visitors annually and several hundred volunteers. The festival plays an important intergenerational role in strengthening Karelian identity and community, and through its diverse programme it presents Karelian culture to everyone interested in it. The tradition has been widely documented and is also visible in the media. To safeguard the tradition, the Karelian Summer Festival has been a registered trademark since 2016.

Proposed by Karjalan liitto, Karjalainen Nuorisoliitto ry, Heinolan Karjalaseura ry, Karjalan Liiton Etelä-Karjalan piiri ry, Karjalan liiton Etelä-Savon piiri, Karjalan liiton Kymenlaakson piiri ry, Karjalan Liiton Pohjolan piiri ry, Karjalan Liiton Satakunnan piiri ry and Karjalan liiton Varsinais-Suomen piiri ry.

Touring rally tradition

Touring rallies are a central part of the history of motoring. Since 1959, the Finnish Veteran Vehicle Club (SAHK), together with its member associations, has organised annual touring rallies for old cars and motorcycles in changing localities. There are approximately 100–200 participating vehicle crews each year. In addition, local associations have many events of their own. The purpose is to promote and support the preservation, conservation and restoration of culturally and historically valuable old vehicles, as well as their use as part of mobile cultural heritage. The tradition brings people together through intergenerational shared activity and has particularly strong dimensions of social sustainability. The touring rally tradition has been documented, for example, in the Road Traffic Museum Mobilia.

Proposed by SAHK together with its member associations (31 in total).

Nature and the universe

Traditional sauna healing

Traditional sauna healing and ritual sauna practices is an umbrella term for various communal sauna rituals and healing saunas based on spiritual and folk medicinal cultural heritage. There are many forms of application, such as sauna practices and healing saunas connected to life transitions and the cycle of the year. The tradition is practised by private individuals, associations, companies and researchers. The number of private individuals practising traditional sauna healing and those interested in the tradition is difficult to estimate, but there are around 50 trained practitioners. In recent years, sauna-related spiritual traditions have been consciously revitalised through research and education, and interest in them is growing. Practitioners also cooperate with other actors maintaining sauna culture. Traditional sauna healing and ritual sauna practices combines holistic wellbeing, relationship with nature and oral tradition in a way that supports sustainability and community.

Proposed by Perinnesaunottajat ry and Taivaannaula ry.

Traditional cultivation, processing and spinning of flax

Traditional flax cultivation and use is a long and multi-stage process. Fibre flax is known to have been cultivated in the area of present-day Finland already before the beginning of the Common Era. Today, the tradition is maintained and transmitted in hobby groups, projects and associations by private individuals, heritage farms and museums. The tradition has been widely documented, especially in agricultural and local heritage museums. Interest in the tradition has

increased in recent years. Flax is a domestic fibre crop whose use supports self-sufficiency and sustainable development. Slow flax cultivation and spinning are calming, create intergenerational community and teach appreciation of materials.

Proposed by Käsi- ja taideteollisuusliitto Taito ry, Maa- ja kotitalousnaiset, Metsähallitus / Korteniemen perinnetila, ProAgria, Seurasaaren ystävät ry, Suomen maatalousmuseo Sarka, Taito Varsinais-Suomi ry and Turun kaupunginmuseo / Kuralan Kylämäki.

Tour skating

Tour skating means skating on natural ice either in a group led by a tour leader or independently. The activity takes place throughout Finland and is also international. The tradition is transmitted through associations and within the close networks of practitioners. There are estimated to be around 150,000 practitioners, of whom more than 5,500 are members of Suomen retkiliustelijat ry. Tour skating increases respect for nature, ice-reading skills and community through shared excursions and training. Tour skating has been documented, for example, in the international Skridskonätet database, in the magazine of Suomen retkiliustelijat ry, and in the Sports Museum Tahto.

Proposed by Suomen retkiliustelijat ry and Suomen Latu ry.

Music and dance

Huutokatrilli

Huutokatrilli is a form of dance based on group dancing and performed with a partner according to the instructions of the “caller”, that is, the leader, to continuous and usually accelerating music. The dance can easily be adapted to groups of different sizes and to different situations. The tradition is practised by both amateur and professional folk dancers, and it is also easy for beginners to approach. Huutokatrilli has deep historical roots, and it has been revived in Finland from the 1980s onwards. The tradition has not been systematically documented or administered, so oral knowledge and shared practice play an important role in its transmission. The huutokatrilli tradition lives and develops over time.

Proposed by Raaka tradia ry, Pro Kaustinen / Kaustinen Folk Music Festival, kansanmusiikkiyhtye JPP, Suomen Nuorisoseurat ry, Perinnearkku ry, Höyhtyän kulttuuriyhdistys ry / OstariFestari, Taideyliopiston Sibelius-Akatemian kansanmusiikin koulutus, Oamkin tanssinopettajakoulutus, Kansanmusiikin ja Kansantanssin Edistämiskeskus ry, Suomen Kansantanssi-instituutin puolesta ry, Suomen Kansanmusiikkiliitto ry, Karjalainen Nuorisoliitto ry, Suomalaisen Kansantanssin Ystävät ry and Kansantanssijamikollektiivi Kataja ry.

