

PROJECT ON CULTURE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Ukraine Cultural Heritage Fund: International Considerations

2025



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This publication was prepared by the Project on Culture and Civic Engagement, Bard College Center for Civic Engagement.

Please note that this document presents a subjective evaluation based on available information gathered online and reflects personal opinions and interpretations of the topic.

A – Background

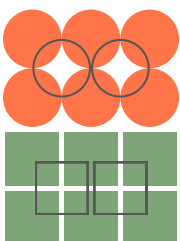
Ukraine stands at a crucial crossroads in shaping the institutional foundation for a national cultural heritage fund-one that can support the restoration, protection, and sustainable development of cultural assets damaged or threatened by war, neglect, or underfunding. The Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund (UCHF) initiative aspires to become a transparent, independent, and effective mechanism for mobilizing resources and channeling them into both immediate conservation needs and long-term cultural resilience. Before designing its legal, operational, and financial architecture, it is essential to assess international models and clarify the fundamental parameters that will define its character and legitimacy.



B – Foundation Model Parameters

To navigate this design process, we identify four core parameters that will structure the conceptual development and allow for meaningful comparisons with established cultural heritage institutions abroad:

- 1. Governance Model.** Defines the legal and institutional nature of the fund: Is it a state entity, independent foundation, hybrid public-private body, or an NGO? This also includes questions of board composition, independence, political alignment, and long-term accountability.
- 2. Funding Model.** Explores how the fund will be financed: through state allocations, international donors, private philanthropy, endowments, memberships, or mixed models. This parameter also considers mechanisms to ensure sustainability, flexibility, and financial independence.
- 3. Scope and Focus.** Determines the operational priorities of the fund. Will it focus on direct physical restoration, preventive conservation, capacity building, training of specialists, research, or advocacy? A clearly defined scope is essential to prevent mission drift and to align with donor expectations.
- 4. Granting Model.** Specifies how funds are allocated and to whom. Will the fund issue open calls for proposals, provide matching grants, make discretionary awards, or directly implement projects? Eligibility criteria, selection processes, and transparency mechanisms fall under this parameter.



C – Case Studies of Established Heritage Conservation Institutions

1. Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz (Germany 🇩🇪)
2. Schweizer Heimatschutz (Switzerland 🇨🇭)
3. The National Trust (United Kingdom 🇬🇧)
4. Fondation du Patrimoine (France 🇫🇷)
5. Fondo Ambiente Italiano (FAI) (Italy 🇮🇹)
6. National Trust for Historic Preservation (USA 🇺🇸)
7. Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN) (Brazil 🇧🇷)
8. Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) (India 🇮🇳)
9. Cultural Heritage Administration (South Korea 🇰🇷)

Looking at the 9 examples along the foundation models core parameters:

1. Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz (Germany 🇩🇪) Founded in 1985, this is Germany's largest private initiative for monument preservation. It supports heritage conservation through grants, advocacy, and education.

- Governance Model: Independent foundation with a strong public-private orientation. Governed by a board with civil society and expert representation.
- Funding Model: Primarily donor-based, with significant private philanthropy, legacy donations, and occasional public co-financing.
- Scope and Focus: Focuses on restoration and adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, public awareness campaigns, and some educational outreach.
- Granting Model: Competitive project grants, primarily to municipalities, churches, NGOs, and private owners.

2. Schweizer Heimatschutz (Switzerland 🇨🇭) Founded in 1905, this NGO is dedicated to heritage protection, public education, and promotion of quality urban and rural development. It also runs the "Ferien im Baudenkmal" tourism initiative.

- Governance Model: Member-based NGO with democratic governance; broad citizen involvement and advocacy role.
- Funding Model: Funded by member contributions, private donations, and occasional government support.
- Scope and Focus: Strong on advocacy, heritage tourism, and public campaigns; limited restoration.
- Granting Model: Offers small-scale financial support; more focused on policy influence and public engagement than direct grantmaking.

3. The National Trust (United Kingdom 🇬🇧) Founded in 1895, this is one of the world's most prominent conservation charities, owning and managing hundreds of historic sites, landscapes, and buildings.

- Governance Model: Independent charity with a royal charter; professional executive team with public accountability.
- Funding Model: Mixed model including membership fees, property income, donations, retail, and partnerships.
- Scope and Focus: Wide scope covering property ownership, restoration, conservation, tourism, education.
- Granting Model: Does not provide external grants; directly owns and manages sites.

4. Fondation du Patrimoine (France 🇫🇷) Established in 1996, this foundation promotes the restoration of heritage buildings, especially those not protected by the state. It acts as an intermediary between private owners and donors.

- Governance Model: Legally recognized independent foundation with public utility status; works closely with local governments.
- Funding Model: Uses tax-incentivized donations from individuals and companies, along with public-private partnerships.
- Scope and Focus: Specializes in restoration of private and rural heritage, including religious buildings and traditional architecture.
- Granting Model: Co-financing model requiring recipient investment; broad eligibility but selective support.

5. Fondo Ambiente Italiano (FAI) (Italy 🇮🇹) Founded in 1975 and modeled after the UK National Trust, FAI focuses on the conservation of Italian cultural and natural heritage.

