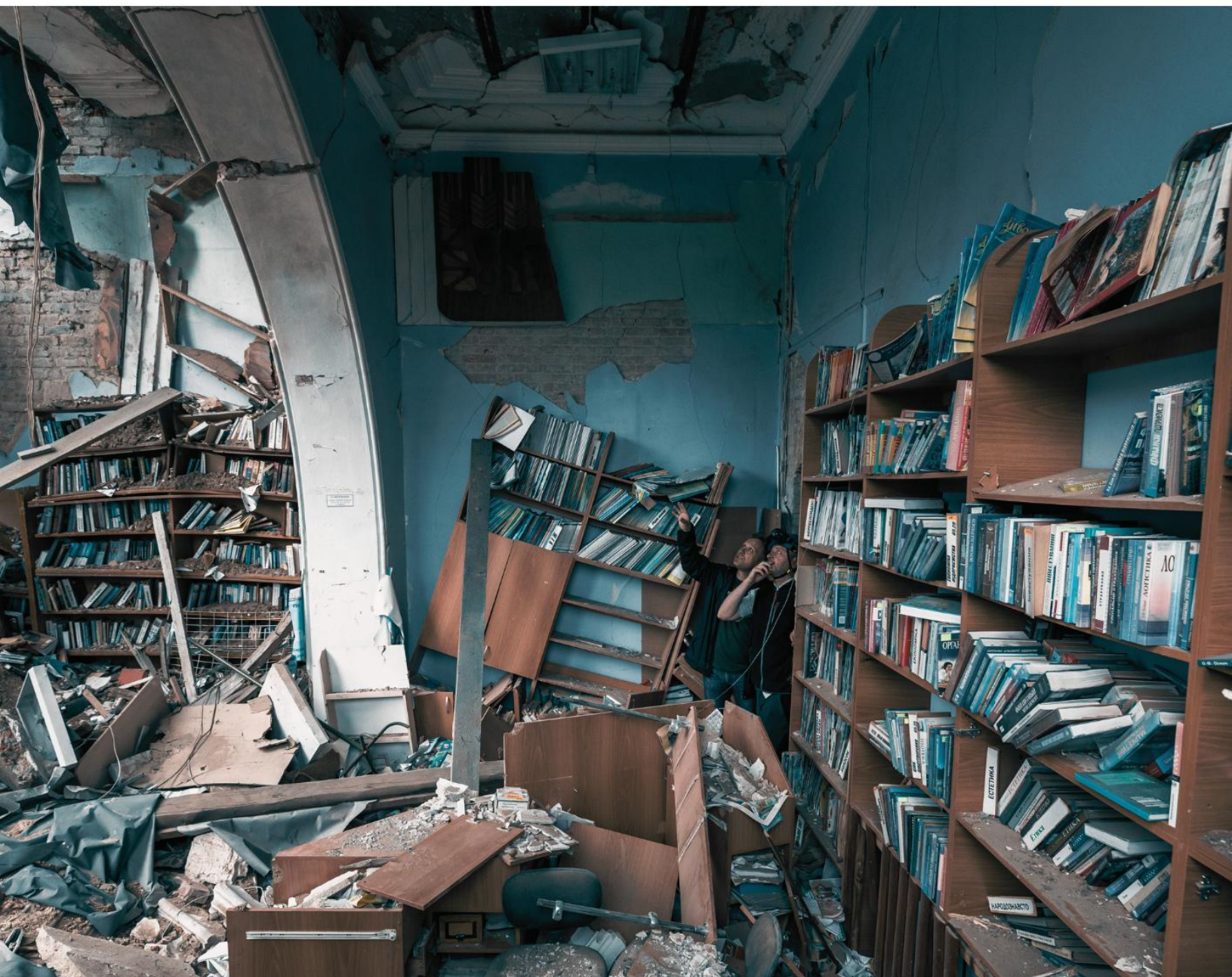# READY

Safeguarding Heritage Collections, Living Traditions and Practices in the face of Disasters, Extreme Weather Events and Complex Emergencies

Course Information Document

READY Track 1 – Safeguarding Heritage Collections, Living Traditions and Practices in the face of Disasters, Extreme Weather Events and Complex Emergencies

