

Strategy for crafts

The Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage



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Preface

It is with pleasure that we launch the Directorate for Cultural Heritage's Crafts Strategy. Skilled craftspeople are needed to help preserve cultural monuments, sites and environments in the years ahead. In the craft trades, both tangible and intangible cultural heritage are intertwined.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage is the advisory and executive body for the Ministry of Climate and Environment in matters concerning the cultural environment. Traditional craftsmanship has long been a key component of the mandate from the Ministry. The following is outlined for 2025: *'The Directorate for Cultural Heritage shall work strategically to strengthen competence and knowledge development within traditional crafts and contribute to the continued advancement of documentation efforts, as well as the preservation of knowledge and expertise connected to heritage restoration and maintenance.'* The Directorate for Cultural Heritage's Crafts Strategy will serve as a key tool in supporting this essential development work.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage's Crafts Strategy is anchored in the Report to the Storting no. 16 (2019–2020) New goals for Norway's cultural environment policy – Involvement, sustainability and diversity. This white paper emphasises that owners of cultural heritage should have better framework conditions. Access to necessary advice and craft skills is highlighted, along with a focus on 'advancing and developing continuing education for skilled craftspeople in the restoration and repair of buildings and ships'. The Crafts Strategy is based on the intentions set out in the white paper.

The Church Preservation Fund was launched in 2024 as the largest cultural heritage initiative in Norway's history. The fund will allocate up to NOK 500 million annually for restoration, preservation and conservation work. There will be a major increase in projects requiring expertise in traditional crafts. More competent craftspeople are needed for the fund to succeed.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage therefore hopes that the Crafts Strategy will encourage more people to learn traditional crafts and pursue this as a career. This is absolutely vital to the success of preservation efforts in Norway.

It is also important to emphasise that the expertise developed in traditional crafts has a wide range of applications. Preserving and using existing buildings and upgrading their energy efficiency are crucial for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the construction sector. The shift in the building industry from new constructions to repurposing requires craftspeople with knowledge of older building physics, material use and repair techniques — and that is precisely the expertise that traditional craftspeople possess. Proper maintenance and restoration of older buildings require an understanding of the building's characteristics, qualities and challenges, so that appropriate steps can be taken. Traditional craftsmanship thus plays an important role in shaping sustainable solutions for the future.

The strategy is the result of a strong cross-sectoral collaboration. The education, business, culture and museum sectors collaborated actively with the cultural environment authority in developing the strategy. In addition, we have placed a large emphasis on the extensive input received during the strategy development process — from craftspeople, public agencies, competence clusters such as educational establishments, building and vessel preservation centres, museums and other actors. The process has seen a high level of engagement, with many constructive and valuable contributions, where were incorporated into the final strategy.

The policy instruments used to stimulate the desired development are spread across many sectors, bodies and actors. Grant funding is one of the most important instruments in cultural environment management, and the Directorate for Cultural Heritage has overall responsibility for distributing state grants to the cultural environment sector. These grant schemes allow for the establishment of conditions related to historical and craft-based preservation and expertise. The Directorate also has formal responsibility for managing, monitoring and overseeing the annual budget allocations in the Church Preservation Fund. Another important policy instrument is the granting of exemptions from protection orders. When granting such exemptions, the cultural environment authority can impose conditions and set specific requirements.

However, the crafts sector is complex. Many parties are involved across different levels and through various policy instruments. Consequently, the strategy addresses issues and challenges that fall outside the remit of the Directorate for Cultural Heritage. This includes responsibility for establishing and implementing education programmes and initiatives, as well as procurement regulations and other legal and financial instruments that set the framework for the craft industry.

The ambition is that, through this strategy, we can coordinate the policy instruments across sectors to strengthen the measures we wish to implement. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage will take the lead in initiating a collective effort. The goal is for this strategy to help address some of the challenges we face in the cultural environment sector in terms of the shortage of craftsmanship expertise. The Directorate looks forward to following up on the strategy together with the cultural environment authority, the education sector, the museum sector and traditional craft competence clusters – and not least, with the craft industry itself. The strategy is the result of close collaboration between these parties, who must continue to work together to achieve the goals of the strategy.

