

GOOD PRACTICES

- **ALPINE ICON Summer School promoted by Lombardy region** [YouTube link](#)
- **AlpTextyles Textile School Slovenia:** [YouTube link](#)
- **Handicraft manuals:** [Vezenje guide](#)
- **Peer exchanges** and networking with other masters help reinforce skills and inspire innovation. In the AlpTextyles project, several such exchanges took place, e.g. **Škofja Loka—Regione Lombardia exchange:** [YouTube link](#)

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Task: Organize a knowledge-transfer course.

Steps:

1. Select a skill and an experienced master.
2. Define the target group (children, youth, adults, tourists).
3. Choose the form (workshop, live demonstration, online video).
4. Plan timing and location (e.g. afternoons after 17:00, or weekends; ensure enough space, lighting, access to water, storage, etc.).
5. Plan promotion (posters, social media, partners).
6. Agree on fair compensation for the master (free workshop supported by an institution or paid participation).
7. Define expected outcomes (new product, acquired skill, increased awareness of heritage).
8. Prepare a short article or social media post about the workshop using skills from Module 5.

Outcome: The community will have a simple educational plan and a hands-on experience of knowledge transfer that can be developed and repeated.



8. Heritage as an inspiration for new generations

MODULE OBJECTIVES

- Encourage young people and creators to see heritage as a source of creativity.
- Connect traditional knowledge with contemporary trends and practices.
- Create opportunities for intergenerational collaboration and the development of new products.

Heritage as a living source of creativity

Cultural heritage is not just a collection of objects or records—it is a living source of inspiration that opens space for exploration, creativity, and innovation. Alpine textile heritage, with its rich patterns, colors, techniques, and stories, offers limitless possibilities for contemporary creation.

Encouraging creativity among youth

Young people often seek new ways to express themselves. Traditional motifs can inspire them with aesthetic power and storytelling. Integrating heritage elements into contemporary design—fashion accessories, interior elements, or artistic projects—stimulates innovation and gives traditional techniques new life. Providing practical challenges and accessible heritage materials is key to engaging youth.

Intergenerational collaboration

When youth creativity intersects with the knowledge of older generations, innovative and authentic solutions emerge. Workshops where masters demonstrate traditional techniques and young designers reinterpret them into contemporary products enable simultaneous knowledge transfer and idea generation. Schools, artists, local creators, and community associations can all participate, building a bridge between tradition and modernity.



Contemporary products inspired by heritage

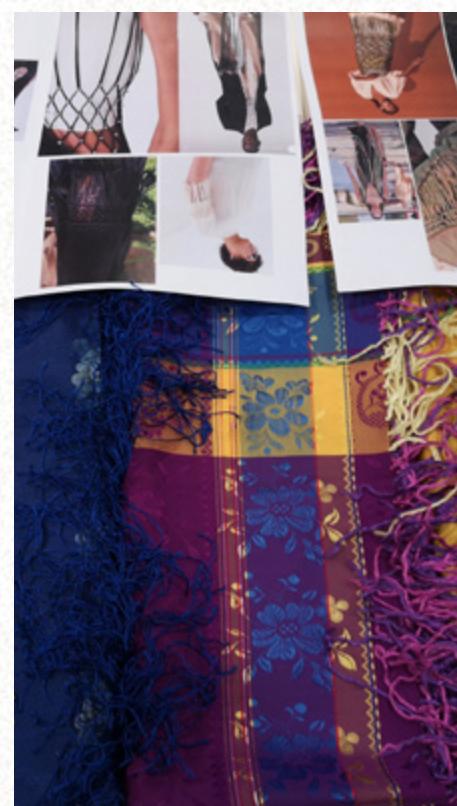
Products based on heritage combine authenticity and story with modern usability.

Examples include:

- Bags, clothing, jewelry, or interior elements featuring traditional textile patterns and techniques.
- These products strengthen local identity and appeal to markets seeking unique, story-rich items not found in mass production.

GOOD PRACTICES

- **AlpTextyles project:** capsule collection by Istituto Marangoni and Montafon ([Link to the catalogue](#)), UMID Capsule Collection by Francesco Ferrero and Codadilana - Lombardy Region. [Link](#)
- **Designer examples:** Vita Ivičić. [Link to the website](#)
- **Opančareva kći** enterprise inspired by local tradition. [Link to the website](#)



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Group creative process—mentorship and collaboration

Objective: Connect traditional knowledge from heritage holders, youth, and professional designers to develop new ideas for contemporary products inspired by heritage motifs and techniques.

