

**REPORT BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACCREDITED  
TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE ON ITS  
CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**Deadline: 15 February 2023  
for examination in 2023**

*File may be downloaded at:  
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>*

*Please provide only the information requested below.  
Annexes or other additional materials cannot be accepted.*

### **A. Identification of the organization**

#### **A.1. Name of the organization submitting this report**

A.1.a. *Provide the full official name of the organization in its original language, as it appears on the official documents.*

Societe Internationale d' Ethnology et de Folklore/International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF)

A.1.b. *Name of the organization in English and/or French.*

International Society for Ethnology and Folklore

A.1.c. *Accreditation number of the organization (as indicated in all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)*

90385

#### **A.2. Address of the organization**

*Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone number, email address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled. In the case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.*

Organization: International Society for Ethnology and Folklore  
Soci t e Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore - SIEF

Address: P/A Meertens Institute  
Oudezijds Achterburgwal 185  
1012 DK Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

Telephone number: +31 204 628 500

Email address: [sief@meertens.knaw.nl](mailto:sief@meertens.knaw.nl)

Website: <http://www.siefhome.org>

Other relevant  
information:

### A.3. Contact person for correspondence

*Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this report.*

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Prof. Dr.

Family name: Elpers

Given name: Sophie

Institution/position: SIEF/Executive Vice President

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Other relevant  
information:

## B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national and international levels (Chapter III and Article 19 of the Convention, paragraph 156 of the Operational Directives)<sup>1</sup>

*Distinguish between completed activities and ongoing activities contributing to the eight thematic areas of the Convention's Overall Results Framework<sup>2</sup>, as well as to the preparation of periodic reports, nominations, proposals and requests under the Convention's international cooperation mechanisms. If you have not contributed, this should be indicated. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.*

**B.1.** *Describe your organization's contribution to strengthening **institutional and human capacities** for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

The International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) provides platforms for the exchange of information and dissemination of best practices among heritage practitioners. During its biannual congress, at meetings and conferences of its working groups, in summer schools, in list serves and through its publications, leaders of heritage organizations, policy advisors, researchers, archivists, museum professionals and policy advisors exchange information and engage in dialogue about their safeguarding experiences, organizational capacity building, inventorying, documentation and archiving. Their mutually supportive peer exchange of best practices contributes to the enhancement of ICH safeguarding in the 45 countries represented in SIEF's membership. Our activities and publications provide ongoing forums for intangible cultural heritage professionals who often lack opportunities for such international dialogue and professional development activities generated as a result of interactions fostered by SIEF. These activities are carried out on an ongoing basis by SIEF's working groups (and especially the working group on cultural heritage) which function as international networks for heritage professionals involved in research, inventorying, education, and archiving.

SIEF's members are from States that include Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Germany, Romania, Ukraine, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia, Slovenia, United States, Canada, Israel, Turkey, Belarus, Croatia, Bulgaria and India.

**B.2.** *Describe your organization's participation in activities related to the **transmission of and education** for intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

SIEF's summer schools in the last years have brought together faculty with heritage expertise, graduate students and community members actively involved in safeguarding ICH. Students learned about ICH issues and challenges in dialogue with community members. The 2022 summer school in Warsaw focused on urban heritage, including revitalization of the Praga craft community and engagement with local heritage activists. It also included dialogues on heritage policy and lectures on global heritage production, the politics of cultural heritage production in the post-socialist sphere and food as

1. In case your organization operates in several States, please indicate clearly which State or States are concerned by your answers where appropriate.
2. For further information on the Overall Results Framework, please refer to the Chapter 8 of the Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/basic-texts-00503>

heritage. The 2020 summer school in Siena, Italy, held virtually because of the pandemic, featured online interactions with local heritage practitioners. This summer school focused on heritage policies as strategies for the promotion of traditions and challenges posed by tourism. Group field research brought participants into contact with grassroots ICH practitioners and bearers, including meetings with the Contrade that drive the Palio festival. The 2018 summer school in Portsoy, Scotland, Giving Voice? Facilitating Social and Community Resilience explored how communities reinvent themselves and repurpose the past while fostering traditions that change over time. It included extensive interactions with cultural activists dealing with the challenges and opportunities of ICH safeguarding and cultural tourism, and assisting with an annual boat festival.

SIEF's Standing Committee on Higher Education in Ethnology and Folklore is devoted to strengthening cooperation in higher education. Together with the American Folklore Society it is developing a global interactive map of university departments and programs, including many that train ICH researchers and practitioners in genres of ICH, policy and practice.

Some years ago SIEF published a comparative map with university departments and programs in Europe.

**B.3.** *Describe your organization's participation in the **inventorying and research** of intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Most of SIEF's members are researchers, with many focusing specifically on ICH and/or related topics. They design inventorying programs in their countries, train community members in methods of inventorying and documentation, create ethical guidelines for research, inventorying and archiving, maintain archives that serve as repositories for inventorying and documentation, explore heritage making processes, and give communities a voice. SIEF members have been centrally involved in creating national inventories in multiple countries, including Estonia, Belgium, France, Germany, The Netherlands and Latvia, all in collaboration with communities. Our members also took leading roles in the UNESCO community-based needs identification of the living heritage of Ukrainian refugees living in Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

SIEF's publications, meetings and online platforms frequently deal with best practices in inventorying and research that emphasize community collaboration. SIEF is prominently involved in promoting and advancing research, documentation and inventorying practices that involve co-curation and shared authority with community members. These approaches are modelled in our summer schools, which include group field research carried out in collaboration with community members, who learn from the technical and methodological expertise of the faculty.

Research by SIEF's members encompasses a broad range of ICH topics, including heritage tourism, genres of ICH that include narrative, belief systems, foodways, material culture and performing arts; documentation practices and heritage policies on

local, regional, national and intergovernmental levels. This research is published and reported in SIEF's affiliated journals, *Ethnologia Europaea* and *Cultural Analysis*; its semi-annual newsletter, proceedings of its biennial Congress and in other publications and online platforms for both the general public and scholars.

**B.4.** Describe your organization's participation in developing **policies, as well as legal and administrative measures**, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

SIEF's position paper, SIEF and UNESCO: Making a Difference ([SIEF-UNESCO position paper.pdf \(siefhome.org\)](#)) emphasizes the use of methodologies that seek out and acknowledge the multiple voices that create culture, community, heritage and tradition. It views heritage as processual in character, possessing dynamics of innovation and change. In this document, SIEF indicates that its activities are carried out in a framework of informed consent by stakeholders, concretized through the use of informed consent documents.

The Archives Working Group of SIEF is a leader in developing policies relating to standards and practices for the management and long-term storage of records and archives which consist largely of ICH materials. It has formulated ethical policies regarding privacy and informed consent for the storing and sharing of research materials. These policies stress that caution must be observed with regard to materials which have been collected "under problematic political conditions, or have been shaped by social and cultural paradigms that are no longer acceptable", such as among minorities and disadvantaged groups. The Archives Working Group emphasizes collaboration with source communities and facilitation of public access to archival collections.

Likewise, SIEF's general statement on Data Management ([SIEF Statement Data Management.pdf \(siefhome.org\)](#)) emphasizes the importance of handling ethnographic research materials in appropriate, and tailored, ways, taking into account that the materials are co-produced in the interaction of researchers and research participants. The key principle is consent.

SIEF members have created innovative, interactive archive web sites extensively used by source communities. Their archives of ICH materials are critically important for maintaining documentation of ICH obtained through inventorying projects for future generations and enabling use of these materials by bearers and their communities for current and future generations.