Scope

The strategy is intended to serve as a tool for strengthening the expertise and capacity in general and for specialised craft skills needed to preserve cultural monuments, sites and cultural environments. Expertise is needed in areas such as exteriors, structures, interiors, furnishings, vessels and green spaces. The strategy also aims to stimulate a higher level of procurement expertise among cultural heritage owners and managers of protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage will follow up on Norway's responsibility to protect and maintain intangible cultural heritage that is relevant to cultural environment management. Only craftsmanship that is relevant to the Directorate's remit is covered in the strategy. Arts and Culture Norway is responsible for implementing UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and is the Ministry of Culture's expert body in this field.

Safeguarding cultural monuments, sites and environments requires expertise in various fields beyond crafts, including consulting engineers, architects, executive officers and other professionals. These areas are outside the scope of this strategy.

The action plan for the crafts strategy will guide activities and the use of policy instruments that fall within the remit of the Directorate for Cultural Heritage. The strategy also recommends measures for other sectors and levels of governance where these could help achieve the goals of the strategy.

Recommendations for other sectors must be coordinated with the relevant ministries, directorates and county authorities.

Strategy development process and participation

The strategy steering committee consisted of the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills, Arts and Culture Norway, the Federation of Norwegian Construction Industries and the Norwegian Crafts Institute. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage is the project owner.

The collaborative effort has been broad and extensive:

- introductory survey
- input meeting and open consultation on the strategy framework
- two in-person meetings in three reference groups that were appointed to provide input on the strategy development process
- input meeting and open consultation on the draft strategy

A total of 93 consultation responses were received regarding the framework and 65 concerning the draft strategy. County authorities, the Sámi Parliament, local directors of cultural heritage, museums, building and ship preservation centres, advocacy groups, craft industry associations, education institutions and others were among those invited to provide input. Details about providing input were also published on www.riksantikvaren.no.

The three reference groups that provided input for the development of the draft strategy consisted of 42 people. The groups included, for example, craftspeople and trade associations, education institutions, museums, building and ship preservation centres, advocacy groups, county authorities, the Sámi Parliament, researchers and state property managers. Focus group interviews were also held with 26 representatives of small and medium-sized craft businesses within key building trades. The purpose of these interviews was to make direct contact with the industry and gather input for the action plan.

A summary of the consultation responses, information about the strategy work and an overview of the reference group members are available on the [Directorate for Cultural Heritage's website](#).

Overall objective and strategic initiatives

The overall objective of the strategy is that owners and managers of protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels have sufficient and stable access to craftspeople with relevant expertise.

GOAL STRUCTURE

The three strategic initiatives in the Directorate for Cultural Heritage's Crafts Strategy have been chosen because they address specific challenges. Each initiative outlines where the Directorate will take a strategic approach and where partners in cultural environment management, the education sector, the culture and voluntary sector, the construction industry and other relevant stakeholders can contribute to development. The goals for each initiative outline the outcomes the Directorate aims to achieve through the strategy. The action plan for the strategy sets out planned activities that will help achieve these goals.

Strategic initiatives and goals

Strategic initiative no.1:

Strengthen expertise and capacity

1.1. Establish a systematic collaboration to develop education programmes between the cultural environment authority, the cultural heritage sector, the education sector, the construction industry and other relevant commercial parties

1.2. Raise awareness of the job market within restoration and repairs

1.3 Better utilisation of the opportunities for training and specialisation in traditional crafts in upper secondary education and apprenticeship schemes

1.4 Further develop craft subjects in vocational higher education and higher education, adapt them to market demand and increase capacity

1.5 Further develop non-formal training initiatives, adapt them to market demand and increase capacity

Strategic initiative no.2:

More companies with relevant expertise engage in work involving cultural monuments, sites and environments

2.1 Ensure that tender competitions in restoration projects promote the use of relevant expertise at every stage

2.2 Strengthen the link between the market and businesses

2.3 Help ensure that the cultural environment authority's grants and decisions promote utilisation of relevant craft expertise

2.4 Clearly communicate the cultural environment authority's competence requirements to the owner, contracting authority, craftspeople and businesses

Strategic initiative no. 3:

Strengthen evidence-based knowledge development and research

3.1 Further advance knowledge development and research through collaboration between the cultural environment authority, craftspeople and other knowledge communities

3.2 Identify knowledge needs arising from the impact of climate change on cultural environments and facilitate knowledge development and research

3.3 Improve and develop knowledge on traditional materials and techniques

Strategic initiative 1: Strengthen expertise and capacity

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage will work to ensure that there are sufficient relevant training establishments, education and training provision for craft subjects. These opportunities should be available to both young people and adults pursuing a career, as well as experienced craftspeople seeking to specialise in traditional techniques, restoration and repair.

