



وزارة الثقافة
Ministry of Culture

Our Culture, Our Identity

Our Cultural Vision for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

March 2019





The Ministry's Objectives

Promoting culture as a way of life, enabling culture to contribute to economic growth and creating opportunities for global cultural exchange.



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Foreword

His Highness Prince Badr bin Abdullah bin Farhan Al Saud, Minister of Culture

Culture is an essential part of the ambitious national transformation program being overseen by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Saudi creatives, the jewel of our cultural sphere. We will develop an environment which supports and nurtures creativity, in addition to opening doors for new forms of expression. Saudi culture will remain an essential part of our lives.



The Kingdom prides itself with a rich heritage and diverse traditions spanning 13 regions. Talented creators in various aspects of culture have earned international recognition and performed or displayed their work in different parts of the world.

The Ministry of Culture was established to oversee a cultural transformation that supports the growth and expansion of this creativity.

Developing and enabling a cultural sector that unlocks the Kingdom's creative potential is an ongoing process.

Vision 2030 states that culture is "indispensable to our quality of life" and notes that the Kingdom must increase both the quality and quantity of its cultural activity. The Ministry of Culture will deliver on both counts.

Saudi culture stands on solid ground with Saudi creatives across various cultural sectors. We're proud of our rich cultural environment with extraordinary potential whose talent transcends the borders of our country to reach the world.

The Ministry will adopt a collaborative approach with our

We are aware of the responsibility of the Ministry and realize our ambitious objectives will not be achieved overnight. Nonetheless, we are committed to deliver, and designed our cultural vision to remove barriers, limit bureaucracy and enable creativity to flourish.

We will showcase Saudi Arabia's rich culture, heritage and traditions to the world and encourage cultural exchange by opening the Kingdom's doors to others.

work to enable intellectuals and creatives to harness their potential, with the Ministry as their foremost supporter.

The Ministry will embrace the very best of the Kingdom's ancient heritage and traditions, and the latest in contemporary arts and culture. We will encourage as wide a range of people to participate in our cultural transformation as possible.

I extend a warm invitation to all in the Kingdom to join us in celebrating our nation's proud and distinct heritage.



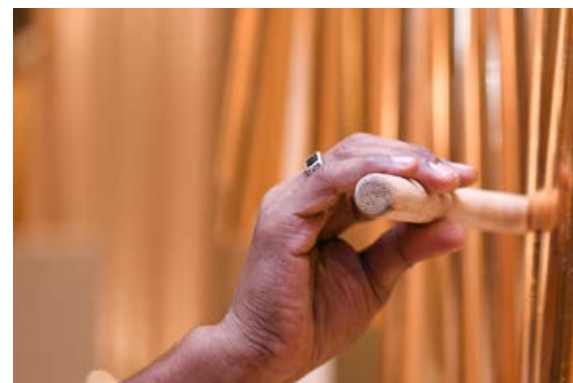
Executive Summary

The Ministry of Culture was created by a royal order in June 2018. It was established to be a new, dedicated guardian for the Kingdom's cultural sector at home and abroad.

The document sets out the framework which will guide the activity of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's first dedicated Ministry of Culture.

It identifies how the Ministry defines culture and the sectors it will be responsible for overseeing. The document also defines the concept of Saudi culture.

It articulates the vision and mission of the Ministry which will drive all activity. The Ministry's vision is of "a flourishing of arts and culture across Saudi Arabia that enriches lives, celebrates national identity and builds understanding between people." The mission of the Ministry is "to support and enable a vibrant Saudi Arabian culture that is true to its past and looks to the future by cherishing heritage and unleashing new and inspiring forms of expression for all."





The Ministry today sets out three objectives for the delivery of this vision and mission. These are the promotion of culture as a way of life, enabling culture to contribute to economic growth, and the creation of opportunities for global cultural exchange.

In order to achieve this ambitious cultural transformation, we are also outlining the principles which will

guide the Ministry's work and its engagement with the wider cultural ecosystem. This will include leading the sector, reforming the regulatory environment, preserving Saudi heritage and tradition and developing and nurturing talent.