Group composition:

- Knowledge holders (older community members, masters of traditional techniques)
- Youth (students, local creators)
- Designer or creative mentor (fashion, graphic, or industrial designer)

Steps:

1. Presentation of heritage:

- Knowledge holders present techniques, patterns, materials, or stories.
- Highlight significance and unique aspects of each technique or motif.

2. Brainstorming and idea generation:

- Identify possibilities for innovative use of heritage elements.
- Designer guides creative thinking: sketches, moodboards, combining tradition with modernity.
- Youth contribute ideas on functionality, contemporary trends, and user preferences.

3. Development of product concept:

- Decide product type, purpose, target audience, and key characteristics.
- Consider prototyping or demonstrating the product in workshops, exhibitions, or mini-collections.

4. Presentation and reflection:

- Groups present concepts to other participants or mentors.
- Discuss how heritage was incorporated, challenges faced, and opportunities for further development.



Outcome:

- Group produces an innovative product concept combining tradition and contemporary design.
- Participants gain experience in intergenerational collaboration and mentorship.
- Ideas are ready for prototyping or practical implementation.



9. Intellectual Property (IP) and Legal Protection

MODULE OBJECTIVES

- Understand the basic forms of protection for cultural and textile heritage.
- Comprehend the importance of legal protection for preserving authenticity and ensuring the economic sustainability of heritage products.
- Learn how to approach the protection process.

Cultural and intellectual property (IP)

Preserving heritage is not only about physically safeguarding objects or revitalizing techniques; it also involves legal protection. Intellectual property (IP) rights and cultural intellectual property rights are essential tools that allow communities to:

- Protect their knowledge, products, and identity from misuse and
- Create the foundation for sustainable economic development.

What are intellectual property rights and why are they important for heritage?

Intellectual property rights (IP) protect creative ideas, knowledge, and products. They are crucial for heritage because they:

- Prevent unauthorized use or copying of traditional knowledge and symbols,
- Allow communities to decide how their heritage is used,
- Enhance recognition, market value, and sustainability of heritage products.



Types of intellectual property rights

Copyright: Protects original works such as pattern drawings, publications, photographs, or story collections.

Trademarks: Protect the name, logo, or symbol used by the community to represent its products (e.g. a quality mark for textiles).

Patents: Protect new technical solutions, processes, or inventions. Less common in textile heritage but relevant for innovative production methods.

Collective marks and geographical indications: Indicate product origin and guarantee quality (e.g. Idrija lace).

Cultural intellectual property: Protects knowledge, traditions, and practices linked to a community and prevents unauthorized commercial use.



How to address cases of cultural appropriation and ensure respectful collaboration

Textile traditions can attract the interest of designers and companies. While such collaborations can bring visibility and income, they also risk misuse or cultural appropriation when communities' designs, motifs, or knowledge are used without consent, credit, or fair compensation.

When companies wish to collaborate with heritage communities respectfully, here is what communities should ask and require, drawing on best practices and guidelines by the World Intellectual Property Organisation and the Cultural Intellectual Property Rights Initiative®.

Consent: free, prior, and informed

- Ask companies to present their project idea **before using any traditional motif or knowledge.**
- Ensure the community understands what will be produced, how it will be sold, and for how long.
- Decisions should be collective and follow traditional governance or representative bodies.
- Written consent should specify the scope, limits, and duration of use.

Credit: acknowledgment and attribution

- Request that the community's name and contribution appear in all communication materials, packaging, exhibitions, and media releases.
- **Discuss how the community wishes to be represented** (visuals, language, name).
- Ensure the story of the textile or technique is told accurately, in consultation with community members.



Compensation: fair and equitable benefits

- Ask for transparent and fair benefit-sharing:
 - Monetary: royalties, lump-sum fees, or community funds.
 - Non-monetary: capacity building, shared IP rights, visibility campaigns, or training.
- **Clarify the type of compensation before production starts.**
- Ensure agreements include mechanisms to review and adjust benefits over time.

Building respectful relationships

- Companies must take time to know the community and its culture before any negotiation.
- The community has the right to refuse collaboration if the proposal is inappropriate.
- Collaboration should be based on trust, respect, and continuous dialogue—not one-time transactions.

