

ENS | ÉCONOMUSÉE®
NETWORK
SOCIETY

PROMOTER OF THE EXPERIENCE  *Artisans* AS WORK
& COUNTRY

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABILITY IN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE (ICH)

Challenges and lessons learned
from the ÉCONOMUSÉE®
Network Society initiatives

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artisansaloeuvre.com

economusees.com



ECONOMUSÉE® Network Society

Who we are

- An international non-profit organization that was created in 1992 and based in Québec City, Canada.
- ENS assists artisan-entrepreneurs, through business support, in **preserving, enhancing and transmitting to visitors their passion and their know-how**, traditional and contemporary, inspired by their cultural identity and heritage, which have been transmitted from generation to generation.
- Owner and promoter of the ÉCONOMUSÉE® concept.
- **Support artisan-entrepreneurs to become a tourist attraction.**



Cultural tourism and intangible cultural heritage (ICH)

Combining tourism and the intangible cultural heritage

The intangible cultural heritage (ICH) / living heritage is a component of cultural tourism.

Some of the domains in with ICH can be manifested (UNESCO 2003 Convention list)¹

- Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
- Performing arts
- **Social practices, rituals** and festive events
- Knowledge and practice concerning nature and the universe
- **Traditional craftsmanship**

1. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention>

ICH and tourists interact to reinvigorate the present by bringing the past and future together. This is the dynamic core of an enriched cultural experience.



Survey on implemented sustainable actions

Starting point - ENS's contributions to the 17 SDG's in 2020

Member's weaknesses and strengths

25% or less of members take actions on:

- GHG emissions
- Sustainable mobility

76% or more of respondents take actions on:

- Residual materials management
- Cultural heritage
- Protection of biodiversity
- Energy management

Survey's conclusion

All 17 SDGs are met by the various actions taken by the ÉCONOMUSÉE® and some SDGs seem to get more actions than others:



Top barriers to achieved sustainability with artisan-entrepreneurs / ÉCONOMUSÉE®



Time



Budget



Workforce



Discouragement
to act

Strategies for making ÉCONOMUSÉES more sustainable

Promote accessible tourism

What we've done :

- Engage in partnership with Kéroul (a non-profit that promotes and develops accessible tourism and culture)
- Provide a training program for members and staff
- Assessment of the business/site's accessibility with Kéroul's specialists
- Advice on best practices in interior design and interpretation material
- Support access to funding
- Conditions of membership : since July 1st , 2023, achieve a partially or fully accessible rating at the end of the implementation of the ÉCONOMUSÉE®

Challenges :

- High cost to meet the requirements
- Old building
- Historic building
- Insufficient space



Strategies for making ÉCONOMUSÉES more sustainable

Raise awareness about sustainability issues (members, partners and staff)

What we've done :

Organizing training sessions, workshops, and conferences.

- Québec's Culinary Identity
- Adaptation to climate change
- Tourism and Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Green Building
- Accessible tourism
- Sustainable tourism certification



Strategies for making ÉCONOMUSÉES more sustainable

Encourage a culture of innovation members, partners and staff

What we've done :

- Support business shift to digital to remain more sustainable in the medium term.
- Provide digital technologies that make it simpler to change content and the visitor's experience.
- Annual awards

Challenges:

- High cost of some digital /electronic tools
- Funding
- Non-specialized workforce
- Find the right solution for the artisan



Strategies for making ÉCONOMUSÉES more sustainable

Support artisans on the pathway of Sustainable tourism certification

What we've done :

Cohort pilot project: supporting 15 businesses in Québec to achieve sustainable tourism certification :

- Common workshop/training
- Site visits
- Provide an action plan for each artisan
- Support in “all paperwork”



Strategies for making ÉCONOMUSÉES more sustainable

Challenges to be overcome :

- Provide advanced training in sustainable development to managers and employees;
- Offer artisans support with an environmental advisor to implement the actions with them;
- Provide best practices guides to artisans to support them before, during and after their sustainable development initiatives;
- Provide cooperative workshops to encourage artisans to share and communicate best practices.

Result of our first cohort

- 10 certified businesses
- 4 businesses chose not to be certified
- 1 business left the cohort



Actions to become a sustainable tourism leader

Promoting sustainable tourism by

- Creating accessible facilities
- Democratizing access to intangible cultural heritage
- Creating experiences in a sustainable way
- Emphasizing the sustainable aspects of exhibitions/know-how
- Maintaining a responsible communication
- Training guides and hosts to become ambassadors to raise visitor awareness
- Engaging visitors in discussions about environmental stewardship, climate change, and sustainable living practices
- Creating visitor experiences that raise awareness about responsible tourism practices, environmental and cultural preservation