We are also announcing the intention to establish new sector commissions, which will assist in driving forward sector specific agendas and outlines the Ministry's approach to industry and international engagement.

The Ministry of Culture will make a significant contribution towards the Kingdom's ambitious transformation program outlined in Vision 2030.



What is Culture?

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Defining culture can be a difficult task. It is a broad term and has different meanings to different people. To one person culture can mean natural heritage and the landscape, but to another it is poetry and the performing arts. Culture has tangible and intangible aspects. It evolves over time. It is both ancient and modern. Archaeology is often associated with culture, but today so are the digital arts.

The Ministry has drawn together this document by examining the existing cultural ecosystem in the Kingdom and engaging extensively with Saudi citizens, local and international partners, subject matter experts and the wider sector to establish the key priorities for the cultural sector in the Kingdom.

This has involved detailed research and the study of international best practice. The Ministry has conducted meetings with local practitioners and cultural agencies, local and international cultural experts; conducted polling; analyzed social media; and studied over 250 documents and publications from within the Kingdom and around the world.



The 16 sectors are:

This helped the Ministry to define culture and shaped the thinking behind this document.

UNESCO splits culture into seven domains, and the Ministry's framework for defining culture takes into account UNESCO's definition and combines it with our local understanding of Saudi Arabia.

This holistic approach led the Ministry to identify 16 sectors, which will form the cultural space the Ministry oversees, in coordination with others.



Museums



Language and Translation



Film



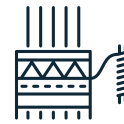
Music



Literature



Visual Arts



Heritage



Libraries



Natural Heritage



Fashion



Theater and Performing Arts



Cultural Festivals and Events



Books and Publications



Architecture and Design



Archaeological and Cultural Landscapes



Culinary Arts

Saudi Culture

09

Our vision

A flourishing of arts and culture across Saudi Arabia that enriches lives, celebrates national identity and builds understanding between people.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is rich in culture.

Our national identity is rooted in cultural aspects such as the food we eat, the clothes we wear and our centuries-old heritage and traditions.

Throughout the country there are poets, architects, dancers and actors. Each one is a vital component in the promotion, preservation and enhancement of our cultural identity. There are mothers and fathers handing down our rich cultural heritage to the next generation.



Our Kingdom's culture is diverse. It includes dialects and dances from different regions, and it encompasses crafts and landscapes. It has history and tradition. Preserving this is our duty as citizens of the Kingdom.

Saudi culture is part of who we are as the people of Saudi Arabia.



The Kingdom's cultural sector is already well established.

There are five locations in Saudi Arabia designated as UNESCO World Heritage sites. These are to be cherished. The archaeological site of Al-Hijr in the province of Al Ula is currently being restored; conservation activity like this is an example of the Kingdom's commitment to preserving natural heritage sites.

The redevelopment of Turaif District in Ad-Diriyah where the Ministry is based is an example of how we can seamlessly fuse together our past, present and future.

New and innovative modern structures have sprung up across the country. Young architects are being encouraged to make their own contributions to our evolving cities.

The visual arts, music and theater have all played their part in our history, and they will be vital to our future. Domestically, these sectors have flourished in recent years.

The Kingdom has already been represented at international events such as the Cannes Film Festival and the Venice Biennale. We will continue to showcase our country's cultural mission on a global stage.

The Ministry's Mission

Our mission

To support and enable a vibrant Saudi Arabian culture that is true to its past and looks to the future by cherishing heritage and unleashing new and inspiring forms of expression for all.



The Ministry of Culture has identified three objectives for its work: promoting culture as a way of life, enabling culture to contribute to economic growth and creating opportunities for global cultural exchange.

A flourishing cultural sector will have an impact beyond its remit. It will strengthen national identity, benefit the economy and improve the quality of life of those in the Kingdom. It will promote social cohesion, health and happiness. Employment opportunities will increase as a result. Culture will also help to forge stronger links with countries around the world.



What is the Role of the Ministry?

Its work has a specific mandate to oversee and lead the cultural transformation of Saudi Arabia.

