



European Heritage Days
Journées européennes
du patrimoine

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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European Heritage Days
A joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Union

Young European #HeritageMakers Competition

#EuropeanHeritageDays activity oriented towards children and young people

Guidelines

[European Heritage Days](#) (EHD) are the largest cultural events celebrated by people across Europe. Each year, up to 70,000 events are organized in countries that have signed the [European Cultural Convention](#), attracting about 30 million visitors. EHD, a joint effort by the [Council of Europe](#) and the [European Commission](#), is a unique grass-roots initiative shared by millions of Europeans.

YOUNG EUROPEAN HERITAGE MAKERS



Photo: EHD event - discussions, workshops and seminars in Žagarė, Lithuania 2023

WHAT IS IT?

Children and young people play a crucial role in the future of heritage protection and promotion and are a precious source of creative ideas and contributions to the field of heritage in general.

The [Young European Heritage Makers](#) is a competition for young people in Europe. It gives them a chance to explore their surroundings, discover interesting parts of their heritage, and share these with the world. The competition encourages young people to understand heritage and express their views.

This document is here to help facilitators guide participants through this exploration. Facilitators might be teachers, youth leaders, or professionals working in heritage organizations, like museums or libraries. They should be trustworthy and legally allowed to work with children in their country.

Facilitator's Role

Facilitators help organize groups of children who are interested in heritage. They introduce them to local heritage and ensure that activities follow the in line with the [Council for Europe child safeguarding policy](#) .The Council of Europe "[Listen – Act – Change Council of Europe Handbook on children's participation for professionals working for and with children](#)", including new "[Rome Strategy](#)" (2022-2027), adopted by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers on 23 February 2022, as well as [the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee](#) should be consulted before and during the delivery of the activities.

Facilitators should support children in exploring heritage but should not interfere with their process of discovery and expression.

WHY PARTICIPATE?

The Young European #HeritageMakers Competition has three main goals:

Share Experiences: Collect stories about how children and young people understand the European aspect of their local heritage. This can include physical heritage like monuments, natural landscapes, or cultural traditions such as dancing or singing.

Recognize Young Talent: Highlight the work of young people interested in heritage.

Connect Across Europe: Bring together young heritage makers from different parts of Europe.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE?

Organize an Activity: Create an activity under the theme "Young European Heritage Makers" with a group of young people. There are **two age categories**: children born between 2013 and 2018, and young people born between 2007 and 2013. The activity should answer the question: ***What is your European heritage?***

Present the Outcome: Share the results through a video (up to 5 minutes) or a visual medium (photo, painting, drawing), accompanied by a description of up to 800 words.

Submit Your Entry: Upload your group's work to the EHD website, including details about the participants and the facilitator.

2024 Theme

The theme for 2024 is "[Heritage of Routes, Networks, and Connections](#)". We encourage participants to explore stories of Europe related to this theme in tangible, intangible, natural, or digital heritage.

Examples of Activities:

- Host community events, workshops, or discussion groups.
- Organize quests, treasure hunts, or visits to local heritage sites like museums, monuments, or historical buildings.
- Encourage participants to explore their family heritage by talking to older generations and learning about their community's history.

Consent

Participants' personal data is processed based on consent. Depending on age and national law, this consent might be given by the participant or their parent/guardian. For European winners, separate media consent forms will be required for the online ceremony.

Exploration Questions:

What does heritage mean to you?

What do you know about European heritage?

What European story can you find in the heritage around you?

What is the most interesting part of your local heritage?

Facilitators should guide, NOT instruct, allowing children to explore heritage on their own.

It's crucial that the ideas, discoveries, and stories come directly from the children themselves. The primary responsibility of a facilitator is to create a safe and supportive environment where children feel empowered to express their own views on heritage.

What Does This Mean?

Facilitators should:

Provide resources, such as books, websites, or access to local heritage sites, that children can use to explore their heritage.

Ask open-ended questions that encourage children to think deeply about their surroundings and heritage.

Ensure that activities follow the Council of Europe's child safeguarding policies.

Support logistical needs, like organizing visits to heritage sites or providing materials for creative projects.

But..

Facilitators should not:

Tell children what aspects of heritage are important or what should be included in their projects.

Suggest specific narratives, themes, or interpretations that reflect the facilitator's own views rather than the children's perspectives.

Over-edit or rewrite the children's work to make it "perfect" or more in line with what adults might consider heritage.

Examples of Facilitator Involvement:

Example of Proper Facilitation:

Situation: A group of children is exploring a local historical monument. One child is fascinated by the story of a particular figure associated with the site.

Facilitator's Role: The facilitator might ask, "What do you find interesting about this person? How do you think they are connected to our town's history?" The facilitator provides guidance without steering the child toward any particular conclusion or narrative.

Example of Improper Influence:

Situation: The facilitator knows that the local community is proud of its traditional dance and believes it should be featured in the children's project.

Improper Action: The facilitator tells the children, "You should include the traditional dance because it's a big part of our heritage."

Corrected Approach: Instead, the facilitator could say, "What traditions in our community stand out to you? Are there any that you think are particularly important to include?" This approach leaves the decision entirely in the hands of the children.

Encouraging Originality:

Scenario: A child expresses interest in exploring how modern technology is part of their cultural heritage.

Facilitator's Response: Instead of discouraging this choice because it might not align with traditional views of heritage, the facilitator might say, "That's an interesting idea! How do you think technology influences our community's culture?" This response encourages the child to pursue their unique perspective.

Why This Approach Matters

Allowing children to lead the exploration ensures that their voices are authentically represented. It helps them build confidence in their ability to observe, analyze, and express what is meaningful to them. Facilitators are there to assist and inspire, but the story of heritage should always be told through the eyes of the children.

Who Can Apply?

Any **group of young people** or individuals under 18 from **participating countries** can join the competition. Entries are accepted in **two age categories: 6-11 years and 11-17 years.**

Group Size

For the **6-11 age group**, there is **no restriction on group size.** For the **11-17 age group**, the **group should have 2-5 participants** to qualify for European-level evaluation.

Selection Criteria

All eligible entries will be published as Young European Heritage Makers stories and promoted at the European level. **If selected as a national winner, the entry must include an English description for evaluation.**

Evaluation Criteria:

- Originality and creativity
- How well the story answers: What does heritage mean to you? What do you know about European heritage? What European story can you find in the heritage around you? What is the most interesting part of your local heritage?

Prizes

All of the submitted works will be published on the EHD website, after National Coordinators have confirmed their eligibility.

At the national level, the top 5 entries from each age category will receive special EHD goodie bags and certificates. One selected work from each category will be included in the European evaluation. At the European level, **winners in the 11-17 age category will get to visit Strasbourg in 2025 and have their work exhibited.**

Important Dates

2 September 2024 – 31 December 2024: Organize activities and upload entries.

31 January 2025: National level evaluation submitted to the EHD Secretariat.

February 2025: European level evaluation.

March 2025: Winners announced.

May 2025: Strasbourg exhibition and visit for winners in the 11-17 age category.

Origins

What initially started as “Heritage Makers” in Finland in 2013, before its adoption as a programme-wide cross-frontier activity as of 2018, has been recognised by the EHD National Coordinators from across Europe as a unique opportunity for engaging young people, both online and in their immediate surroundings.