**B.5.** Describe your organization's participation in promoting the **role of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding in society**. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

The membership of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore is actively engaged in advancing understanding of the ICH Convention through their activities as researchers, educators and practitioners. Many of its members teach in colleges and universities, where students learn about the Convention and the practices, theories and policies of ICH. Their courses frequently deal with shared authority for heritage projects and community cultural self-determination. Their publications have been instrumental in

broadening the understanding of heritage to broadly encompass ICH. As policy advisors, SIEF members shape the direction of cultural and educational policies in their States to integrally include ICH.

**B.6.** Describe your organization's participation in **raising awareness** about intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

In recent years ICH and the Convention have become an increasingly prominent feature of SIEF's Congress, publications and social media. These activities raise awareness of ICH among SIEF's members who are in the academic community and practitioners in heritage fields such as museums that are expanding their involvement with ICH. Members of the Heritage and Cultural Property Working Group, with over 80 members and the Archives Working Group, with over 60 members, are especially active in raising awareness of ICH within and beyond SIEF. Over the two decades SIEF members on the faculties of scores of colleges and universities on multiple continents have initiated courses on heritage topics that include ICH.

**B.7.** Describe your organization's participation in facilitating the engagement of communities, groups and individuals, as well as other stakeholders, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

SIEF's members engage communities, groups and individuals as a central focus of their research and other activities. A growing number of members share authority for representation in safeguarding programs and inventorying projects. Many SIEF members teach in colleges and universities that have student populations with substantial representation of ethnic minorities and other cultural groups with strong ICH legacies. Their courses on ICH increase consciousness of local, ethnic and regional heritage and are stimulating involvement in ongoing ICH projects. SIEF's Congress, publications and online platforms provided forums for sharing information and dialogue about ICH activities.

**B.8.** Describe your organization's **engagement in cooperation at the bilateral, subregional, regional or international levels** for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

All of SIEF's activities involve members from multiple nations. They have leadership roles in consortia of ICH practitioners, such as the European Focal Points for the 2003 Convention and the regional consortium involving Nordic and Baltic nations. SIEF's biennial Congress, biennial convenings of working groups, publications and online platforms are primary means for exchanging information and experiences relating to the Convention for hundreds of ICH practitioners.

**B.9.** Describe your organization's involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the national Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

As an international organization SIEF does not prepare Periodic Reports. Many of its members prepare these reports for their own State.

**B.10.** Describe your organization's participation in the preparation of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, requests for International Assistance or proposals of Good Safeguarding Practices.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

As an international organization SIEF does not prepare nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding

or Representative List. Many of its members prepare nominations for their own State.

### C. Cooperation with UNESCO

*Has your organization carried out activities in cooperation with UNESCO? If yes, please tick the relevant boxes and provide information in the box below.*

- Direct cooperation with UNESCO (Headquarters and Field Offices)*
- Activities for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention*
- Cooperation through the 2003 Convention's Global Network of Facilitators*
- Cooperation with Category 2 Centres*
- Cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO*
- Cooperation with UNESCO Chairs*
- Financial support from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund*
- Financial support from the Participation Programme*
- Other types of cooperation*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Members of SIEF are also members of the Global Network of Facilitators, work with Category 2 Centers and with National Commissions for UNESCO. Members of SIEF are UNESCO chairs in Belgium, Estonia, and Latvia.

### D. Participation in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

**D.1** *Has your organization participated in the sessions of the Committee? If so, please indicate which sessions you attended and whether you had any specific role during these meetings.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

At least one SIEF delegate attended Committee meetings in 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2022. Its delegations attended the General Assembly meetings in 2020 and 2022. One of its delegates presented at symposia and other sessions of the ICH NGO Forum in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. As a member of the Executive Board of the ICH NGO Forum (Treasurer in 2021, Secretary in 2022 and 2023) he has been actively involved in organizing the Forum's symposium and side events at the Committee meetings and 2022 General Assembly.

**D.2** *Has your organization served as a member of the Evaluation Body (paragraphs 26 to 31 of the Operational Directives), or as a member of the Consultative Body (between 2012 and 2014)? If so, please indicate the period.*

*Not to exceed 100 words*

There is no member of SIEF who has served on the Evaluation Body as a representative of our organization.