The Ministry, and the sector as a whole face a number of challenges. Regulation remains an

obstacle in some areas, funding is unstructured, and formal education and talent need further development.

The Ministry acknowledges these challenges and will address them by undertaking six specific roles:

1

Leading the sector

The Ministry's primary role is to act as a guardian for the cultural sector. In this role the Ministry will seek to ensure that laws and policies are in place to allow the cultural ecosystem to flourish. The Ministry will also be responsible for setting funding priorities.

2

Developing the ecosystem

Saudi Arabia already has active commissions within the cultural sector; these are both public and private institutions. The Ministry has an important role to play in developing these organizations by providing support that makes tangible, positive difference to their outputs.

3

Enabling regulations

The ministry will develop new and appropriate regulations consistent with international best practice and domestic requirements. This will establish a clear regulatory environment which enables creatives to flourish.



Cultural Commissions:



Museums



Film



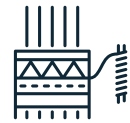
Music



Libraries



Fashion



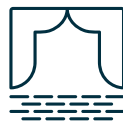
Heritage



Literature,
Publishing and
Translation



Architecture
and Design



Theater and
Performing Arts



Visual Arts



Culinary Arts

4

Becoming a bridge to the world

By engaging in international cultural exchanges the Ministry will showcase Saudi culture to the world. We will increase global awareness of our cultural offer by developing partnerships and identifying platforms for the exchange of ideas. Learning from international best practice, while exporting our own cultural treasures, will strengthen our sector and ensure the Ministry has a lasting impact.

5

Recognizing and nurturing talent

The Ministry will showcase and support the work of the cultural sector and its communities across all 16 sectors identified in this strategy. Recognizing and rewarding talent will be a central goal for the Ministry, as will encouraging young people to participate in the sector. This will include the creation of specialist education programs and scholarships.

6

Preserving Saudi heritage and culture

The Ministry has an important role in preserving Saudi culture by documenting the Kingdom's history and enabling future generations to understand its unique heritage. The Ministry will champion traditional activities and support our communities and citizens in doing so. It will continue to ensure that cultural activity is aligned with the Kingdom's values.

How the Ministry of Culture Will Operate



The Ministry will create the long-term strategic direction for the sector. It is the engine that powers Saudi Arabia's cultural transformation. It will provide leadership, drive policy development and regulatory reform to enhance opportunities within the cultural ecosystem. It will form strong relationships with partners, other government entities and wider participants within the sector through consistent and meaningful engagement.

The Ministry will showcase the rich aspects of Saudi culture that already exist, identifying and supporting the Kingdom's cultural assets, both ancient and modern. Ensuring the promotion of Saudi Arabia's cultural sector remains respectful of the Kingdom's heritage, and its distinct cultural identity, is a vital part of the Ministry's role.

The Ministry will develop funding sources that are easily identified and accessed by creative entrepreneurs, linking them with investors. It will also establish mechanisms to acknowledge achievements within the sector.

The Ministry will seek to avoid the potential pitfalls in such a complex and varied sector. Specifically:

1

Whilst the Ministry will deliver some flagship events, the vast majority, such as exhibitions and shows, will be implemented by commissions within the wider cultural ecosystem.

2

As the leader of the sector as a whole, the Ministry of Culture will welcome the initiatives of others and seek opportunities for partnership.

3

The Ministry will drive the overall priorities of the sector and the commissions that fall within its portfolio, while giving commissions freedom to manage their own activities.