There are already several good education programmes and training courses that should be strengthened and further developed to meet the cultural environment authority's demand for expertise. The formal qualifications in upper secondary education, vocational colleges and higher education must be complemented with non-formal courses and other types of training. Craftsmanship is an intangible form of cultural heritage, where learning takes place through hands-on experience, making it essential to support the transfer of practical knowledge.

There is a considerable shortage of craftspeople in Sápmi, which makes it particularly challenging to preserve Sámi cultural monuments and sites. For each initiative, consideration must be given to how to address this, with measures differentiated based on where the need is greatest. It is also important to have a special focus on national minorities' cultural monuments and sites and the expertise needed to preserve these.

GOALS

1.1. Establish a systematic collaboration to develop education programmes between the cultural environment authority, the cultural heritage sector, the education sector, the construction industry and other relevant commercial parties

The responsibility for developing and establishing education programmes is split between the Ministry of Education and Research, several directorates and the county authorities. The county authorities are responsible for determining the scope and scale of most education programmes, ensuring they are aligned with the needs of the labour market based on input from the relevant social partners. The restoration of protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels is part of the market that the education programmes aim to support.

The stakeholders share a common interest in ensuring the development of relevant education programmes for craftspeople. Currently, the level of dialogue between the cultural environment authority, the construction industry and other actors responsible for the education provision varies at the local, regional and national levels. Consequently, those responsible for the education provision

and training/apprenticeships may lack a clear understanding of the skills required for preserving cultural monuments, sites and environments.

1.2. Raise awareness of the job market within restoration and repairs

More craftspeople with the skills to work with cultural monuments and sites need to be recruited, both in the short and long term.

By raising awareness of job opportunities, more people might be drawn to the craft trades broadly – and to traditional craftsmanship specifically – potentially motivating them to specialise in traditional techniques.

We need to clarify the potential career opportunities for pupils, adults and students, as well as established craftspeople and business owners. Craftspeople already working in the renovation, conversion and extension market should have easy access to good-quality information about further education and training in traditional craftsmanship.

1.3. Better utilisation of the opportunities for training and specialisation in traditional crafts in upper secondary education and apprenticeship schemes

Several education programmes have been established in upper secondary schools that are relevant for traditional crafts. Education programmes related to construction and building, as well as crafts, design and product development are the most relevant for the Crafts Strategy. Other programmes, such as those in natural resource management, may also be relevant.

Current curricula in construction and building are largely focused on new constructions, but there are also specific learning objectives for pupils to learn about traditional craftsmanship. It will be important to highlight traditional craftsmanship as a career path in the educational pathway. The crafts, design and product development programme includes the traditional craft subjects. These subjects have a limited number of applicants and places. Vocational specialisation allows pupils to specialise in traditional methods and materials and introduces them to a potential job market. This opportunity should be better utilised than currently.

Teachers' and supervisors' competence is crucial for raising awareness of the job market and educational opportunities in traditional craftsmanship. Skills development schemes have been established, some of which provide vocational teachers and instructors with opportunities for further education and training. For example, vocational teachers can participate in continuing education aimed at skilled workers in the construction industry. This opportunity to strengthen teachers' skills in traditional craftsmanship should be better utilised.

The education programmes rely on the availability of a sufficient number of relevant training establishments. The lack of relevant apprenticeships is a challenge for those wishing to pursue traditional craftsmanship. A new public procurement regulation introduced in 2024 with stricter requirements for companies to take on apprentices. Access to apprenticeships must therefore be

improved nationwide, particularly in Northern Norway. Relevant cooperative bodies for training establishments (vocational training offices) can assist companies in recruitment and in facilitating apprenticeship training.

1.4. Further develop craft subjects in vocational higher education and higher education, adapt them to market demand and increase capacity

Vocational colleges offer vocational higher education that provides in-depth knowledge of traditional techniques and materials, as well as local or regional building traditions. Relevant vocational college programmes are needed in various parts of Norway. Through the industry programme scheme, vocational colleges can also offer short modules tailored to the demand in the construction industry. Vocational colleges should work together to develop new programmes with the potential to be rolled out nationwide.