If misuse occurs

- Document and make public evidence of unauthorized use (dates, images, communication).
- Contact local IP offices, cultural heritage organizations, or NGOs for legal and public support.
- Communicate calmly and professionally, requesting rectification, acknowledgment, or compensation.



How to protect textile heritage

- **Traditional patterns and motifs:** copyright or collective trademark.
- **Products with geographical origin:** geographical indication.
- **New techniques or production processes:** patent.
- **Community marks:** quality or authenticity labels verifying the origin and quality of the product.

Practical Advice for Communities

1. Identify which elements of your heritage have potential for legal protection (objects, patterns, techniques, names).
2. Consult experts (intellectual property offices, lawyers, support organizations).
3. Consider **collective protection**, which is often more effective than individual protection.
4. Learn the registration process: submission of application, documentation, fees. Subsidies and support programs are often available.

Useful Contacts

- **The 3Cs' Rule: Consent. Credit. Compensation© (2017)** is a soft law, agreement-based framework for sustainable, fair and equitable relationships with traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions custodians who belong to indigenous peoples, ethnic groups and local communities (i.e. community, group or, if applicable, individuals) [Link to the website](#)
- **Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Slovenia (UIL)** – check local contacts for individual countries.
- **European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)**
- **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** [Official website](#)
- **Study Safeguarding Traditional Textile Knowledge in the Alpine Context** by Agnese Musatti (Lombardy Region): [Link](#)



PRACTICAL EXERCISE

1. Make a list of elements of your community's textile heritage (patterns, products, stories, names).

2. For each element, consider which form of protection is most suitable:

- Copyright
- Collective trademark
- Geographical indication
- Patent

3. Explain why the chosen form of protection is most appropriate and how it would help preserve heritage and increase its visibility.

4. Create a checklist for your community to be used when dealing with cases of collaboration with companies:

- Who represents the community?
- What forms of crediting and compensation are preferred?



10. Market Presentation and Business Models

MODULE OBJECTIVES

- Understand how heritage can become a sustainable source of income.
- Learn the basic elements of a business model for cultural products.
- Identify opportunities to link heritage with tourism and local markets.
- Recognize the importance of clear communication and positioning of heritage products.

Cultural heritage can also represent an important economic potential for local communities. When heritage is properly presented and market-positioned, it supports sustainable development, strengthens local identity, and creates new jobs. In the context of textile heritage, this means that products are not only aesthetically pleasing, but also carry stories, authenticity, and values that contemporary consumers increasingly appreciate.

Heritage products have a special appeal—they combine craftsmanship, tradition, and cultural significance. Their value is not only functional but also lies in their ability to tell the story of a community, its lifestyle, and the skills passed down through generations.



How to present and sell heritage products

Clear storytelling is essential when presenting and selling heritage products. Every product should answer the questions:

- Who made it?
- When and where was it created?
- Which techniques and materials were used?
- What significance does it hold for the community?

Such storytelling can transform products into “premium” items—unique, high-quality, and carriers of an authentic narrative.

Basics of a business model for cultural products

A clear business model ensures that heritage products can survive in the market and become a sustainable source of revenue. Key aspects to consider include:

- **Costs:** materials, production, promotion, packaging, and distribution.
- **Target customers:** tourists, local residents, designers, collectors, or the general public.
- **Production:** handmade, small workshops, or a combination with industrial production.
- **Sales and promotion:** channels through which the product reaches the customer—local fairs, museum shops, online sales, social media, or tourism packages.
- **Pricing strategy:** ensure fair compensation for producers and authors, while considering how much revenue is reinvested into the community, content development, and promotion.
- **Brand positioning:** A consistent visual identity, quality labels, or community marks help buyers recognize authentic products and build trust.



Linking heritage with tourism and local markets

Tourism is an excellent channel to showcase heritage products. Visitors often seek authentic experiences and products that tell a story—exactly what heritage products can offer. Communities can integrate products into:

- **Tourism packages:** visit a workshop, watch a demonstration, and purchase products.
- **Museum shops and local stores:** selling as part of the cultural experience.
- **Local markets and festivals:** direct interaction with customers and educational opportunities.
- **Collaboration with local businesses:** restaurants, hotels, and travel agencies can promote products as part of the local experience.

