



Cultural
Emergency
Response

Protecting Culture in Crisis.

ANBI SUMMARY

POLICY PLAN 2022 - 2024

Who we are

Cultural Emergency Response (CER) is a global organisation providing first aid to cultural heritage threatened or damaged by conflict or disaster, always doing so in direct cooperation with local actors in the affected communities. CER acts as a 'cultural ambulance': it provides quick and flexible financial support and expertise to assist heritage actors and communities as they assess risks and damages, implement stabilisation, and conduct early recovery measures. Emergency actions aim to prevent the loss of endangered cultural heritage, facilitate cultural continuity, and build resilience in times of crisis. CER also works with heritage communities to prepare for crises and mitigate potential risks to cultural heritage. Beyond emergency response, CER's wider purpose is to make global heritage protection more inclusive, sustainable and locally-led, notably by training heritage experts, sharing expertise and experience, and advocating the recognition of cultural heritage rescue as a crucial aspect of humanitarian relief, recovery, development and peacebuilding.

Mission

Our mission is to coordinate and support locally-led protection of heritage under threat. We promote inclusivity and accessibility by developing and strengthening decentralised infrastructures for cultural emergency response. We provide fast, flexible support to fit the needs of local actors in crisis situations and invest in the capacities of our partners through dialogue, training, and sharing expertise. Our advocacy work makes the case that cultural rescue is a vital component of humanitarian relief.

Vision

We see a future in which all heritage communities can safeguard their culture in times of crisis. We want to build a strong and inclusive heritage system in a world that recognises the protection of cultural heritage as a humanitarian issue.

CER and the Prince Claus Fund

Cultural Emergency Response (CER) was established in 2003 by the [Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development](#) in direct response to the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas and the looting of the Iraq museum. The Prince Claus Fund, which honours and supports artists and cultural practitioners around the world, had long recognised that supporting cultural expression should also include protecting expressions from the past. Envisioned to grow and evolve into an independent entity from the start, CER has since established itself as a leader in the culture heritage rescue field with a range of activities supplementary to its original remit as a cultural ambulance. As of July 2022, CER is operating as an independent entity. Both organisations remain close allies in championing culture as a basic need, and the Prince Claus Fund will always remain an important part of the legacy and identity of CER. For we not only share deeply rooted values, but also the belief in fighting for a world in which culture in all its diversity is valued, protected, and supported.

How we help

Our actions & activities

CER's main goal is to coordinate and support locally-led protection of heritage under threat. Through its four different programmes and annual funding- and project cycles, it provides fast and flexible support to local partners protecting heritage in crisis situations and helps strengthening the networks, infrastructures, and capacities to enable fast and efficient cultural response. In addition, CER raises its voice and creates a platform for its partners to make the case for the urgency of cultural protection as a humanitarian issue through impact actions, advocacy, and dialogue.

1. Cultural Emergency Response

The emergency grant and coordination mechanism

This programme is our emergency grant mechanism that provides quick and flexible support in immediate response to disaster or conflict for the rescue, stabilization or evacuation of heritage under threat to prevent further damage.

Applications for Cultural Emergency Response grants may be submitted at any time. Requests for support need to meet the following criteria:

- **Urgent** – the action responds to an acute threat to the affected heritage, which means that without immediate intervention there is a high risk of loss.
- **First aid activities** – as an ambulance organisation, we are only able to support actions geared towards stabilizing the affected heritage and preventing further damage. Examples of such actions include damage assessment missions, basic repairs, stabilization efforts, evacuations, salvage missions and emergency documentation.
- **Locally led** – the individuals and/or organisation coordinating and implementing the rescue effort must be based in the region they are applying from, and projects need to respect local contexts, priorities, and traditions.
- **Living heritage** – CER seeks to support cultural continuity following an interruption. As such, we are only able to help if the affected heritage is still in use by, and of significance and relevant to, its primary heritage community.
- **We prioritize** vulnerable countries and communities in disaster- and conflict prone areas.
- **Inclusive** – projects are directly or indirectly linked to the aim of contributing to the creation of more just, peaceful, and inclusive societies and insulating people against marginalisation, oppression, division, and threat.

How do we work?

- **Quickly:** we can respond within days to provide first aid if disaster strikes. CER acts both proactively and upon request. We evacuate, stabilize, rescue and secure sites, among others are museums, monuments, archives, libraries, and collections.
- **With a 24/7 scouting and response team:** besides the applications we receive, our team is always on the lookout and researching potential projects to support. We monitor conflicts and disasters and map vulnerable heritage sites. **Partners can apply at any time.**
- **With a global network of experts:** we're in constant communication with partners in more than 82 countries around the world, all of whom are ready to scout and sound the alarm in emergencies and provide advice at a moment's notice.
- **With flexibility:** we offer small and flexible grants, usually ranging between €15.000 to €35.000, and can grant more when the urgency, scope and relevance of the situation justify it. Application and reporting requirements are light and context sensitive.

CER's response mechanism relies on an active network of trusted partners in vulnerable regions around the world. This network allows it to monitor crisis situations on an ongoing basis and prepare to pro-actively respond in the event of disaster- or conflict-related threats to cultural heritage. This response includes the provision of quick and flexible emergency grants to local actors to help safeguard the endangered sites, collections, or buildings. The local actors determine the priorities and approach to be taken for stabilizing the situation, preventing further damage, and implementing basic repairs to prevent (further) damage. CER is always stand-by to provide technical support and advice, and to connect expertise wherever possible or required.