Background

We are living in an era of *polycrisis*—a term increasingly used to describe the convergence of multiple, interlinked crises that generate cascading and compounding impacts. Events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, accelerating climate-induced disasters, rising cost of living, and ongoing armed conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, and Sudan are not isolated; they interact in complex ways, amplifying risks across societies. According to the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), these are some of the characteristics of **systemic risks**, where hazards interact with vulnerabilities embedded within our social, cultural, political, and economic systems, often with unpredictable consequences.[1]

Two dynamics are occurring simultaneously: *new risks are emerging*, and the *systems we rely on*—from governance to financial frameworks—are revealing deep-seated fragilities. As articulated in the EU's strategic foresight and resilience agendas, resilience today requires more than bouncing back; it demands transformation in how we understand and manage risk.[2]

> In this context, **disasters must no longer be viewed as isolated, one-off events**. Rather, they are manifestations of systemic failures.

To effectively manage disaster risk, especially in the domain of cultural heritage, we need to adopt a new, systems-based perspective. This means understanding how heritage is embedded in and shapes broader societal systems—how it contributes to resilience through continuity, identity, livelihoods, and adaptive capacity, and conversely, how it can also reflect or reinforce social divisions, contested identities, and power imbalances.

Cultural heritage is not merely a passive victim of disaster—it is an active agent within the system. As UNDRR's Global Assessment Report highlights, recognizing heritage's dual role in both vulnerability and resilience is essential to designing inclusive, context-sensitive, and sustainable disaster risk reduction strategies.[3]

READY – Safeguarding Cultural Heritage from Disasters, Extreme Weather Events and Complex Emergencies is aimed at strengthening capacities for protecting heritage from disasters and conflicts in and beyond Europe. Financed by the European Commission's Directorate General of Education, Youth, Culture

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[1] UNDRR (2019, 2022). Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction: https://www.undrr.org/gar

[2] European Commission (2020). Strategic Foresight Report: "Charting the Course Towards a More Resilient Europe: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategic-foresight/2020-strategic-foresight-report_en

[3] UNDRR (2022). Global assessment report on disaster risk reduction : our world at risk: transforming governance for a resilient future https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3969846?v=pdf&ln=en

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and Sport within the framework of the Creative Europe Programme 2024, this endeavor is spearheaded by ICCROM's flagship capacity development programme, First Aid and Resilience for Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis (FAR) - in collaboration with the cultural ministries and national heritage departments of EU Member States. (See the list of technical partners below)

Integrating in-person and online cross-sectoral training with practical on-the-ground action, the initiative aims to facilitate the **exchange of good practices and tools, formulate effective risk management indicators**, as well **as establish a proactive network** comprising cultural heritage first aiders, disaster risk management specialists, civil protection personnel, and emergency responders.

Designed as a cascading capacity development initiative, the Project will **prepare trainers, strengthen inter-agency coordination and cooperation, as well as improve early warning for early action for heritage and people during emergencies**. Collective results will be disseminated through an online conference and an open-source publication to inform broader policy and practice.

Technical Partners:

Track 1 of the READY Initiative will be hosted by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia. The training has been designed based on FAR's Field-tested methods and tools, as well as recent implementational research on heritage-based climate action and peacebuilding. The curriculum has been enriched by the input of the following 14 technical partners, with the cooperation of the following technical partners:

- Agency for Cultural Resilience (ACURE), Ukraine
- Centre des monuments nationaux, France
- Department of Antiquities of Cyprus (DoA), Cyprus
- Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI), Germany
- Dirección General de Patrimonio Cultural y Bellas Artes, Spain
- Federal Monuments Authority of Austria, Austria
- International Council on Archives
- Ministry of Culture and Media, Republic of Croatia
- Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, Poland
- Museus e Monumentos de Portugal (MMP), Portugal
- National Institute of Heritage, Romania
- National Memorial to the Heavenly Hundred Heroes and Revolution of Dignity Museum (Maidan Museum), Ukraine
- National Research Council of Italy, Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate (CNR-ISAC)

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- National Research Council of Italy, Institute of Heritage Sciences (CNR-ISPC), Italy
- Protecting Cultural Heritage from the Consequences of Disasters Network (PROCULTHER Net 2)
- Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA), Belgium
- Swedish National Heritage Board
- UNDRR Regional Office for Europe & Central Asia

