

ECO CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Regulations of the ECO International Mobile Photography Festival

“Our Heritage”

Article 1 — Introduction

The ECO International Mobile Photography Festival, entitled “Our Heritage,” is organized by the ECO Cultural Institute (ECI).

Festival Theme: “Passing on Heritage”

Article 2 — Objectives

The festival aims to:

- Strengthen the shared cultural identity among ECO Member States.
- Document intangible cultural heritage that is at risk of being forgotten.
- Promote cultural exchange among the peoples of ECO Member States.
- Introduce the cultures of ECO Member States to international audiences.
- Encourage younger generations to document and preserve their local heritage.

Article 3 — Festival Theme

The Festival theme is “Passing on Heritage”: capturing moments in which cultural heritage is transmitted from one generation to the next.

Participants are invited to use their mobile phone cameras to document moments in which traditional knowledge, skills, or customs are passed on, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Teaching traditional handicrafts (such as carpet weaving, embroidery, pottery, etc.)
- Passing on traditional music and folk melodies
- Teaching rituals, customs, ceremonies, and traditional practices
- Transferring traditional agricultural, pastoral, and occupational knowledge
- Storytelling, folk tales, poetry, and oral traditions
- Any authentic moment reflecting the transmission of cultural heritage between generations

Article 4 — Eligibility and Submission Requirements

Participation is open to all citizens of the following ECO Member States:

Afghanistan • The Republic of Azerbaijan • Iran • Kazakhstan • Kyrgyzstan • Pakistan • Tajikistan • Türkiye • Turkmenistan • Uzbekistan

In addition:

- The festival is open to both amateur and professional photographers.
- No previous photography experience is required.
- Each participant may submit a maximum of three (3) photographs. Each submitted photograph shall be judged individually.
- Participants must be at least 15 years old.

Technical Specifications

- All photographs must be captured using the camera of a mobile phone.
- Images captured using DSLR, mirrorless, compact, action cameras, drones, or any camera other than a mobile phone are not eligible.
- Accepted formats: JPEG or PNG.
- Minimum image dimension: 2000 pixels on the shortest side.
- Maximum file size: 10 MB per image.
- Images must not contain watermarks, signatures, logos, or text.
- Minor global adjustments, including exposure, brightness, contrast, white balance, color correction, sharpening, noise reduction, and cropping, are permitted, provided they do not alter the factual content of the photograph. The removal, relocation, or addition of visual elements is not permitted.
- Standard computational-photography processing performed automatically by the mobile device at the moment of capture (e.g., built-in HDR, night mode, or portrait mode) is permitted and is not considered AI-generated or AI-assisted manipulation under these Regulations. Deliberate post-capture use of AI tools to generate, remove, or alter image content is prohibited under Article 5.
- Composite images or any alteration that changes the original content of the photograph are prohibited.
- Submitted photographs must be relevant to the festival theme.
- Photographs must not have previously received awards in any international photography competition.

Article 5 — Grounds for Disqualification

Entries will be disqualified if they:

- Do not comply with the festival theme.
- Fail to meet the technical requirements.
- Are staged, posed, reenacted, or otherwise misleading, and fail to depict genuine, real-life situations truthfully.

- Contain AI-generated imagery or AI-assisted manipulation that materially alters the factual content of the image, as distinguished from the standard automatic camera processing described in Article 4.
- Were taken using equipment other than a mobile phone.
- Contain violent, offensive, discriminatory, or culturally inappropriate content, or violate applicable laws or the cultural values of ECO Member States.