2. Network of Regional Hubs

Decentralizing the response to cultural emergencies

Success in protecting cultural heritage in crisis situations depends on available local infrastructure and the preparedness of local actors to respond quickly and effectively. To strengthen this capacity, CER is decentralizing its activities by creating a network of regional CER hubs. In partnership with local heritage rescue organizations in vulnerable areas around the world, we create go-to centres for cultural emergency expertise and response. Our regional hubs ensure regional coordination, available expertise and means for faster, locally driven, and tailored cultural emergency response. Hubs are part of a global network for exchange and support, mentoring, learning and sustainability opportunities.

By embedding heritage rescue capacity and coordination locally, we aim to create the needed infrastructure for quicker and better cultural emergency response in areas where it matters most.

CER's decentralisation efforts expand and sustain an international network of mutually supportive regional entities that can manage emergency preparedness and the rescue and preservation of cultural heritage. We aim to enable emergency response efforts to become

locally driven, faster, more effective and more sustainable. However, the ultimate goal is to make heritage protection more inclusive by collaborating with local and national actors in decision-making when it comes to the protection of their cultural heritage. This, in our view, is the future of heritage preservation.

From 2022 – 2024 CER will develop a new CER Regional Hub each year by providing a 2-year grant for seed funding and full mentorship programme to further develop and solidify the organisation as CER Hub. CER currently has four CER Regional Hubs in Central America, the Western Balkans, the Levant, and the Caribbean.

3. Training & Mentorship

Strengthening local capacity, leadership & networks

Preparedness is key. To provide first aid to cultural heritage under threat in an adequate and inclusive way, CER ensures the capacity and infrastructure are in place to support our approach in facilitating locally led responses to cultural emergencies.

We work closely with other cultural heritage emergency organisations to provide interdisciplinary, hands-on training programmes to international heritage professionals. Also, we facilitate knowledge exchange and the development of new cultural first aid solutions. Our aim is to strengthen response capacity and crisis preparedness on the ground, and to create and mobilize new and existing networks to connect people, organisations and expertise across the globe.

With likeminded partners, we explore, develop and pilot new possibilities for internationally tailored training programmes that contribute to a coordinated and efficient response and build a strong and professional field. With this, we aim for enhanced heritage protection and a close collaboration with humanitarian response.

Since 2018, CER and the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative (SCRI) annually offer a leadership course for cultural heritage professionals. The course is run by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals in leadership, project development, management and communications, and is designed to equip participants with the tools and techniques needed to create more effective project proposals and management plans, garner more resources, and develop a professional network of colleagues dealing with similar issues. Lessons are brought to life by visiting cultural heritage leaders. Each year, the course is open to ca. 15 participants from around the world.

4. Making the Case

Impact, advocacy, and dialogue

Objects and sites of cultural heritage are a crucial part of our individual and collective identities. They enrich our lives in countless ways, connect us to our past, allow us to understand our place in the history of humanity, help keep communities together and provide a foundation for our future. In short, they are part of what makes us human. And yet cultural heritage protection is

often overlooked in humanitarian relief and disaster-response mechanisms. CER aims to change this.

We actively invest in demonstrating the wide-ranging impact of heritage protection, raise awareness of its importance and campaign for its integration in humanitarian policies and relief efforts. We aim to contribute to a more prominent role of culture in response, recovery and sustainable development funding and approaches.

We aim to make the case for the urgency and relevance of heritage protection as a humanitarian issue, to pioneer innovative solutions and motivate the field to move forward. To do so, we collaborate with other international heritage, academic and humanitarian organisations to develop initiatives to collect data that demonstrates the impact of heritage protection efforts. We also work closely with our partners on the ground to identify best practices, challenges, and solutions through pilot project grants. We actively share knowledge and disseminate our findings through lobby, advocacy, and awareness campaigns.

For examples of all CER activities visit the website: culturalemergency.org.

Finances

To realise its goal and support its actions and activities, CER is dependent on income from third parties and actively fundraises to ensure a stable flow of resources.

CER receives subsidy from government authorities and - foundations, funds from independent foundations for multi-year collaborations or specific projects, and donations from private individuals or corporations.

This income goes directly to realize CERs actions and activities as described above. This includes emergency project grants, training facilitation, seed-funding and programming for CER Regional Hubs, and advocacy campaigns. Income also facilitates the operations of the organisation, fundraising activities, and communication. Resources are distributed according to an annual budget approved by the CER board.

Reserves and funds

Incoming subsidies, grants, and donations are closely administered on separate booking accounts. CER is forming a continuity reserve over the coming three years to deal with current affairs after the subsidy period and to fulfill the contractual obligations if there is no or insufficient follow-up financing.

CER is currently not investing the resources at its disposal, to avoid risks and speculation. CER's revenue is only deposited in current and savings accounts.

Remuneration policy

The remuneration policy is based on the Fair Practice code and based on the principle of fair pay, which predicts equal pay for equal work as a precondition for solidarity. Salaries and rates are determined in a way that is insightful and transparent and are based on a relationship of trust between contractor and employees. Salaries are reviewed and indexed annually.

As per the articles of association, CER board members receive not remuneration for the work they do for the foundation. In incidental cases, board members do receive compensation for the costs incurred on behalf of the foundation.

In determining the remuneration of the director, CER follows the regulation on the remuneration of directors of charitable organisations (see www.goededoelennederland.nl). The regulation provides a maximum standard for the annual income based on weighing criteria. The weighing of the situation at CER was executed by the board. This led to a so-called BSD score in function group D of the remuneration regulation with a maximum annual income of € 83.539 for 2022.

A detailed account of income, expenses, and reserves is published in CER's annual report of 2022 on the CER website: <https://www.culturalemergency.org/programs/annual-report>.