Further specialisation and knowledge development opportunities are provided through universities and university colleges, in collaboration with museums, regional competence clusters and international partnerships.¹ In many cases, other countries offer education programmes not available in Norway, and knowledge sharing is important for strengthening competence in the preservation of cultural monuments, sites and environments. Although there are currently few higher education programmes for craftspeople, expanding this provision would not only increase the number of options available but also provide valuable access to highly qualified instructors. It is necessary to strengthen this provision to ensure professional development and research.

Recruiting more established craftspeople to further education and training at vocational colleges, universities and university colleges is crucial to ensure sufficient craft skills and capacity. This requires education programmes to be practically and financially accessible for craftspeople who are already in full-time employment. Short, tailored programmes through the industry programme scheme may be realistic alternatives for many experienced craftspeople. For others, a decentralised vocational education provision or a decentralised module-based continuing education pathway may be both relevant and feasible alongside employment. For those with a particular interest, the Norwegian Crafts Institute offers a three-year craft scholarship to specialise, conduct research and learn new skills in traditional craftsmanship while being funded.

1.5. Further develop non-formal training initiatives, adapt them to market demand and increase capacity

Building preservation centres and ship preservation centres, craft industry associations, museums and NGOs are among those offering courses and other training for craftspeople looking to update

¹ Example: Since 1984, ICCROM, the Directorate for Cultural Heritage and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) have jointly held the International Course on Wood Conservation Technology (ICWCT) in Norway every two years. The course is regarded as one of the world's leading education programmes in wood conservation.

their knowledge in the field and acquire specialised expertise. Formal education institutions collaborate with these actors in several locations. Many museums own and manage buildings, boats and structures that require ongoing maintenance and can be used as training venues. These are also excellent places for craftspeople to create specialist communities and networks.

Non-formal training programmes range from basic introductory courses in specific craft techniques to comprehensive training programmes in traditional craftsmanship. While they do not lead to formal ECTS credits, they can provide participants with valuable skills and varying levels of recognition in terms of qualification criteria. This situation needs closer examination, particularly in regions without local education institutions and for traditional crafts where no education provision exists. This particularly applies to the craft traditions of the Sámi and national minorities, and skills training that does not lead to a formal qualification but is nevertheless crucial for maintenance and restoration. Non-formal training programmes should be regarded as a supplement to formal education, not a replacement.

For work on protected buildings in private ownership, there is a requirement for craftspeople to have previously worked on three similar projects. In relevant restoration projects, there should be more possibilities for non-formal knowledge transfer, observational work, collaboration and practice through courses and training, as long as it is culturally and historically justifiable. Non-formal training environments are also important for building specialist communities for craftspeople.

Craft and building traditions in different countries often share a variety of features. Projects that facilitate the international training of craftspeople are beneficial for preserving cultural environments. Several collaborations already exist that can be further developed.

Strategic initiative 2: More companies with relevant expertise engage in work involving cultural monuments, sites and environments

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage aims to promote a well-functioning market in which the restoration and maintenance of protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels are in accordance with antiquarian principles.

We want to attract more companies to work on protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels. The craftspeople and companies working on the restoration and preservation of cultural environments must have expertise in cultural heritage assets and traditional materials and techniques. Qualification criteria must be adapted to the complexity of the work and be easily accessible and understandable to relevant craft businesses. It is also important that owners and managers have a high level of procurement expertise and recruit craftspeople with the right skillset.

Various public instruments can help ensure that more companies with relevant expertise are awarded contracts. Examples include grant regulations, approval schemes and the design of public procurements. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage is aware that many smaller companies have limited resources for managing extensive procurement processes when competing for public funds. The contracting authority may also have limited knowledge about procurement regulations.

Consequently, public procurements can represent a barrier to achieving the goals set out in the strategy.

GOALS

2.1. Ensure that tender competitions in restoration projects promote the use of relevant expertise at every stage

Describing a large, complex restoration project in a tender can be challenging. Professionals with relevant craft expertise should be involved in the planning and compilation of tenders for major projects in order to ensure the safeguarding of cultural heritage assets. Owners and managers should design public procurements in a way that encourages small and medium-sized businesses to participate. Using collaborative contracting models and dividing contracts into smaller components can make it easier to secure the right expertise in large-scale restoration projects. Qualification criteria should be tailored to each project. Strong procurement expertise with the contracting party is absolutely essential.