About READY TRACK 01

Safeguarding Heritage Collections, Living Traditions and Practices in the face of Disasters, Extreme Weather Events and Complex Emergencies
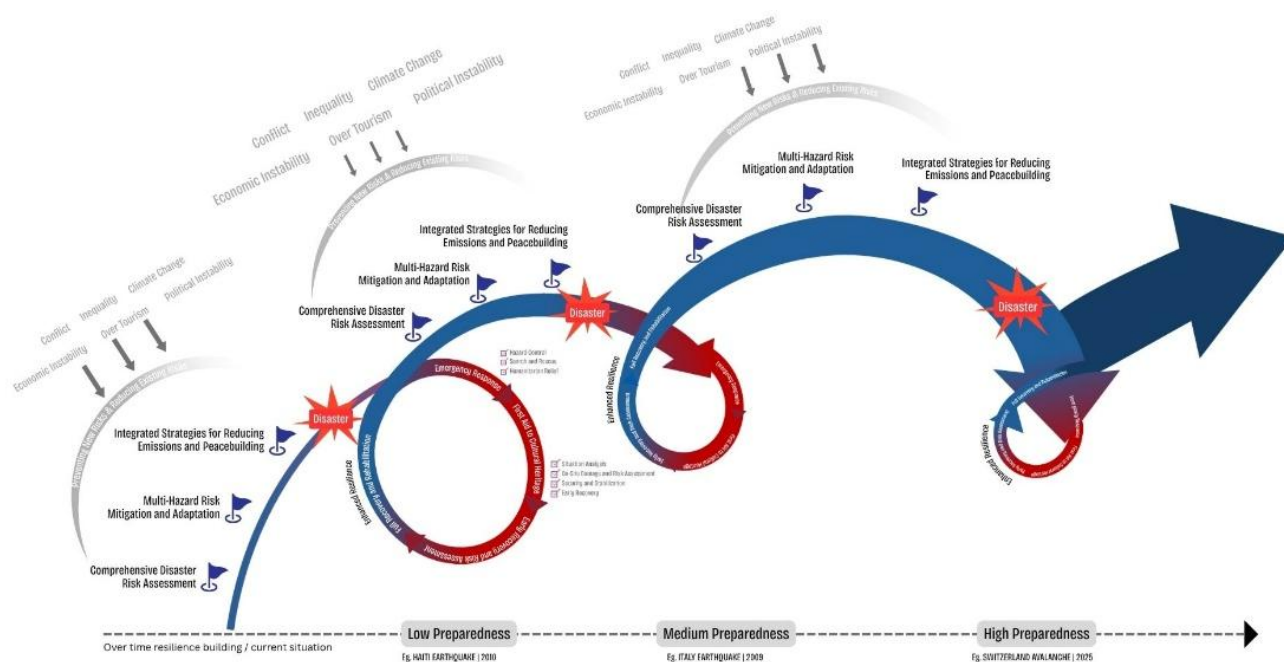
READY track 1 is conceived as a hybrid course. This interdisciplinary training emphasizes a systems-based approach to managing disaster, conflict, and extreme climate risks to heritage collections—whether in museums, libraries, archives, or places of worship, as well as to living traditions and associated knowledge systems.

Recognizing that disasters do not occur in isolation and that heritage institutions may not always have immediate access to external support, a core component of the course will focus on community-centred disaster risk management approaches. By equipping participants with the skills to tap into traditional knowledge and community-held practices, the training aims to actively engage local communities in safeguarding at-risk heritage while strengthening resilience and fostering social cohesion.

The course will also emphasize the enhancement of cross-sector cooperation and coordination among key stakeholders, such as disaster risk management professionals, climate scientists, civil protection services, armed forces, and heritage agencies, across all phases of disaster response: before, during, and after an event.

Participants will gain the knowledge and tools to assess and mitigate disaster and conflict risks to both movable and living heritage. This includes addressing a broad spectrum of threats such as cyberattacks, armed conflicts, and climate change-driven extreme weather events. The training will also factor in key risk drivers, including geopolitical shifts, financial instability, migration, unplanned urbanization and overtourism, all of which compound the vulnerabilities faced by heritage places and associated communities.

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Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Process for Cultural Heritage. (ICCROM, 2025)

Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- **Identify** the values, uses, and meanings associated with heritage collections, living traditions, and social practices that serve as vital sources of community resilience and well-being in times of crisis.