Practical advice

- Start with small quantities and test customer response to reduce risk.
- Use a combination of sales channels: local stores, fairs, online platforms, social media.
- Ensure high-quality product presentation: packaging, origin labels, story and technique description.
- Think long-term about branding: recognizable visual identity, logo, or shared quality mark supports sustainability and market visibility.

LEARN MORE about heritage-sensitive products and their valorization: [Link to the Massive Online Open Course \(MOOC\)](#)



GOOD PRACTICES

- Sales of **official tourist souvenirs** made by craftspeople and **Handicrafts experiences** in Arts & Crafts Centre Škofja Loka. [Link to the website](#)
- **Semne Cusute** sale of textile courses and contemporary items inspired by embroidery tradition from Romania. [Link to the website](#)
- **Business Plan for Bergamasca Wool by** Kilowatt (Lombardy Region) [LINK](#)

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Task: Select one product or service and answer the following questions:

1. Product definition: What are we offering (tradition, materials, story)?
2. Target customer: Who will buy it (tourists, local community, designers, youth)?
3. Unique value: Why is the product “premium” (origin, handmade, authenticity, limited edition)?
4. Market channels: How and where will it be sold (local fairs, shops, online, tourism packages)?
5. Pricing: How will the price reflect premium positioning and production costs?
6. Storytelling: How will we communicate the heritage story to the buyer (label, description, digital media)?

Outcome: Participants will develop a comprehensive concept for the market presentation and business model of a heritage product, which the community can use for sustainable sales, promotion, and the dissemination of cultural value.



Sample documentation sheet:

Basic information

Object ID:

Production technique:

Name:

Date of creation (if known):

Description (what it is, material, usage):

Place of origin:

Dimensions and materials:

Owner/knowledge bearer:

Related story (short narrative)

What was (or is) the object used for? In what manner? Does it have any symbolic meaning or is connected with socialisation, work, life-cycle rituals? Any “hidden” information is very meaningful for the interpretation of the material (tangible) culture.

Photograph

For photographing objects on a neutral background or in use; ideally, both approaches. Capture multiple angles and details, patterns, and dimensions. Use a unified system for naming the photos and add metadata (object name, date, author, owner, location, description, keywords).



Interview questions

Do not forget to record basic biographical information (name, birth year, residence, education).

Basic information, taking up handicrafts:

- What is your profession?
- Is crafting your main income or are you an amateur craftsman?
- What led you to this craft?
- Where and how did you learn the techniques? Have you been (formally) trained in this craft? Who taught you?
- Since when has your workshop been operating?
- Did you take over the craft from someone else?

Production:

- How many people are involved in production?
- What kind of products do you make?
- What are you best known for/what is your best-selling product?
- What is the average production/service time?
- What is the average price?
- What materials do you use?
- Where do you source them?
- What do you look for when choosing/what is the quality of the material?
- How do the prices of the materials fluctuate?
- What do you do with the leftover material (do you have any recycling methods)?
- What tools and machines do you use (are there any adapted, special tools)?
- What is the rhythm of the work, when is the main season, how do you plan your work?



Connections and support:

- Do you have any problems (production, material supply, sales, etc.)?
- Are you a member of an association, a craft centre; are you registered as a holder of intangible cultural heritage?
- Do you miss institutional support?

Broader meaning of work:

- What is the significance of this work for you and your community?
- What is still practiced today, and what is changed, adapted or forgotten?
- What would you like younger generations to preserve?
- Can you share any other stories related to the sense of your work, personal heritage, handicrafting process etc.?



Colophon

Future of Alpine Textiles: Heritage Safeguarding Toolkit for Communities

Published by: Razvojna agencija Sora d.o.o.

Editors: Marija Demšar and Tajda Jovanovski

Authors: Marija Demšar, Katarina Šrimpf Vendramin, Kati Sekirnik, Diego Rinallo

Photographs: AlpTextyles project partners' photo archive, Andrej Furlan, Jana Jocif

Design: Simon Pavlič

Digital edition RC_1

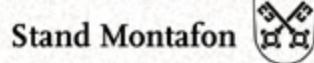
Price of the e-publication: free of charge

Year of publication: 2025

This handbook was created within the AlpTextyles project, co-financed by the European Union under the Alpine Space Programme.



AlpTextiles



SUPPORTED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION THROUGH THE INTERREG ALPINE SPACE PROGRAMME

