

TOWARDS A RECOMMENDATION ON OPEN CULTURE

WHAT IS TAROC?

Towards a Recommendation on Open Culture or **TAROC** is a community initiative led by Creative Commons aiming to support the international community in developing a positive, affirmative, and influential **international normative instrument** (a "recommendation") enshrining the values, objectives, and mechanisms **for open culture to flourish**. Such an instrument would recognize the importance of global open sharing of culture **as a means to activate and support wider cultural and information policy ambitions**. There is currently no formal definition of "open culture" but it may be understood as including broad and inclusive access to cultural heritage and contemporary creativity.

WHY TAROC?

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promotes international cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, as well as communication and information. In the past few years, UNESCO adopted Recommendations for Open Educational Resources and Open Science, but there is currently no international instrument enshrining open culture.

Better sharing — sharing that is free, ethical, equitable, inclusive, sustainable, reciprocal, and responsible — is a key means to enable everyone to enjoy culture. In 2022, the UNESCO Mexico City MONDIACULT Declaration recognized culture as a global public good. However, the current policy landscape is unfit to fully realize this ambition:

- Citizens all over the world should have the right to meaningfully access the world's cultural heritage held in cultural heritage institutions in order to understand their present and create their future. However, they currently face multiple challenges to experience, interpret, and connect with their heritage and with each other.
- Cultural heritage institutions, including galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAMs) many of them publicly funded are pivotal spaces where citizens can participate in culture and contribute to building resilient knowledge societies. Yet many GLAMs cannot fulfill their missions in the digital world, including sharing collections as part of efforts to protect, preserve, safeguard, or make them available to the public for education, research or enjoyment.

Open culture is a means to overcome these challenges. There is an urgent need to realize open culture for all. Open culture cannot thrive without:

- A global policy environment including laws, standards, norms, frameworks, and practices — that supports open culture to the fullest extent possible.
- Empowered **people** who promote and practice open culture widely.
- Public, non-profit, and/or collectively governed open digital infrastructures to support delivery and enjoyment of culture, including free and open source software, as well as technical, legal and social open infrastructures.
- Sustainable and sufficient **funding** for GLAMs, creators and open infrastructures.



WHAT ARE TAROC'S GOALS?

TAROC envisions an international policy framework and joint work programs that recognize the potential of open culture as a primary means to attain the goals of the wider cultural policy agenda, including as a means to:

- **Uphold** everyone's fundamental rights under the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948):
 - Of freedom of expression and access to information Article 19
 - To freely participate in the cultural life of the community and to enjoy the arts — Article 27(1)
- Reach the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to culture, particularly cultural heritage
- Enable everyone to benefit from culture as a global public good
- Foster contemporary creativity and complement and accompany existing UNESCO instruments, including those protecting the rights of the artist:
 - support creators and artists who wish make their own works openly accessible
 - enable everyone to discover, access, share, use, reuse, and remix cultural heritage in the public domain and open contemporary cultural materials according to artists' wishes and free choices
- Catalyze the preservation, protection, safeguarding, dissemination, and revitalization of cultural heritage
- Increase accessibility to cultural heritage for people with disabilities
- Empower marginalized groups including young people, women, and Indigenous peoples in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- Support novel models for creators' fair remuneration and financial sustainability
- Enhance the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural heritage and cultural expressions
- Build knowledge societies and support digital and new technologies skills learning and support the cultural sector through technological transitions
- Fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural heritage
- **Facilitate** the return and restitution of cultural heritage
- Ensure a sustainable future for GLAMs and their collections

- Promote intercultural dialogue and understanding and promote sharing of reliable information
- Dynamize research, education, and learning linked to cultural heritage and the arts to face the world's biggest challenges
- Enliven arts, culture, and creativity to help us live richer lives
- **Promote** diversity, inclusivity, and equity to sustain just, democratic and resilient societies
- Propel cultural heritage institutions into the digital world with public investment to ensure their continued relevance, mission alignment, and service orientation

WHO IS *DRIVING* TAROC?

We are a community of practice made up of volunteers, librarians, copyright experts, anthropologists, artists, archivists, creators, academics, museum curators, researchers, lawyers, activists, cultural heritage institution/GLAM practitioners, and others involved in cultural heritage and contemporary creativity. We believe in the transformative power of open culture.

WHAT DOES CREATIVE COMMONS DO?

CC was founded in 2001 and for over two decades has been at the vanguard of access to culture. Since the start of TAROC in 2023, we:

CREATE We co-create resources to raise awareness, share knowledge, and spark new ideas to build new cultural paradigms, such as:

- Open Culture Background and Context
- Open Culture A Working Description
- Open Culture Values and Principles
- Open Culture Objectives and Outcomes

EXCHANGE We nurture spaces to hold global and local conversations to exchange real-life experiences

COLLABORATE We build networks to empower open culture volunteers and enthusiasts and stimulate collaboration among like-minded individuals, communities, institutions, organizations, the private sector, and governments.

ARE YOU READY TO JOIN?

Get in touch with the Creative Commons Open Culture Team at info@creativecommons.org