- **Assess** risks related to Climate change, disasters, and conflicts to different types of heritage collections and living traditions and practices, factoring in key risk drivers in consultation with local governments, disaster risk management, and climate change adaptation authorities.

- **Document and apply** community-held local and traditional knowledge, along with existing adaptive capacities, to develop inclusive multi-hazard risk mitigation and emergency preparedness strategies for safeguarding heritage collections, living traditions, and cultural practices.

- **Analyze** the cultural, social, and political context of a given emergency to assess needs for affected movable and intangible heritage, understanding the different phases of emergency management

- **Plan and carry out** on-site damage and risk assessments for cultural heritage in complex emergency situations, while being familiar with the basic requirements of personal safety and security in crisis contexts.

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- **Work with various** humanitarian actors, civil protection agencies, and military to identify priorities and provide **ethical first aid** to movable and intangible heritage in a complex emergency.

- **Plan and execute** emergency complex emergency evacuations and salvage operations for a variety of heritage collections, including emergency documentation and setting up of temporary storage.

- **Provide timely relief** to cultural bearers and work in collaboration with humanitarian actors to safeguard at-risk intangible heritage.

- **Be familiar** with basic principles of effective teamwork, the value of multi-disciplinary team leadership, and be equipped with essential coordination and communication skills.

- **Understand** how to plan the transition from first aid to early recovery to build disaster resilience and peace through heritage.

- **Transfer relevant knowledge and skills** to train local teams of cultural first aiders.

- **Identify** institutions and coordination mechanisms needed for improving disaster risk management for cultural heritage at the local level.

- **Promote** better integration of the concerns for cultural heritage protection within national, regional, and local disaster risk management and climate adaptation plans.
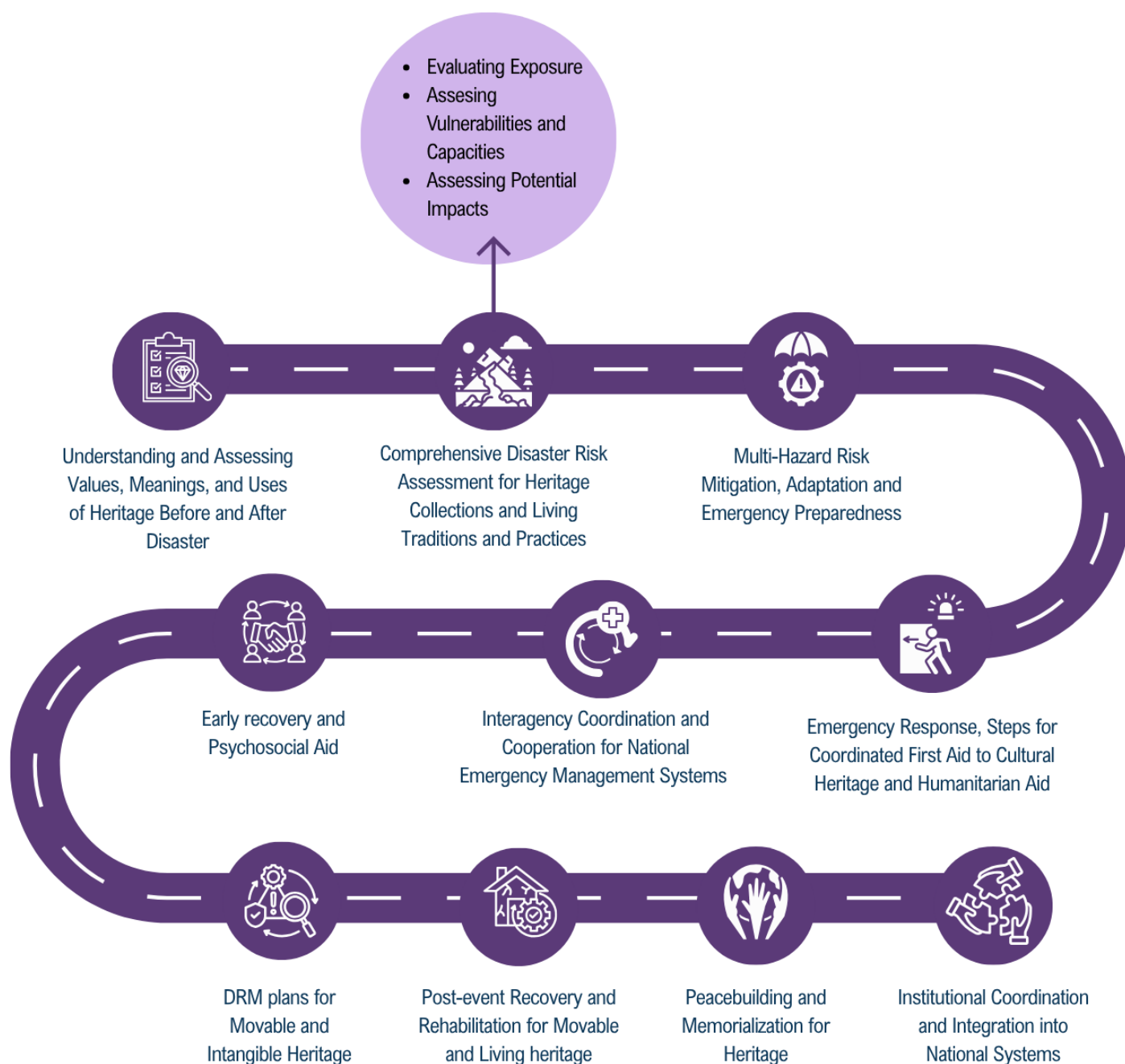
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Key modules:

- Evaluating Exposure
- Assesing Vulnerabilities and Capacities
- Assessing Potential Impacts

Understanding and Assessing Values, Meanings, and Uses of Heritage Before and After Disaster

Comprehensive Disaster Risk Assessment for Heritage Collections and Living Traditions and Practices

Multi-Hazard Risk Mitigation, Adaptation and Emergency Preparedness

Early recovery and Psychosocial Aid

Interagency Coordination and Cooperation for National Emergency Management Systems

Emergency Response, Steps for Coordinated First Aid to Cultural Heritage and Humanitarian Aid

DRM plans for Movable and Intangible Heritage

Post-event Recovery and Rehabilitation for Movable and Living heritage

Peacebuilding and Memorialization for Heritage

Institutional Coordination and Integration into National Systems

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READY Track 1 – Safeguarding Heritage Collections, Living Traditions and Practices in the face of Disasters, Extreme Weather Events and Complex Emergencies

Course structure

The READY Track 1 training is designed as a blended learning experience structured around four interconnected phases. Over the next eight months, it will combine online learning, immersive in-person workshops, and in-field application.

Phase 1: Online Orientation and Introduction to Key Concepts

Dates: June 16 – July 9, 2025
Location: Online (Zoom)

This phase includes live, half-day online sessions (Monday to Thursday) over four weeks, totalling 16–20 hours per week. It introduces participants to foundational concepts of disaster risk management for cultural heritage, emphasizing systems thinking, community-centred approaches, and inter-agency coordination.

Phase 2: In-Person Training on Movable and Intangible Cultural Heritage

Dates: July 21 – August 3, 2025
Location: Riga, Latvia

This two-week intensive training will consist of hands-on simulations, technical sessions, and collaborative exercises. One day of rest will be built into each training week. Participants are advised to secure approval from their institutions for a minimum 17-day stay. The training will be structured around 4–5 case studies, including those proposed by participants, and will encourage in-depth group work and peer-to-peer learning.

Phase 3: Follow-up Field Projects Implemented by Participants

Dates: August 2025 – February 2026
Location for distance mentoring: Online (Zoom)

Following the in-person training and supported by distance mentoring, participants will design and implement joint or individual field projects in their home countries. These projects will focus on improving preparedness and resilience for collections, living traditions, and associated knowledge systems at risk. Implementation support is expected to come from participants' institutions.

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Phase 4: International Online Meeting for Dissemination of Field Project Outcomes

Dates: To be confirmed after project completion

This final phase will bring participants back together in an international online forum to share experiences, lessons learned, and policy recommendations based on their field project outcomes.

Participants

The training brings together approximately 25 participants representing diverse cultural, geographic, and institutional backgrounds. Selected from across Europe and beyond, they include professionals working in the fields of heritage conservation, museum management, archives, libraries, civil protection, and disaster risk management. This multidisciplinary group will engage in peer learning, cross-sector collaboration, and joint problem-solving throughout the course.