Reviewing the possibilities within the current procurement regulations, along with devising guidance materials, can help enhance the competence of contracting authorities as well as craft businesses. There may also be a need for targeted information campaigns or training courses aimed at different target groups. Regional competence clusters, such as building preservation centres or craft industry associations, can serve as hubs for networking and skills development among smaller craft businesses.

2.2. Strengthen the link between the market and businesses

It is important that the supply and demand for skilled workers in the market are communicated to relevant craft businesses. However, demand depends on owners and managers having the right procurement expertise and knowing what craftspeople to look for.

If the contracting authority does not know what expertise is required this can create a barrier to forming a clear link between the market and businesses. Another challenge may be that an owner is unable to find the right business or that businesses are unaware of the market.

A number of building and ship preservation centres, along with other advisory services, already serve as intermediaries between the market and craft businesses, but the availability and capacity vary across regions. County authorities and the Sámi Parliament are typically involved in operating these services.

When owners and managers of cultural monuments and sites commission services from craftspeople, it is important that they can be confident that the businesses have the right expertise. Certification and approval schemes can make it easier for owners and managers to choose the right business. Examples of existing approval schemes and registries include:

- Startbank
- The Norwegian Crafts Institute's Crafts Registry

- List of businesses linked to Central Approval
- Master Builder Certification Scheme
- Qualifications Registry

2.3. Help ensure that the cultural environment authority's grants and decisions promote utilisation of relevant craft expertise

Grant funding is one of the cultural environment authority's most important policy instruments. One of the main aspects of building and ship preservation is the work on protected and historic cultural monuments and sites where owners and managers receive public funding for restoration, maintenance and safeguarding. These grant schemes allow for the establishment of conditions related to historical and craft-based preservation and expertise.

Another important policy instrument is the granting of exemptions from protection orders. When granting such exemptions, the cultural environment authority can impose conditions and set specific requirements in relation to, for example, expertise and material quality.

The extent to which requirements for expertise and execution are imposed in decisions by the cultural environment authority varies. It is important that the requirements set in grant decisions and exemptions from protection are specific and tailored to the project in order to ensure that the right expertise is used.

2.4 Clearly communicate the cultural environment authority's competence requirements to the owner, contracting authority, craftspeople and businesses

The cultural management authority shall set competence requirements for craftspeople working on protected cultural monuments and sites. There is considerable variation in the portfolio of protected and historic cultural monuments, sites and environments, and the requirements must be tailored to the complexity of each project. By clarifying competence requirements in projects and public procurement processes, more craftspeople with the right expertise will gain access to the market represented by protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels.

The competence requirements must be understandable and accessible to craftspeople and businesses, as well as to contracting authorities. The cultural environment authority must guide owners of protected cultural monuments and sites to ensure that the competence requirements are adapted to the complexity of the specific project.

Strategic initiative 3: Strengthen evidence-based knowledge development and research

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage will work to ensure that craftspeople working on protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels are involved in the development of knowledge in the crafts sector. Thorough documentation of restoration, evidence-based knowledge development and research are essential for the effective and sustainable preservation of cultural environments.

New knowledge and research must be made accessible and shared so that it can be used by craftspeople and the construction industry. There has been little knowledge development and research on Sámi buildings and vessels, or on the buildings and traditions of the national minorities. These areas require a special focus.

The cultural environment authority must take the initiative to develop knowledge based on identified needs. This is particularly important for safeguarding the scientific value of cultural monuments and sites and for addressing the challenges posed by climate change. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage's climate strategy highlights the need to develop methods for preserving cultural environments in a changing climate, and crafts know-how is a key component of this. The need for know-how about traditional building methods and material use is growing as society moves away from prioritising new construction toward adapting and repurposing existing buildings.

GOALS

3.1. Further advance knowledge development and research through collaboration between the cultural environment authority, craftspeople and other knowledge communities

Craft research is based on traditional craftsmanship combined with theoretical knowledge. Several museums, together with other knowledge institutions and academic communities, have played a leading role in promoting this type of research. Where practically feasible, craft research can be integrated into restoration projects to a greater extent than it is today. Documenting cultural monuments and sites, as well as craft methods, enables restoration projects to serve as valuable sources for broader knowledge development and research.

