

**Tentative List and World Heritage Status Guidance Document**

Overview of the World Heritage Nomination Process

1. Tentative List Application (Approx 2 years)
2. Preparation of site and community (Typically 5 years)
3. Preparation of nomination dossier (Typically 5 years; concurrent with above)
4. Submission to World Heritage Committee must take place prior to the 30th of September in the year the decision to nominate is made
5. Adjudication on the submission will be made at the WH committee meeting following the advice of the Advisory Bodies

**Introduction and Background**:

The World Heritage Convention (The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage) was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1972. The aim of the Convention is to ensure the proper identification, protection, conservation and presentation of cultural and natural heritage with 'outstanding universal value to all mankind. Ireland ratified the Convention in 1991 and currently has two properties inscribed on the World Heritage List: Brú na Bóinne, the Archaeological Ensemble of the Bend of the Boyne; and Sceilg Mhichíl.

The National Monuments Service (NMS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, as State Party to the UNESCO Convention, is in the process of re-opening Ireland’s Tentative List. The NMS seeks nominations from Local Authorities, State Bodies, community organisations and individuals, for sites which may possess Outstanding Universal Value as defined by UNESCO.

1. Each applicant must fill out the attached form, explaining why it should be included on the Tentative List, and also provide letters of support from the relevant stakeholders. Applicants should also include supporting photographs and images so that the assessors can gain an insight into the proposed property.
2. Once the form has been completed and received, a committee of internal experts will evaluate the proposed site. A shortlist of sites will then be passed on to an oversight committee to discuss whether they meet the criteria. If a proposal has been passed on to the oversight committee the proposers will be informed and may be asked for further details. All unsuccessful candidates will also be informed.
3. The expert committee will inform NMS of which sites they consider possess Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and that have sufficient stakeholder support for eventual World Heritage Status. On this basis, Ireland’s Tentative List of World Heritage Sites will be selected and sent to UNESCO for approval.
4. Once sites are on the Tentative List, the Department will liaise with the applicant/relevant statutory authority with regard to initiating a Technical Evaluation of the site, a Conservation Management Plan, and a Management Plan. The applicant will also be obliged to engage in further extensive local stakeholder consultation. The process of advancing from inclusion on the Tentative List to preparedness for eventual nomination as a World Heritage Site can be expected to take several years.
5. Once a site has reached the necessary standards for inscription as a World Heritage Site, only then is a nomination dossier prepared, explaining how the selected site meets UNESCO criteria. This will be submitted to UNESCO for the consideration of the World Heritage Committee.
6. UNESCO will then appoint experts to examine the nomination dossier, assessing both strengths and weaknesses, and it may send a mission to visit any sites proposed. These experts will recommend either Inscription on the List, referral, which means that certain elements need strengthening and the site is referred back to the State Party for amendment, or deferral which means that the site is deferred until a completely new dossier is submitted. UNESCO will have the final say as to which sites, in their opinion, show potential to demonstrate OUV.

**Preparing for nomination**:

Preparing a World Heritage nomination can be a satisfying and rewarding experience for those involved. The preparation of a nomination provides a chance to:

• understand and present a property to the international community;

• critically review the known values of a property;

• compare the property on an international level with other potentially similar properties;

• test, challenge and improve the adequacy of the property’s protection, conservation and management, including the protection of its setting;

• engage and support communities and stakeholders in the protection, conservation and management of a property; and

• recognize the range of interests in a property, sometimes including conflicting interests, and seek ways of effectively addressing the various interests.

**Benefits of World Heritage status**:

Some possible benefits of World Heritage status are:

• providing an opportunity for the State Party and for the local community to celebrate the property as one of the most important natural and cultural places on Earth;

• the property encourages a community to focus on protection for heritage in the life of the community;

 • international interest in World Heritage may provide a stimulus for international cooperation and joint efforts to ensure the protection of the property;

• providing opportunities to mobilize funding and support, including from donors, and the World Heritage Fund; and

• providing techniques and practices for protection, conservation and management that can be applied to national and local heritage properties.

**Definitions of Heritage**

Article 1 of the World Heritage Convention, defines “cultural heritage” as:

 • monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of history, art or science;

 • groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of history, art or science;

• sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of Outstanding Universal Value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

Article 2 of the Convention defines "natural heritage" as:

• natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of Outstanding Universal Value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;

• geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation;

• natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty. With these definitions in mind, any cultural, natural, or “mixed” heritage property that is deemed by the government of the nation (the “States Party”) to be of ‘Outstanding Universal Value’ can be put forward for nomination to the World Heritage List. The concept of OUV is assessed by ten criteria devised by the World Heritage Committee for this purpose.

Below is a list of relevant documents from UNESCO which can assist when completing your application:

World Heritage Resource Manuals <http://whc.unesco.org/en/resourcemanuals/>

Understanding World Heritage in Europe and North America.... <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/43/>

Engaging local communities <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/40/>

Community Development <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/31/>

Cultural Landscapes <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/26/>

Managing Historic Cities <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/27/>

Buffer Zones <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/25/>

Cultural landscapes again <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/7/>

Managing tourism <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/1/>

Operational Guidelines: [https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/](https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/%C2%A0)

Documents: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/>

Application Forms can be found at the following website: http://www.worldheritageireland.ie[link on site]

or Email: worldheritage@chg.gov.ie