Teaching team

The READY course is delivered by a multidisciplinary team of experts with extensive experience in humanitarian assistance, development planning, cultural heritage conservation, disaster risk management, climate action, and crisis negotiation. The session lecturers bring diverse perspectives rooted in both theory and field practice, ensuring participants gain applied knowledge that is grounded in real-world challenges.

A dedicated group of mentors, drawn from ICCROM's FAR's global alumni network, will accompany participants throughout the three phases of the training. These mentors will provide personalized guidance, facilitate groupwork, and help participants link course content to their professional contexts.

Former FAR participants, especially those from Ukraine, form an integral part of the teaching team. By sharing their recent experiences from the field, they will illustrate how the methods, tools and skills acquired through ICCROM's FAR training are being applied in risk-prone regions to proactively safeguard heritage.

Language

Most participants and course team members are not native English speakers. However, the working language of the course is English. The course team will be available at all times to help in overcoming language barriers during lectures, practical activities, group discussions, and study visits.

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Course Evaluation

At the end of each week, participants are asked to complete a short evaluation form. These reflections are essential for the course team to monitor progress and make timely adjustments to ensure an engaging and effective learning experience.

A formal evaluation system used across all ICCROM courses has been applied to this training. It includes feedback from participants, their institutions, the course team, and partner organizations. This long-term evaluation will assess the course content, pedagogical approach, and overall learning environment.

READY App

To enhance the learning experience and streamline communication, participants have access to the **READY App**, developed by ICCROM specifically for this course. The app serves as a central hub for all course-related resources, including the training schedule, session links, reading materials, assignments, and evaluation forms.

Through the app, participants can stay updated on announcements, connect with mentors, access groupwork tools, and submit required tasks—all in one convenient platform. The app is accessible via mobile or desktop and is designed to support engagement across all phases of the course, from online sessions to in-person training and fieldwork.

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Key Tools:

Participants will have access to a curated set of practical tools and reference materials developed by ICCROM and its partners to support risk-informed heritage protection. These tools were designed for use in real-world contexts and have been translated into multiple languages to facilitate wider adoption.
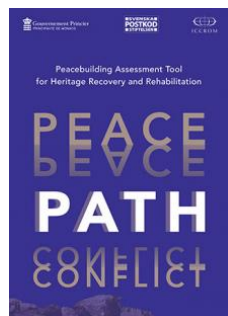

Guide to Risk Management

First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis – Handbook and Toolkit

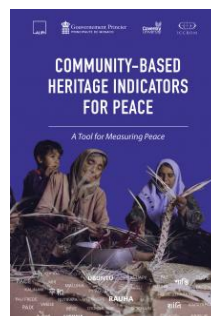Endangered Heritage: Emergency Evacuation of Heritage Collections

inSIGHT: A Participatory Game for Enhancing Disaster Risk Governance

PATH - Peacebuilding Assessment Tool for Heritage Recovery and Rehabilitation

Community-Based Heritage Indicators for Peace: A Tool for Measuring Peace

Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development

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Technical partners

READY Track 1 is hosted by

Ministry of Culture
Republic of Latvia

GERMAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

UNDRR
UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

MINISTERIO DE CULTURA
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DEL PATRIMONIO CULTURAL Y BELLAS ARTES

DEPARTMENT OF ANTIQUITIES CYPRUS

SWEDISH NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD
RIKSANTIKVARIEÄMBETET

Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche

CNR ISAC

ispc Istituto di Scienze del Patrimonio Culturale

ICA INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES ARCHIVES

National Institute of Heritage
Romania

IRPA KIK Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage

REPÚBLICA PORTUGUESA CULTURA

MUSEUS E MONUMENTOS DE PORTUGAL

CULTURE

МУЗЕЙ РЕВОЛЮЦІЇ ГІДНОСТІ
REVOLUTION OF DIGNITY MUSEUM

Republika Hrvatska Ministarstvo kulture
Republic of Croatia Ministry of Culture

MUSEUM of King Jan III's PALACE at WILANÓW

CENTRE DES MONUMENTS NATIONAUX

Austrian Federal Monuments Authority

Co-funded by the European Union

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