**D.3** *In what way(s) has your organization provided advisory services to the Committee (paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?*

*Not to exceed 500 words*

SIEF could assist the Committee in initiatives to advance awareness of the Convention (in Europe), develop ICH courses and curricula in higher education, share and carry out research on safeguarding practices and the impacts of inscription, explore the power relations in which the Conventions functions, and assist in organizing convenings of Convention stakeholders in its Congress. It has included information and reports about meetings of the Committee meetings and ICH NGO Forum activities in its newsletter and website. In 2023 SIEF's Cultural Heritage and Property Working Group is presenting a Roundtable at its Congress in Brno, Czechia, New horizons for SIEF engagement with UNESCO-ICH. The Roundtable will explore how SIEF could potentially act to convene and establish networks among diverse ICH stakeholders from throughout Europe as well as provide collective representation of ICH experts in Europe as a whole for the Convention.

SIEF members have carried out extensive research about a broad range of ICH genres and safeguarding practices which can be shared with stakeholders and used to advance the Convention. Research by our members on the impact of tourism on the form, content and cultural meaning of ICH elements can be applied to communities that currently or will potentially have inscribed elements. Our members are equipped to provide original research commissioned by the Convention.

SIEF's Archives Working Group can provide advisory services on informed consent for inventorying as well as safe storage, preservation, privacy concerns and access for elements that are collected and documented. It can also advise about collaborations with communities utilizing archival resources for learning and transmitting ICH elements.

## **E. Capacities of your organization to evaluate nominations, proposals and requests (paragraphs 27 and 96 of the Operational Directives):**

**E.1.** *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff have a very good command of English or French? If so, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

All members of SIEF, currently numbering over 800, are fluent in either English or French, with many who are bilingual.

**E.2.** *Does your organization have experience in working across several intangible cultural heritage domains? Please describe your experiences.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

SIEF members have expertise in narrative cultures, crafts, material culture, music and song, dance, festivals, collections management, archiving, traditional belief systems, play and games, knowledge about nature and the universe, modes of presentation of ICH, primary, secondary and tertiary education about ICH, informal education for transmitting ICH, heritage policies, foodways, ceremonies and rituals, cultural heritage and property. Its members have carried out



field research, taught courses and created public programs in all of these areas.

**E.3.** *Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

SIEF's members are extensively involved in evaluating proposals to government, foundation and private funding agencies for research and public programs. Most of our members have masters or doctoral degrees in disciplines that include anthropology, ethnology and folklore. They have extensive experience in analysing documents created by governmental agencies, scholars and other laypersons.

**E.4.** *Does your organization have experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French? Please describe your experience and indicate in which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

SIEF members draft synthetic texts of all kinds, for academic, governmental, and general audiences. Our members are fluent in one or more major world languages, including English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Chinese, Hindi and Arabic as well as languages found in every nation in Europe.

**E.5.** *Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to apply local experience to an international context? Please describe such experience.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

SIEF is an international organization which was founded in the late 1920s (as CIAP, since 1964: SIEF). All of its activities engage researchers from multiple nations. Its Congress and Working Group meetings are held in a wide variety of nations in Europe. SIEF's members have expertise in field research carried out in local situations. This research is applied to ICH public programs for international audiences, policy development for intergovernmental agencies and publications read and disseminated internationally.

## **F. Membership in the ICH NGO Forum**

*Indicate below whether your organization wishes to (continue to) be part of the ICH NGO Forum. Please note that membership is contingent upon the decision of the Committee to maintain the accreditation of your organization.*

*For more information on the ICH NGO Forum and its activities, please see: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ngo-forums-00422>.*

Yes

No

## **G. Signature**

*The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of your organization.*

Name: Sophie Elpers

Title: Prof. Dr.

Date: 08-02-2023

Signature:

Sophie Evans