



ICELAND'S CANDIDACY

UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD

2021-2025



NORDIC CANDIDATE SUPPORTED BY
DENMARK, FINLAND, NORWAY AND SWEDEN

AS A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ICELAND WILL WORK FOR

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- + An **effective** and **active UNESCO**, highlighting its important contribution to progress and sustainability.
 - + The full implementation of the **Agenda 2030** for Sustainable Development.
 - + Inclusive and equitable high-quality **education**.
 - + **Equality** in all spheres of life.
 - + An integrated approach to **science** for a sustainable future.
 - + **Capacity development** as a key to support Member States to craft and implement effective public policies.
 - + Respect for **fundamental freedoms**, **pluralistic media** and **freedom of information**.
 - + Safeguarding the **intangible and tangible heritage** in all its form, protecting and promoting **cultural diversity and creativity**, and the preservation of **languages** and **linguistic diversity**.

A LONGSTANDING PARTNER

Iceland, a longstanding partner of UNESCO, is an active supporter of **multilateralism**, and continuously works to **promote inclusive dialogue** and **cooperation**.

Iceland is firmly committed to **UNESCO's mandate**, its basic principles, global priorities, and strategic objectives.

Iceland shares UNESCO's goals of **promoting peace** and **security** through collaboration in **education, science, culture, and communication**.

Iceland's candidacy to the UNESCO Executive Board in 2021 is in line with Iceland's desire to strengthen its commitment to the Organization and the realisation of UNESCO'S mandate both through its normative work and work on the ground.



EMPHASIS

Iceland prioritizes the **implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** through concerted efforts, strong partnerships and inclusive dialogue.

Our priorities for action include **education, equality, heritage, the environment, youth, and inclusion** — leaving no one behind.



PROMOTING EDUCATION

Iceland endorses the work of UNESCO in promoting global policy dialogue on education based on Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Education Agenda. **Inclusive high-quality education** is an important priority for Iceland as education is a vital tool to promote peace and diversity, prevent violent extremism and to embrace responsible global citizenship.

Iceland is a founding member of the Capacity Development for Education Programme and contributes to UNESCO's educational projects.

SUSTAINING PEACE

Iceland recognises the crucial role of UNESCO in promoting peaceful societies in line with Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda. Iceland supports UNESCO's action to protect **freedom of expression and the safety of journalists**, its leading role on education and global citizenship, and is also committed to safeguarding cultural heritage and scientific resources.





CULTURAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITY

UNESCO plays a key role in recognizing our world's heritage. Iceland is firmly committed to **protecting the world's heritage** – natural and cultural, tangible and intangible. This includes protecting and promoting cultural diversity and creativity and the preservation of languages.

For Iceland, a sparsely populated island with great literary heritage, the preservation of languages, linguistic diversity and the intrinsic value of language – core to cultural identity, is of high importance.

COMMUNICATION

Access to information and information literacy, free and pluralistic media, fostering freedom of expression and promoting safety of journalists are essential components to development and democracy.

Iceland strongly **supports UNESCO's holistic approach in the communication and information sector.**



SCIENCE FOR THE FUTURE

Iceland seeks to build on UNESCO initiatives to improve the interface between science, society and policy. To ensure the successful implementation of the SDGs, governments and the international community must base their policies on sound scientific knowledge. UNESCO has promoted important scientific collaboration within key fields such as **geology, biodiversity,** and **oceanography**, where Iceland is an active participant.

EQUALITY

Iceland advocates for universal human rights that concern everyone, everywhere. Icelanders believe that everyone has the **right to respect and dignity**. Iceland stands strongly behind multilateralism that is conducted based on International Law, which is key to greater peace and stability.

Iceland has been a vocal champion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, a key driver for the achievement of the SDGs.



GRÓ

GRÓ — GROCENTRE.IS

Iceland places a high priority on capacity building in developing countries. UNESCO plays a key role in this respect - both in developing institutional and human capacities - to support member states in reaching the SDGs in UNESCO's fields of competence.

To support this work, **GRÓ, the International Centre for Capacity Development**, comprising four of Iceland's flagship development programmes was moved under the auspices of UNESCO in 2020. The centre comprises four training programmes in the fields of Fisheries, Gender Equality, Geothermal Energy and Land Restoration. More than 1400 fellows from over 100 developing countries have graduated from the training programmes in Iceland from inception, and over 4000 have attended short training courses in partner countries. Upon graduation, these fellows have played a key role in contributing to the sustainable development of their home countries.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND — BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Recent world events of the COVID-19 crisis have further exposed the digital divide and shed light on digital opportunities. As we continue our path towards increasing digitalisation, bridging the digital divide will be key to fulfill our promise of leaving no one behind. UNESCO's contribution in this area, including in relation to education, bridging the digital gender gap has the potential to be crucial towards building a better and more equitable future for all.

ICELAND IS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS SINCE 1946 AND UNESCO SINCE 1964



UNESCO is one of Iceland's key partner organizations in supporting the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals.



In April 2019, Iceland signed its first partnership agreement with UNESCO with the aim of providing predictable and flexible funding through a multi-year agreement, aligned to UNESCO's strategic orientation and reinforcing its delivery towards the SDGs and Agenda 2030.



The country has **three** World Heritage Sites: **Vatnajökull National Park** (2019), **Surtsey Island** (2008), and **Thingvellir National Park** (2004).

CONTACT INFORMATION

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ICELAND PRESENTED ITS CANDIDACY
TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO
FOR THE TERM 2021–2025 IN JUNE 2018



TOGETHER TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE