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Introduction

In order to promote and encourage comprehensive inheritance of the storytelling traditions within the Latvian culture space, retaining as well as possible the inherited oral form and message, during the first Latvian storyteller conference (on 25 November, 2016) the idea of founding the Latvian Association Of Storytellers was developed. The main purpose of the Latvian Association Of Storytellers is to become a unifying platform for those involved in the activity, in order to encourage and support preservation and recognisability of storytelling traditions as well as the social status of those carrying the tradition, forming a well-established idea of the forms of this oral tradition in Latvia, and promoting their international recognition.

The Association is an institution coordinating and consulting the storytelling tradition, encouraging preservation, recognition and implementation of storytelling traditions, as well as collaboration between the individuals maintaining the tradition and those having inherited it, the informal education of both aforementioned, mutual exchange of experience and knowledge both in Latvia and internationally. Its aim is to promote a balanced, uniform and sustainable preservation, development and transfer of storytelling traditions as an important part of intangible cultural heritage in Latvia and support the recognisability of the national experience internationally.

The Association is open, and any individual storyteller or an institution can join it, filling in the application form and confirming one's wish to contribute to actualising of storytelling traditions.

Latvian Association of Storytellers: the vision, the mission and the goals

The Mission

To become a unifying platform for individuals active in the field, in order to encourage preservation, recognisability of storytelling traditions and their carriers' social status, creating a well-formed idea of the forms of this oral tradition in Latvia and to promote their recognisability internationally.

The Vision

The Association is an institution coordinating the storytelling tradition and providing consultations to those involved in it, promoting balanced preservation, recognisability and implementation in society of storytelling traditions, along with the collaboration of their keepers and inheritors, their informal education, mutual exchange of experience and knowledge in Latvia and internationally.

The goal of the activities of the Latvian Association of Storytellers

The goal is to encourage sustainable preservation, development and transfer of storytelling traditions in Latvia, promote the recognisability of the national experience internationally, and familiarisation with international experiences, their study and implementation on a national level.

The tasks and functions of the Latvian Association of Storytellers

The tasks of the Latvian Association of Storytellers are as follows:

To develop study, cultivation, preservation, implementation and popularisation of the manifold storytelling traditions in Latvia;

To create a well-based notion of storytelling and inform the society about the diversity of storytelling traditions, their carriers and forms of the traditional oral culture;

To encourage the professional growth and lifelong learning of storytellers;

To promote a synergy between different target audiences and generations in sustaining and preservation of storytelling traditions;
To promote partnerships and creation of new cooperation forms (state and non-governmental , municipal institutions, educational institutions, individual storytellers, etc.) between organisations and unions related to storytelling;
to support and promote the development and recognisability of the Latvian storytellers' festivals as a unified movement;
to promote integration of storytelling traditions into other intangible cultural heritage manifestations, events, activities and projects;
to aid involvement of new storytellers and participation of organisations in popularisation of storytelling;
to provide a platform to different institutions of the field for a dialogue on development and preservation of storytelling traditions;
to summarise the experience gathered in Latvia, represent it and ensure its recognisability within international organisations, networks, projects and events;
to promote international co-operation for exchange of experience and knowledge, including encouraging of the study of different storytelling aspects and opportunities in the Latvian, European and global cultural space;
To help attract funding for carrying out joint activities in the field of storytelling.

The Basic Principles of the Latvian Association of Storytellers

One of the tasks of the Latvian Association of Storytellers is to ensure thorough inheritance of storytelling traditions, as much as possible retaining the basic values and message of the inherited oral forms.

The Basic Principles of the Association's activities

STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF STORYTELLING TRADITIONS

INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

TRADITIONS

SUSTAINABILITY

INCREASING THE STORYTELLERS' CAPACITY

STORYTELLER'S PRESTIGE

INTEGRITY

AVAILABILITY

QUALITY

ATTRACTION OF FUNDING

The fields of activity and priorities in the long term

1. Children and youth
2. Middle generation (35 – 55)
3. Seniors

4. Finding storytellers, local history studies, documentation of storytellers
5. Creation of unified platforms for actualisation of storytelling traditions and promotion of intergeneration dialogue
6. Gathering the experience stories and popularisation of those
7. Local and international co-operation
8. Attraction of finances and partners

3 urgent and current issues, that in medium term could grow in importance for the Latvian Association of Storytellers:

1. further education of storytellers;
2. international co-operation and attraction of expertise;
3. preservation of the regional traditional culture features and uniqueness.

The Structure of the Latvian Association of Storytellers

Co-operation partners:

Society of traditional culture „Aprika”, Archives of Latvian Folklore of the Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art, University of Latvia, UNESCO Latvian National Commission and the participants of the network „Stāstu bibliotēkas” (Story Libraries), especially the Library of Pilsrundāle, the Library of Valmiera, the Central Library of Preiļi, the Kurzeme cultural heritage centre „Kūrava”, the society „Skaņu māja”, Valsts Izglītības satura centrs (VISCS; The National Centre for Education), Latvian National Centre of Culture (LNKC), Latvian National Library, municipalities of Latvia, folklore groups, teachers, etc.