Access to relevant training venues, objects of study and competent supervision is essential for facilitating more craft research. Museums play a key role in this regard: they manage collections of buildings and artefacts with significant cultural and historical value, maintain archives documenting maintenance and restoration over time, and often possess broad expertise in traditional craft practices. This also applies to cultural heritage organisations, which both manage cultural monuments, sites and environments and serve as important knowledge communities. The building and ship preservation centres are also important arenas for knowledge development. World Heritage Sites shall serve as prime examples of best practice, supported by strong expert communities that uphold the highest standards of craftsmanship.

3.2. Identify knowledge needs arising from the impact of climate change on cultural environments and facilitate knowledge development and research

The cultural heritage sector needs more knowledge about how climate change affects cultural monuments, sites and environments. The damage to cultural environments caused by climate change must be mapped, and we need to know more about how the consequences of climate impact can be managed while also preserving cultural environment values.

Climate change may lead to new challenges where traditional knowledge is insufficient, and new methods need to be developed. For example, increased humidity may require new maintenance procedures and changes in material use. Maintenance plans for cultural environments must be based on current climate forecasts and up-to-date research. It is also important to draw on historical climate adaptation and traditional material use, such as how local climate and weather conditions were factored into the planning and construction of buildings and structures.

3.3. Improve and develop knowledge on traditional materials and techniques

Knowledge of materials is crucial for the successful preservation of buildings and vessels. The cultural environment authority, craftspeople and the construction industry need more knowledge of and access to traditional materials. More knowledge is also needed on which materials will be needed in the future and on how to maintain various materials in a changing climate.

Proper material use leads to better durability of cultural monuments and sites and is a good climate change mitigation measure. It is important to facilitate research and knowledge development relating to the quality, access, production and use of materials needed for restoring and preserving cultural monuments, sites and environments. Collaboration with the forestry sector and other material suppliers and producers is essential to ensure that the knowledge developed has an impact.

Knowledge of traditional material use and craftsmanship can also be applied in today's construction industry, which is facing major changes. The Planning and Building Act allows for exemptions from technical requirements in order to increase the potential for repurposing existing buildings. Standardised documentation methods are needed for older building materials and structures to enable the continued use of traditional materials and techniques in restoration projects.

Appendices

Action plan

See attached document

Actors and roles

This chapter provides an overview of actors with responsibilities and policy instruments that are relevant to the themes of the strategy. The list is not exhaustive.

State actors

The Ministry of Climate and Environment has overall responsibility for the government's climate and environmental policy, including the cultural environment policy. In line with the sector principle, individual ministries and subordinate agencies are responsible for the cultural environments within their own sector.

- **The Directorate for Cultural Heritage** is a central government agency under the Ministry of Climate and Environment and is responsible for implementing and following up on cultural environment policy at the national level. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage is also responsible for following up on the Crafts Strategy and its associated action plan. This includes, for example, conducting analyses and surveys, establishing networks and partnerships, evaluating existing policy instruments and developing new measures.

The Ministry of Children and Families is responsible for faith and life stance policy, including the regulations for the management of churches of cultural and historical value. The Crafts Strategy will also serve as a basis for the development of competence-building measures related to the Ministry of Children and Families' preservation strategy for church buildings of cultural and historical value.

The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for kindergartens, primary, lower and upper secondary schools, vocational colleges, higher education and research. Responsibility for adult education is split between the two education directorates:

- **The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (Udir)** has overall responsibility for implementing education policy in kindergartens, primary, lower and upper secondary schools, ensuring that children, young people and adults have equal access to a high standard of education. Udir works with other authorities, organisations and educational institutions to achieve the goals of education policy. It also serves as the secretariat for cooperation with the social partners in the design of vocational education programmes, through ten advisory councils – one for each vocational education programme.
- **The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills** has national responsibility for administrative functions related to vocational higher education and higher education.

The Ministry of Culture and Equality has overall responsibility for, inter alia, culture and voluntary activities.

- **Arts and Culture Norway** has national responsibility for the implementation of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Traditional craftsmanship is one of five domains in this convention. Arts and Culture Norway also implements the national museum policy.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has overall responsibility for, inter alia, the Planning and Building Act, municipal finances and local administration, regional and district policy, and policy concerning the Sámi and national minorities.

- **The Norwegian Building Authority** is a national competence centre for the building sector and is responsible for, inter alia, the Central Approval system. The Norwegian Building Authority is under the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development.