The Establishment of New Sector Commissions

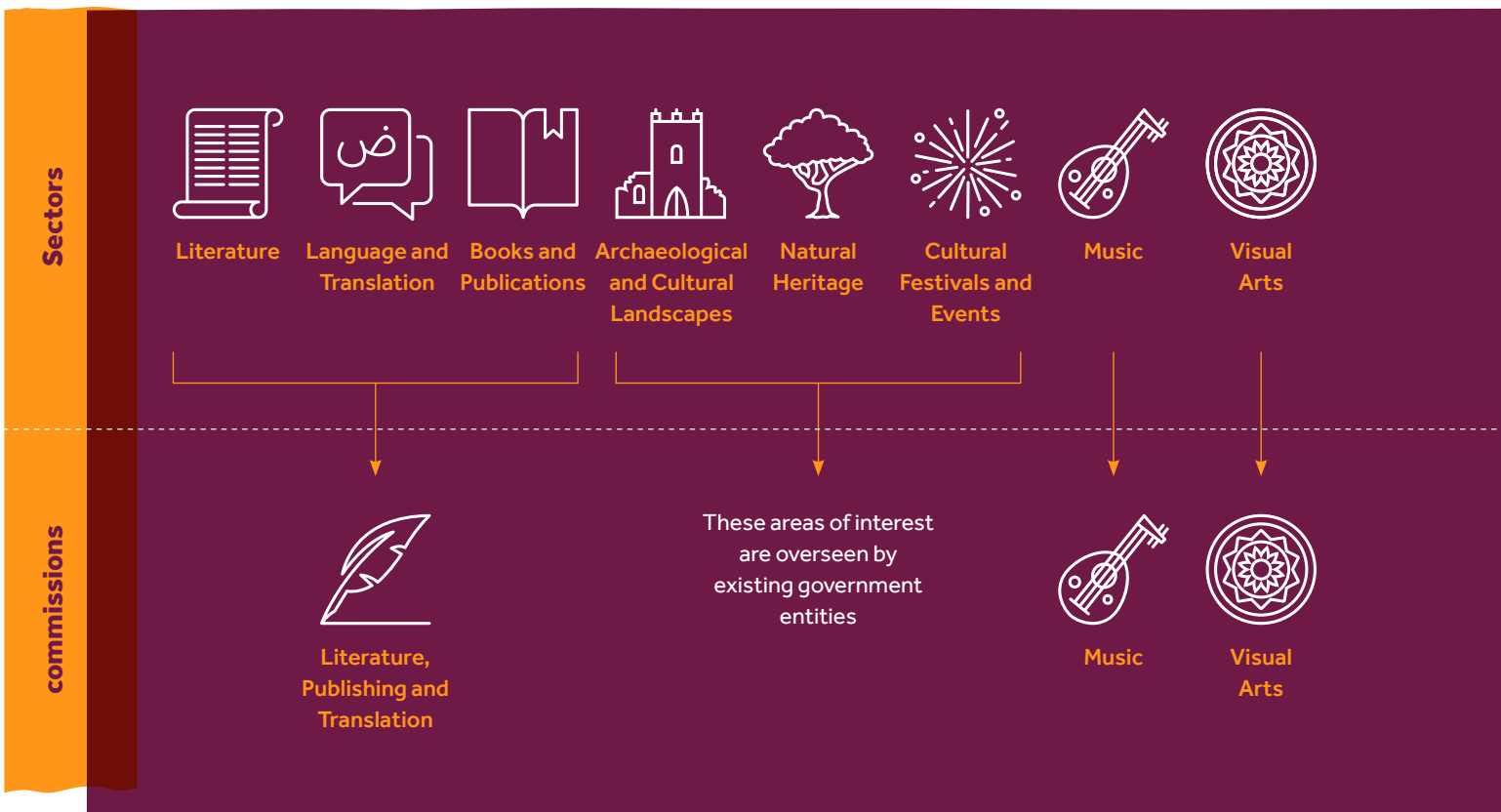
In order to deliver its objectives, the Ministry of Culture will establish new sector commissions around individual sub-sectors. Each will have a dedicated team helping to drive activity forward. This clear sector focus is intended to ensure faster and more efficient execution of plans and thus create a clearer path to attracting top talent and leadership.

These commissions will report to the Ministry of Culture. While each will have autonomy to act according

to the interests of its sector, they will do so within the parameters set by the Ministry.

Each body will focus entirely on its specific sub-sectors: developing expertise, making partnerships and taking overall ownership of its area. The commissions will be responsible for funding support, the execution of strategic plans. And, more broadly, the development of their specific sector. This will be crucial to creating favorable regulatory conditions and streamlined processes.

The exact governance structures of these commissions will be confirmed in the coming months. However, the Ministry will ensure that each commissions has rigorous reporting processes and procedures, with a board of well-qualified directors appointed by the Ministry.



There will be 11 new Commissions in total.

The 'Natural Heritage', 'Archaeological and Historic Sites', and 'Festivals and Events' sectors already have established oversight organizations. 'Language', 'Poetry' and 'Literature' will be represented by one commission. Ten other commissions will be set up and dedicated to one distinct, priority sub-sector.



Theater and Performing Arts



Fashion



Architecture and Design



Culinary Art



Film



Heritage



Museums



Libraries



Theater and Performing Arts



Fashion



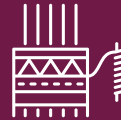
Architecture and Design



Culinary Arts



Film



Heritage



Museums



Libraries

Industry Engagement

Culture is an intrinsic component of our national identity and, as such, the Ministry expects and welcomes input from people within the cultural community.

The Ministry of Culture is seeking active engagement from stakeholders throughout the kingdom and internationally.

The Ministry will host consultation events with all of the priority sub-sectors. These will be accessible to expert stakeholders and interested members of the public.

In order to fulfil its vision and mission, the Ministry believes the participation of a wide network of people is vital.

Cultural Events

In general, activity will be delivered by the commissions in each sector – the new Commissions, museums, galleries, businesses and artists. The Ministry will support these organizations in delivering activities that are in line with the Kingdom's values and ambitions.

The Ministry will help to deliver a small number of events with particular national significance.

These include:

- **Expo 2020:** The Ministry will also support Saudi Arabia's contribution to Expo 2020 in Dubai. Saudi Arabia's Sky Pavilion will be one of the largest pavilions at the event and will show how the Kingdom is building upon its rich heritage and traditions.
- **International state visits:** The Ministry will ensure that culture is a central component of future state visits in order to promote cultural exchange.
- **G20 Summit in Riyadh:** The Ministry will work closely with other entities to ensure that visitors for the G20 summit in the Kingdom can fully experience Saudi culture.

International Partnerships

In the coming months and years, the Ministry will forge cultural partnerships and establish joint activities with friends from other nations.

When the Ministry establishes international cultural partnerships, it will do so in a way that delivers tangible cultural value to the people of Saudi Arabia and our allies around the world.

As a policy, the Ministry will encourage all of its partners to do everything possible to make the fruits of any cultural exchange accessible in Arabic. This will enable as many people as possible to benefit from any programs launched by the ministry.

International cultural exchanges can build understanding across the world. The Ministry's aim is to drive forward the Kingdom's involvement in cultural dialogue. This will bring the best of international culture to the Kingdom, whilst also enabling the Kingdom to export its unique and diverse culture to the world.

The Future of Saudi Culture

The Ministry of Culture's success will transform the cultural sector in the Kingdom and have a significantly wider impact on Saudi Arabia.

Internationally recognized studies show that culturally-active adults are significantly happier than those who are not. They also have reduced stress and anxiety. In addition cultural engagement can positively impact academic achievement in schools.

There is a significant societal impact too: crime rates are lower and pride in one's country is higher.



This is the future we foresee:

By 2030 there will be an ecosystem where talent is encouraged at local and national levels. This has been achieved through careful guidance provided by the Ministry. Across the Kingdom, access to culture will have been improved; new museums and festivals will have been founded; opportunities to participate will be wider. Culture will be part of daily life.

Funding provided through the Ministry and other commissions in the sector will support cultural activities. These funds will be mature by 2030. Beneficiaries of funding programs – whether they are singers, chefs or architects – will be enriching the lives of people within the Kingdom and around the world.

New commissions, created with the Ministry's support, will be operating across all of the priority sub-sectors.



Policy formulated by the Ministry will harmonize the sector and make it easier for practitioners to perform their art or trade. Technology will be fully integrated into the sector.

The cultural sector will contribute up to 3% of the kingdom's economy.

This is what is at stake, a full scale cultural transformation – which the Ministry is committed to delivering.



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