Article 6 — Intellectual Property and Legal Provisions

1. Copyright of all submitted works remains with the photographer.
2. By submitting an entry, the participant represents and warrants that: (a) the participant is the creator of the photograph; and (b) all required permissions, releases, and consent from identifiable individuals, where legally required, have been obtained.
3. Where a submitted photograph clearly depicts an identifiable minor, the participant shall ensure that all permissions required by applicable law have been obtained.
4. Submitted photographs must truthfully depict genuine, real-life situations.
5. The participant shall be recognized as the copyright holder. If ownership is later proven otherwise, the entry will be disqualified, and all legal responsibility shall rest with the submitter.
6. Participants bear full responsibility for any claims regarding copyright infringement, privacy violations, or the rights of third parties.
7. Participants are responsible for ensuring that the creation and submission of their photographs comply with all applicable copyright, privacy, and data protection laws in the country where the photograph was taken.
8. The Festival Secretariat may reproduce and publish selected works solely for cultural, educational, research, and promotional purposes on a non-commercial basis, without additional compensation, with full credit to the photographer.
9. Whenever a photograph is published, the photographer's name and country will be acknowledged.
10. The Festival Secretariat may request the original image file, EXIF metadata, or any additional material necessary to verify the authenticity of a submitted photograph. Failure to provide such materials within the requested timeframe may result in disqualification.
11. The Festival Secretariat reserves the right to verify the date, location, and authenticity of any submitted photograph.
12. The Festival Secretariat may consult independent experts where necessary to verify the authenticity of submitted photographs.
13. The Festival Secretariat reserves the right to withdraw any award if a violation of these Regulations is discovered after the announcement of the results.
14. The ECO Cultural Institute reserves the right to reject works inconsistent with the cultural values, ethical standards, or objectives of the festival.

15. Personal information collected from participants will be used exclusively for festival administration, in accordance with the Institute's applicable data protection procedures, and will not be shared with third parties without consent, except where required by law.
16. Ethical Photography: Participants shall not endanger people, animals, cultural heritage, or the environment while taking photographs for the Festival.
17. The decisions of the Jury and the Festival Secretariat regarding eligibility, evaluation, and award recipients shall be final and binding.

Article 7 — Submission Procedure

All submission materials shall be provided in English.

Entries may be submitted through either of the following methods:

- Email: festival@ecieco.org
- Online Submission: <https://www.ecieco.org>

Each participant must provide:

- Full name
- Nationality
- Country of residence
- City of residence
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Photograph title (in English)
- A brief description of the photograph (maximum 100 words, in English)
- Location and date when the photograph was taken

Article 8 — Festival Timeline

Date	Activity
12 July 2026	Call for Entries Announced
12 July – 12 September 2026	Submission Period
13 September – 23 September 2026	Jury Evaluation
24 September 2026	Announcement of Winners
4 October 2026	Closing Ceremony & Physical Exhibition
5 October 2026	Online Gallery Opens

Note: The Festival Secretariat reserves the right to modify the schedule or format of the festival if unforeseen circumstances arise, including force majeure events. Any changes will be announced in advance.

Article 9 — Awards

Award	Prize
First Prize	Trophy, Certificate of Honor, Cash Prize (amount to be announced), Publication in the Festival Catalogue
Second Prize	Trophy, Certificate of Honor, Cash Prize (amount to be announced), Publication in the Festival Catalogue
Third Prize	Trophy, Certificate of Honor, Cash Prize (amount to be announced), Publication in the Festival Catalogue

Special Awards

One Certificate of Recognition shall be awarded to the highest-ranked eligible photograph from each ECO Member State.

Note: Cash prizes will be paid in accordance with applicable financial and banking regulations.

Article 10 — Festival Secretariat

- Website: <https://www.ecieco.org>
- Email: festival@ecieco.org
- Telephone: +98 21 2767 3238
- Official social media accounts: @ecieco_org on Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, and other official platforms.

Address

ECO Cultural Institute (ECI)

Baqer Al-Nimr Alley, Mohahed Danesh Street, Aghdasieh, Tehran, Iran

Final results will be announced through the official website and social media platforms of the ECO Cultural Institute. Award recipients will also be contacted directly.

Submission of an entry constitutes the participant's full and unconditional acceptance of these Regulations.

Ten Countries, One Shared Heritage

AF AZ IR KZ KG PK TJ TR TM UZ

Secretariat of the ECO International Mobile Photography Festival

ECO Cultural Institute (ECI) — Tehran