The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries is responsible for national trade, industry and ocean policy and is particularly relevant in terms of collaboration with the construction industry.

Several government agencies have a responsibility for and interest in the development of craft skills. Additionally, the state sector is a major owner, manager and contracting authority. Various state actors are responsible for the restoration and maintenance of protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels, including Statsbygg, the Norwegian Defence Estates Agency, the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration and the Norwegian Coastal Administration.

Sámi Parliament

The Sámi Parliament has administrative responsibility for Sámi cultural monuments and sites throughout Norway. It also has responsibility for processing relevant planning and building applications and the authority to grant exemptions for measures that may affect protected cultural monuments and sites.

Regional actors

The county authorities have administrative responsibility for cultural monuments, sites and environments of regional and national value within their areas, including the allocation of state grants. They also play an advisory role for municipal authorities and private owners. In addition, the county authorities are responsible for ensuring compliance with competence requirements and work execution standards when awarding grants for protected cultural monuments and sites and when making decisions about exemptions from protection orders.

The county authorities are the owners of upper secondary schools and determine the structure of vocational education and training, providing input to the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training on the need for educational programmes. They also play a regional role in competence policy and provide foundational education for many who subsequently gain formal qualifications in building conservation.

Municipal actors

Municipal authorities are responsible for safeguarding and facilitating the use of cultural monuments, sites and environments at the local level, and are executive officers for matters relating to the Planning and Building Act. They play an important role in relation to owners carrying out projects that are subject to building and planning approval.

Church councils are cooperative bodies comprising of the municipal authorities and the parishes of the Church of Norway. They are responsible for, inter alia, the construction, operation and maintenance of churches and cemeteries, including procurement. Following the establishment of the Church Preservation Fund, the church councils are set to be key owners, managers and contracting authorities in the coming years.

Other actors

Owners and managers of protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels must have sufficient and stable access to craftspeople with relevant expertise. This is the primary objective of the strategy. Achieving this also requires owners and managers to actually make use of craftspeople with the relevant skills.

The Cultural Heritage Fund is a government grant scheme for private owners of various types of cultural monuments and sites. The Cultural Heritage Fund is responsible for overseeing compliance with the terms of the grants.

Cultural heritage specialist environments in this context is a collective term for many different actors who play a role in the preservation and practice of traditional craftsmanship. Many of these are also central to the development of knowledge in this sector.

- **Museums** are custodians of buildings and vessels; they serve as training environments, teach traditional craft skills, and function as research institutions. Several museums have employed building conservation advisors who provide guidance to private owners.
- **The building and ship preservation centres** serve as advisory services for owners, managers and craftspeople. They also offer courses and training.
- **The Norwegian Crafts Institute** works to document, preserve and promote traditional crafts in line with UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The institute also administers the Crafts Registry.
- **NGOs** play a vital role in cultural environment management and public authorities, acting as consultative partners and advocates for cultural environment policy. They are also central to the safeguarding of cultural environments and traditional crafts, as well as in outreach and training activities.

The construction industry consists of craft businesses of various sizes, contractors and others involved in planning or carrying out restoration and maintenance work. The industry is represented in the advisory councils responsible for ensuring that vocational education and training meet the labour market's and society's demand for skills. There are also numerous craft industry associations that promote the interests of various occupations within the industry, as well as employer and employee organisations.

- **The Federation of Norwegian Construction Industries** and the **Norwegian Master Builders Association** are central organisations that represent craft businesses within construction and building.

The Association for Traditional Crafts in Norway and **Traditional craftspeople in Creo** are central organisations that represent practitioners of traditional skilled crafts.

The Confederation of Churches and Nonprofits (KA) is the central federation for ecclesiastical and non-profit activities. KA aims to safeguard and promote the interests of its members and provide services in line with the members' responsibilities and needs. KA offers advisory services and courses on the management of church buildings and property.

Educational and research institutions such as the University of Science and Technology (NTNU), the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU), vocational colleges and upper secondary schools are key players in the follow-up of the strategy. They are responsible for the academic content of teaching and are important partners in terms of facilitating learning and designing educational programmes. They also have an important role in research and knowledge development.

The cooperative body for training establishments (vocational training office) assists training establishments with training and employment matters concerning their apprentices/trainees. These offices must be approved by the county authority following an assessment by the Vocational Training Board.

