

Canada Memory of the World Register 2025-26

Call for Nominations

[The Canadian Commission for UNESCO \(CCUNESCO\)](#) is pleased to launch the **2025-26 Call for Nominations for Inscription on the Canada Memory of the World Register**.

The Register recognizes nationally significant documentary heritage items, collections, or fonds related to Canada and those who live here, including Indigenous peoples. The goal of the Register is to facilitate the preservation of documentary heritage and to increase awareness of and access to documentary resources with national significance.

The Canada Memory of the World Programme is modeled on the UNESCO Memory of the World International Programme, which aims to preserve and provide access to documentary heritage around the world.

Both the Canadian and International Registers are accessible online, kept up to date regularly, and made available to the public via, respectively, the [CCUNESCO](#) and [UNESCO](#) websites. Nominations for the Canadian Register are evaluated by the [Canadian Advisory Committee for Memory of the World](#), a committee of experts formed by CCUNESCO.

Please note that, while inscription on the Canada Memory of the World Register is prestigious, it does not come with monetary prizes or other compensation. CCUNESCO takes no ownership of the documentary heritage inscribed on the Register.

As part of our Call for Nominations in 2025-2026, the Canadian Advisory Committee for Memory of the World is particularly interested in archival collections relating to the theme of **Archives for Justice**. Records touching on this theme may include those related to human and minority rights, reconciliation, activist issues, sociopolitical movements, and equity.

In recognition of the proclamation of the [second International Decade for People of African Descent](#), the Canadian Advisory Committee also wishes to extend its call for **collections relating to the Black Canadian experience**. The Committee is particularly interested in collections touching on themes of Black entrepreneurship and of slavery in Canada. Please note that the Committee also welcomes nominations relating to other subjects.

A. What can be nominated?

Nominations can be of a single document, a collection, or a fonds that provides evidence of stories about Canada. The Canada Memory of the World Register defines the word “Canada” as a geographical area that has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) since time immemorial. Over time, people from all over the world have also made Canada their home.

Memory can be documented in numerous ways, including textual, non-textual, audiovisual, and digital

form. Nominated materials might include diaries, letters, manuscripts, posters, published books, wampum belts, works of art, photographs, audiovisual recordings (including oral heritage and storytelling), films and television recordings, as well as web-based materials, such as websites, apps, video games, and online learning resources.

The Committee accepts nominations for documentary heritage contained in open collections, i.e., those collections that are still in the process of being created, such as the archives of living people or ongoing institutions. However, the Committee will only assess materials that are already part of a collection at the time of nomination. The Committee asks successful nominators of open collections to keep CCUNESCO regularly informed of major future acquisitions related to the same collection.

B. Who can nominate?

Individuals, private and public institutions, organizations, and communities who are custodians of documentary heritage of Canadian significance can submit a nomination for inscription on the Canada Memory of the World Register. The Committee also accepts joint nominations, such as between a custodial institution housing the materials and an organization or interest group affiliated with the creation or use of the materials. Please note that each nominating body is limited to two individual submissions per Call. In the spirit of cooperation, joint nominations are not counted towards this total.

C. Nominating Indigenous Sources of Memory and Knowledge

CCUNESCO respects the cultural and intellectual property rights of Indigenous people as recommended in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #69, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights through Action to Combat Impunity (2005), more commonly known as the Joinet/Orentlicher Principles.

CCUNESCO recognizes that Indigenous history or heritage is often located in but not limited to oral traditions, songs, dance, storytelling, anecdotes, place names, hereditary names, and other forms of Indigenous knowledge, as outlined and recommended by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore. CCUNESCO also respects the fact that the Indigenous Peoples of Canada transfer, teach, understand, and share their histories and stories in unique ways. CCUNESCO respects the right of Indigenous People to decide when, if, and how to submit items to the Canada Memory of the World Register, and CCUNESCO is committed to ensuring that inscription on the Register does not infringe on Indigenous peoples' ownership, control, access, and possession of their histories and stories.

Anyone submitting a nomination for documentary materials that contain Indigenous knowledge and/or language and/or traditional cultural expressions must ensure that appropriate protocols and agreements are in place with the Indigenous nations, communities, and/or people, including full clarity about and respect for Indigenous concepts of copyright, intellectual property rights, access, and privacy.

D. How to nominate?

Step 1: Complete a Declaration of Interest

If you are interested in proposing documentary heritage for inscription, please send a short Declaration of Interest to CCUNESCO. This Declaration of Interest can be a written document, a video, or an audio recording. Written declarations should be between 500 and 1,500 words. Video or audio recordings should be between five and eight minutes long. Please refer to the Declaration of Interest Questionnaire on the [CCUNESCO website](#) for further information.

Documentary heritage must meet at least one of the key criteria for national significance, as well as the additional considerations. Any materials considered for the Register must be authentic, unique, accessible, and irreplaceable. Please refer to the Selection Criteria for more information.

Your Declaration of Interest will be reviewed by the Canadian Advisory Committee for Memory of the World, and you will then receive a letter providing feedback. You may then be invited to proceed to the second step in the nomination process.

Step 2: Completing a Nomination Form

Invited applicants will have approximately three to four months from the receipt of feedback on the Declaration of Interest to submit a Nomination Form. A copy of the form is available on the [CCUNESCO website](#). Nominations must be completed using the Nomination Form; additional material is limited, as explained in the criteria for completing the form.

Upon receipt of your completed form, the Committee will conduct a full evaluation of your nomination and inform you of its decision.

E. Timeline

The next date to submit a Declaration of Interest is January 31, 2026.

For those invited to the next stage, the deadline for submission of the completed Nomination Form will be in early August 2026. Most nominations will receive a reply in the fall of 2026. Please note that incomplete or unclear applications may result in delays.

F. Contact

Please email declarations of interest and nominations to the attention of Elaine Young, Program Officer for Communication and Information, Canadian Commission for UNESCO (elaine.young@ccunesco.ca), or by mail at PO Box 1047, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5V8.