

# UNESCO and Us

Introducing The Burra Charter Practice note –  
*Intangible Cultural Heritage and Place*



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# The landscape from 31 Moorabinda Street, Buderim

Mount Ninderry, Mount Cooroy, Maroochy river



A ritual at home

# Mount Coolum, Old Woman Island, Pacific Ocean



# Development of *The Burra Charter* & Practice Notes

Changes to Charter and new practice notes address:

- GAPS in understanding & practice
- Shifts in language & terminology
- Understandings taken for granted  
(change to accepted conventions)

Changes also prompted by developments in conservation practice elsewhere

– eg ICOMOS International, UNESCO & legal practice

# Burra Charter Practice Note – Intangible cultural heritage and place

Prompted by UNESCO Convention for ICH

adapts

**UNESCO ICH Convention – scope & definition to:**

- fit with Burra Charter - terms, & definitions; +
- fill a gap in practice

## UNESCO Convention - Definition *Intangible Cultural Heritage*

The intangible cultural heritage means the **practice, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills** – as well as the **instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces** associated therewith – that **communities, groups** and, in some cases, individuals **recognize as part of their cultural heritage**. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity

# Practice Note definitions

- **Intangible cultural heritage** means the diversity of **cultural practices** created by communities and groups of people over time and recognised by them as part of their heritage at the place.
- **Cultural practices** encompasses the rich diversity of intangible cultural heritage that exists in Australia today these include traditional and customary practices, cultural responsibilities, rituals and ceremonies, oral traditions and expressions, performances, and the associated language, knowledge and skills, including traditional craftsmanship, but is not limited to these.
- **Communities and groups** means those who engage in a particular form of intangible cultural heritage, and for whom this intangible cultural heritage contributes to their sense of identity. Individuals within communities and groups may be the guardians of certain aspects of a cultural practice – specific knowledge or skills.

Places with Intangible Cultural Heritage  
**Myer Music Bowl - Carols by Candlelight**





# Musgrave Park, Brisbane, Greek Paniyeri Festival

[The Park is also Brisbane's main meeting place for First Peoples - a continuously occupied camp site, which includes the Tent Embassy]



# Sydney Harbour Bridge – New Year's Eve Fireworks



# MCG - AFL Grand Final



Hawthorn supporters arrive at MCG – wearing their uniforms

# Brewarrina Fish traps – use and maintenance by the Ngemba people



# Practice Note - Differences from UNESCO convention

- **ICH covered by Burra Charter**
  - definition of *USE* and in *associations & meanings*  
[no need to change Burra Charter]
- PN - ICH related to place  
[not the whole scope of UNESCO definition which]

PN focus is:

*Intangible cultural heritage that occurs at or is related to place.*

as an aspect of the associations between people and a place

ie cultural practices *recognised by community or group as part of their heritage at the place'*

# UNESCO Definition of *Intangible Cultural Heritage*

The intangible cultural heritage means

***the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills*** –  
as well as the **instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces** associated therewith –  
that **communities, groups** and, in some cases, individuals  
**recognize as part of their cultural heritage.**

This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation,

is constantly recreated by communities and groups

in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and

provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

# Implications for heritage practice

## *More attention to*

- **what communities and groups are doing at the place ( their *cultural practices* )**
- **The relationship of the *cultural practices* to the place & to the community or group**

AND

- **involvement of the community or group in study, assessment, and management of the place**

*NB Intangible and tangible* not separate entities, but dependent on one-another.

# PN – Intangible Cultural Heritage and place

*What's not included?*

*Intangible attributes of each value –  
aesthetic, historic, scientific, social and  
spiritual*



- **Intangible cultural heritage** means the diversity of **cultural practices** created by communities and groups of people over time and recognised by them as part of their heritage at the place.
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- **Communities and groups** means those who engage in a particular form of intangible cultural heritage, and for whom this intangible cultural heritage contributes to their sense of identity. Individuals within communities and groups may be the guardians of certain aspects of a cultural practice – specific knowledge or skills.

- **Article 2 – Definitions**

- For the purposes of this Convention,

The “intangible cultural heritage” means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.

This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

# **AI Practice Notes - Required Contents**

Purpose

Defining Intangible cultural heritage

Principles

Common Issues in understanding and  
conserving Intangible Cultural heritage

Resources