Definition of terms in the strategy

Cultural monument, site and environment are collectively the traces of all human activity in the physical environment. This can include anything from churches to milk churn stands, from Stone Age settlements to prisoner of war camps from World War II.

Cultural environment is any area where a cultural monument or site forms part of a larger whole. In Report to the Storting no. 16 (2019–2020) *New goals for Norway's cultural environment policy – Involvement, sustainability and diversity*, the term was introduced as a collective term for cultural monuments, sites, environments and landscapes.

Cultural heritage sector is a collective term for actors within cultural environment management, such as museums and cultural heritage organisations.

We use the terms **protected and historic buildings, structures and vessels** to delimit the scope of the strategy. Crafts that are relevant and necessary for the preservation of these categories of cultural monuments, sites and environments are included in the strategy. This applies to exteriors, interiors, furnishings and landscaped areas.

Protection is the highest level of preservation for cultural environments and is carried out under the Cultural Heritage Act or the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act.

The term **historic** in this context refers to cultural environments that have been identified as valuable and have undergone a cultural history assessment. Some historic buildings and structures are subject to preservation regulations, either through a conservation zone under the Planning and Building Act of 2008 or as a special preservation area under the previous Planning and Building Act.

The term **craft skills** refers to skills within construction and building that lead to an apprenticeship or journeyman's certificate, but also traditional crafts.

The term **traditional craftsmanship** is commonly used in the cultural and education sectors, as well as in UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. According to the

Norwegian-language online encyclopaedia, *Store norske leksikon*, the term ‘traditional craftsmanship’ describes a practice in which craftspeople produce traditional items primarily by hand, using techniques, tools and materials rooted in tradition.

Craftspeople working in building and vessel preservation are also increasingly referred to as traditional craftspeople.

The term ‘traditional craftsmanship’ is mainly used in reference to three areas:

> The term is used for traditional craftsmanship that can be related to existing craft skills but is not included in the formal curriculum. For example, log building is not part of the construction and building curriculum in Norway, but many builders nevertheless choose to learn about this during or after completing their education programme.

> The term is also used to describe the 40 crafts that the Ministry of Education and Research considers to be in special need of safeguarding. Examples include upholstery and wooden boatbuilding.

> The term can be used for craft traditions that are not, or can be, related to a recognised trade, but which nevertheless fall within the definition of traditional craftsmanship, such as tar production.

We use the term **craft development** as a collective term for knowledge and skills development within the education, business, culture and cultural environment sectors.

Formal training/education includes all officially approved training/education that leads to formal qualifications or ECTS credits within the standard education system.

Non-formal training is structured learning that takes place outside the formal education system. The training is goal-oriented and is often carried out by various institutions, NGOs or groups, but it does not lead to officially recognised qualifications.

Informal learning refers to knowledge gained through participation in various situations, without a structured framework. It is often not consciously planned as learning.

Relevant documents for the strategy development work

The Crafts Strategy must be viewed in conjunction with other strategies and relevant guidelines/directives. There are several relevant conventions and strategic processes within the fields and areas of interest for the strategy.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage particularly highlights the importance of the following documents:

[ILO’s Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 \(No. 169\)](#)

[UN's Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[UNESCO's Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage \(1972\)](#)

[UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage \(2003\)](#)

[Strengthening cultural heritage resilience for climate change - Where the European Green Deal meets cultural heritage \(2022\)](#)

[Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage \(2023\)](#)

[Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#)

[The Sámi Parliament's white paper on Sámi cultural heritage protection \(2021\)](#)

[Report to the Storting no. 16 \(2019–2020\) New goals for Norway's cultural environment policy](#)

[Report to the Storting no. 12 \(2020–2021\) National minorities in Norway — A comprehensive policy](#)

[Report to the Storting no. 23 \(2020–2021\) Museums in society – trust, objects and time](#)

[Report to the Storting no. 21 \(2020–2021\) The completion reform – with open doors to the world and the future](#)

[The Ministry of Climate and Environment's knowledge strategy \(2021-2024\)](#)

[The Ministry of Children and Families' preservation strategy for church buildings of cultural and historical value \(2024\)](#)

[Kirkenes' special assets \(2022\)](#)

Long live traditional craftsmanship! (2016)

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage's other strategies, including the [climate strategy](#), [preservation strategies](#), [research and development strategy](#) and [voluntary sector strategy](#).