Karelian folk dance

Karelian folk dances are traditional dances from the Karelian cultural area. The dances are actively practised in many Finnish folk dance groups, events and occasions, both by

enthusiasts and professionals. The activity is mainly goal-oriented and performance-based. The popularity of the dances has increased since the 1980s. The tradition also lives in the Republic of Karelia in Russia, and in Finland participants also include Karelian immigrants from Russia. Cross-border cooperation has, however, largely been interrupted as a result of the border closure. The digitisation of course materials supports the transmission and development of the tradition.

Proposed by Karjalainen Nuorisoliitto ry, Karjalan Nuoret ry, Nuorisoseura Motora ry, Saimaan Nuorisoseurat ry, Hyvinkään Kansantanssijat ry ja Pääkaupungin Karjalaiset Nuoret ry.

Performing arts

Summer theatre in Finland

Summer theatre is a form of theatre in which performances are presented in the summer, most often outdoors. The tradition has its roots in the popular education movement of the nineteenth century. Finland has around 700 active summer theatres, which reach approximately one million spectators annually. The summer theatre field includes national associations, local amateur theatre associations and federations, as well as a few dozen professional actors. The tradition is vibrant, developing and exceptionally extensive also by international standards. It is transmitted across generations through practical activity and is fundamentally communal, local and based on voluntary work.

Proposed by Suomen harrastajateatteriliitto, Finlands Svenska Ungdomsförbund FSU and Työväen näyttämöiden liitto.

Oral traditions

Use of inherited place names

Inherited place names are names that people living in or moving through an area have given – and continue to give when needed – to places in their surroundings. They are not official in nature and therefore differ from planned place names. Place names distinguish places from one another, tell of their significance, and are important to local identity. Names are not unchanging; as environments change and generations shift, new inherited place names also emerge in the speech of local language communities. Inherited place names have been collected and studied especially since the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Proposed by Opetushallituksen Kotimaisten kielten keskus, Helsingin yliopisto, Maanmittauslaitos, Oulun yliopiston Giellagas-instituutti, Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, Suomen Kotiseutuliitto and Finlands svenska hembygdsförbund.

Use and teaching of Braille

Braille is the reading and writing system of blind and severely visually impaired people, and the foundation of the education of blind people and of their professional and social participation. There are estimated to be around 55,000 visually impaired people in Finland. The writing system was developed in 1825 and became established in Finland in the late nineteenth century, and it has numerous different forms of application. The writing system is the same throughout the world, although there are also local differences. Braille has also been included in national inventories of intangible cultural heritage in Germany, France and Slovenia, and a similar nomination process is under way in at least seven other countries around the world.

Proposed by Näkövammaisten liitto ry, Näkövammaisten Kulttuuripalvelu ry, Näkövammaisten kirjastoyhdistys ry, Saavutettavuuskirjasto Celia / Kansallisarkisto, Valteri-Onerva, Finlands svenska synförbund rf, Suomen Kuurosokeat ry, Näkövammaiset lapset ry, and Näkövammaisten liikkumistaidon- ja näönkäytönohjaajat ry.

Games and playing

Role-playing culture

Role-playing games involve collaborative imagining and play. Among the many forms of role-playing, tabletop and live role-playing are the most central. In Finland, role-playing primarily lives in small, informal groups where knowledge is passed from more experienced players to new ones, but it also appears in large events and organised association activity. There are tens of thousands of practitioners. Central to the tradition are doing things together, creativity and self-direction. In addition to face-to-face play, digital platforms are used, and international activity is also active. Role-playing culture is documented primarily by the actors involved in it. The Finnish Museum of Games also documents the tradition.

Proposed by Alter Ego ry, Eru, Harmaasudet ry, Heittämättömän Arwan Kilta, Hepro - Helsingin pöytäroolipelaajat ry, Hit Point -pelitila, Hypecon, Hyvinkään kaupungin nuorisopalvelut, Kaksi Kuuta ry, Kalikos - Suomen Glorantha-seura ry, Keurope, Oulun yliopiston roolipelikerho CRYO ry, Ropecon ry, Suomen pelimuseo, Suomen roolipeliseura ry, Todellisuuspakolaiset ry and Tracon ry.

Food traditions

Karelian pie tradition

The Karelian pie is a traditional and well-known Karelian baked product that spread from Karelia to other parts of Finland especially through evacuees. The tradition is vibrant, and handmade pies are baked and eaten widely across Finland. The transmission and safeguarding of Karelian tradition is also organised through various organisations. Industrial versions of the pie are called rice pies. Industrial production increases visibility and makes the pie an everyday part of food culture, but it also threatens the transmission of traditional skills. The traditional handmade Karelian pie has been protected as a Traditional Speciality Guaranteed product by the European Union since 2003.

Proposed by Pohjois-Karjalan Martat ry, Karjalan Liitto ry, Karjalan Liiton Perinnetoimikunta, Karjalainen Nuorisoliitto ry, Marttaliitto, Maa- ja Kotitalousnaisten Keskus ry, Leipätiedotus ry, Etelä-Karjalan museo and Pohjois-Karjalan museo.