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Project “FIBRES. Fostering Intangible Bonds: Resilience, Environment and Society” - no. 101288188 - Call: HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-TWO-STAGE

FIBRES INAUGURAL SYMPOSIUM

Call for contributions

LIVING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN TIMES OF RUPTURE KNOWLEDGE, RESILIENCE, AND PREPAREDNESS

21 January 2027 | Venice, Italy

The inaugural symposium of the Horizon Europe project FIBRES will open its scientific activities to researchers and practitioners working with living heritage, together with the communities and institutions that sustain it. The symposium will address the broader concerns from which FIBRES originated and develop a shared discussion on knowledge, resilience and preparedness for intangible cultural heritage in times of rupture.

Living cultural heritage is a matter of resilience and public action as well as safeguarding. The symposium will examine what living heritage enables communities to know and do when continuity is at risk. Knowledge embedded in cultural practices may help communities recognise risks and prepare for disruption. The forms of collective organisation sustaining these practices may also support emergency response and recovery.¹

Intangible cultural heritage comprises practices, knowledge and forms of expression that communities recognise as part of their heritage and transmit across generations. It is continually recreated as people respond to changes in their environment and circumstances.² For instance UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity includes practices such as the textile art of Taquile in Peru, Naga motif weaving in Laos, Aubusson tapestry in France, piña weaving from pineapple leaf fibres in the Philippines and carpet weaving in Iran’s Fars region, encompassing sheep shearing, wool spinning and natural dyeing, alongside traditional irrigation practices combining knowledge of water and land with collective responsibilities for their management.³

Its continuity relies on relationships within communities and across generations. It also depends on heritage bearers’ access to the places and materials needed to practise and transmit their heritage, and on institutions that support them. Rupture is used here to describe situations in which communities can no longer sustain these relationships or access the resources needed to practise and transmit their heritage. The symposium will also consider how perceptions of loss and endangerment shape decisions about safeguarding⁴.

Environmental change can produce ruptures through cumulative pressures or sudden disasters. Extreme heat and drought may alter seasonal rhythms or restrict access to materials. Flooding and wildfires can damage the places where living heritage is

1 UNESCO. (2020). Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies. Resolution 8.GA 9

2 UNESCO. (2003). Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage. Article 2. [Official text](#)

3 *Lists of intangible cultural heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices*. Retrieved September 23, 2026, from <https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists>

4 DeSilvey, C., & Harrison, R. (2020). Anticipating loss: rethinking endangerment in heritage futures. *International*



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practised and transform entire landscapes. These effects can change the timing and location of rituals or seasonal gatherings and alter agricultural and craft practices rooted in particular environments.

Armed conflict and forced displacement can also rupture the social and territorial foundations of living heritage. They expose heritage bearers to violence, separate communities from the places in which their practices have developed and interrupt transmission.

Environmental and military pressures can interact with longer-term social transformations. Globalisation and urbanisation reshape the environments in which practices are embedded. Rural depopulation and demographic ageing affect the social basis of transmission. Economic insecurity and migration alter livelihoods and community relations.

Traditional and local knowledge can inform environmental observation and resource management. It may contribute to the recognition of natural hazards and adaptation to local ecosystems, while shared cultural practices can help restore social relations after disasters and sustain cohesion during recovery.

Risk assessment must consider the exposure of cultural practices to rupture, while resilience planning can draw on knowledge held by communities. Incorporating these dimensions into public policy requires empirical evidence and participatory processes. It must also respect the agency of heritage bearers, human rights and cultural diversity. FIBRES examines these questions through fibre-related heritage. Fibre gives the project both its field of inquiry and its central image. Its strength comes from connections among threads, while damage can be addressed through joining and reweaving. FIBRES investigates how relationships can be strengthened before rupture and repaired after it through knowledge rooted in particular environments and carried across generations. The inaugural symposium opens this inquiry beyond the consortium. It will bring FIBRES into dialogue with like-minded scholars and practitioners and including research and experiences with no direct connection to fibres or fibre-related heritage.

Themes

The symposium invites contributions addressing, among others:

Environmental and climate pressures

- climate change, natural hazards and environmental disasters, including extreme heat, drought, excessive rainfall, flooding, storms and wildfires, in relation to the continuity and transmission of intangible cultural heritage and its places, resources and seasonal rhythms;
- relationships among heritage practices, ecosystems, livelihoods and local economies;

Conflict, displacement and socio-economic change

- intangible cultural heritage under armed conflict, forced displacement, migration and other emergencies;
- interactions among environmental, political, demographic and economic pressures;

Knowledge, preparedness and resilience

- traditional and local knowledge in environmental observation, natural-resource management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk recognition and post-disaster recovery;



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- the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to preparedness, emergency response, recovery and community resilience;

Participation, transmission and policy

- methods, policies and tools for incorporating intangible cultural heritage into risk assessment and community resilience planning;
- participatory research and policy making involving heritage bearers, researchers, public authorities, cultural organisations and civil society;
- intergenerational transmission, the role of younger generations and gender dynamics;
- relationships among safeguarding, continuity, adaptation and transformation.

Forms of contribution

The call welcomes short research presentations, position papers and testimonies from heritage bearers. Proposals may present completed research, work in progress, field observations, methodological questions or community experiences. Proposals should include a title, an abstract of no more than 500 words, the proposed form of contribution, the contributor's name and institutional or community affiliation, and a biographical note of no more than 100 words.

Timetable

Submission deadline: November 15, 2026

Notification of acceptance: December 1, 2026

Submission

Please submit your proposal by email to fibres@unive.it