- Governance Model: Independent NGO with public access mandate; strong volunteer and donor base.
- Funding Model: Membership, donations, corporate sponsorships, and income from site operations.
- Scope and Focus: Direct conservation and management of heritage sites, education, and public engagement.
- Granting Model: Primarily manages its own sites; minimal external funding mechanisms.

6. National Trust for Historic Preservation (United States 🇺🇸) Founded in 1949, this nonprofit organization works to save America's historic places through preservation advocacy, financial support, and property stewardship.

- Governance Model: Independent nonprofit with a national board and partnerships at state and local levels.
- Funding Model: Funded by individual donors, foundation grants, corporate partnerships, and membership fees.

- Scope and Focus: Advocacy, property preservation, public education, technical assistance, and endangered sites program.
- Granting Model: Offers competitive grants and loans; also partners on special projects and preservation easements.

7. Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN) (Brazil 🇧🇷) Created in 1937, IPHAN is a federal government agency responsible for the preservation of Brazil's cultural heritage.

- Governance Model: Governmental body under the Ministry of Culture; centralized public authority.
- Funding Model: Publicly funded through federal budget; supplemented by partnerships.
- Scope and Focus: Broad scope encompassing architectural, archaeological, intangible, and artistic heritage.
- Granting Model: Public investment in state-owned and supported projects; does not operate through open calls for grants.

8. Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) (India 🇮🇳) Established in 1984, INTACH is one of India's largest cultural heritage NGOs, active in advocacy, conservation, and training.

- Governance Model: Independent NGO with chapters across the country; strong expert and volunteer base.
- Funding Model: Receives grants from the government, international donors, private philanthropy, and project-based funding.
- Scope and Focus: Conservation, documentation, research, education, and training of heritage professionals.
- Granting Model: Undertakes projects directly or in collaboration; limited external grant distribution.

8. Cultural Heritage Administration (South Korea 🇰🇷) Established in 1961, this is a government agency dedicated to protecting and managing Korea's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

- Governance Model: National-level government agency under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.
- Funding Model: Fully government-funded, with targeted programs supported by special funds.
- Scope and Focus: Extensive scope including national treasures, living human treasures, digital archiving, and global outreach.
- Granting Model: Allocates funding to local governments and institutions based on national programs and priorities.

D – Cultural Heritage Institution Post-Conflict Examples

Looking into institutions operating in post-conflict or recovery contexts, where cultural heritage is at risk due to war, political instability, or prolonged neglect, here are some examples to illustrate how institutions adapt the four parameters—governance, funding, scope, and granting—in fragile environments.

1. Iraq Cultural Heritage Conservation Initiative (IHC)

- Overview: Launched by the World Monuments Fund in response to the destruction of heritage during the Iraq War, IHC supported the protection and rehabilitation of major heritage sites like Babylon.
- Governance Model: International NGO-led initiative in partnership with Iraqi authorities.
- Funding Model: Philanthropic and institutional donor-based.
- Scope and Focus: Site management planning, documentation, and international advocacy.
- Granting Model: Implemented projects directly with partners; no open grants.

2. Mosul Heritage Stabilization Program (MHSP)

- Overview: A collaboration led by the University of Pennsylvania with local Iraqi actors to restore key cultural heritage buildings in post-ISIS Mosul.
- Governance Model: University-led international consortium with local stakeholder inclusion.
- Funding Model: U.S. State Department and foundation funding.
- Scope and Focus: Restoration of historic homes, training in traditional crafts.
- Granting Model: Project execution model; restoration and capacity-building led directly by program teams.

3. Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) – Iraq Projects

- Overview: GCI supports long-term heritage conservation globally, with specific interventions in conflict zones like Iraq.
- Governance Model: Department of the Getty Trust (private foundation).
- Funding Model: Endowment-based private funding.
- Scope and Focus: Research, training, and conservation science applied to fieldwork.
- Granting Model: Direct implementation; no external grants.

4. International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

- Overview: Intergovernmental organization with global membership, ICCROM leads in training, technical assistance, and policy development for heritage in crisis.
- Governance Model: Intergovernmental, with member state representation.
- Funding Model: Member state contributions and international project grants.
- Scope and Focus: Capacity building, emergency response, global coordination.
- Granting Model: Offers training and expertise rather than funding grants.

5. Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (SPK, Germany)

- Overview: Created after WWII to manage and reunite scattered cultural assets from Prussian institutions.
- Governance Model: Semi-autonomous foundation under German federal and state oversight.
- Funding Model: Public funding from federal and state governments.
- Scope and Focus: Museum management, archival preservation, restitution efforts.
- Granting Model: Manages institutions; no external funding calls.

6. Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme (AKHCP)

- Overview: An initiative of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, working in post-conflict and fragile urban contexts across the Muslim world to restore historic urban fabric.
- Governance Model: Private foundation with partnerships at local and national levels.
- Funding Model: Foundation funding and partnerships with development agencies.
- Scope and Focus: Restoration, urban revitalization, and community development.
- Granting Model: Direct implementation with some cost-sharing partnerships.

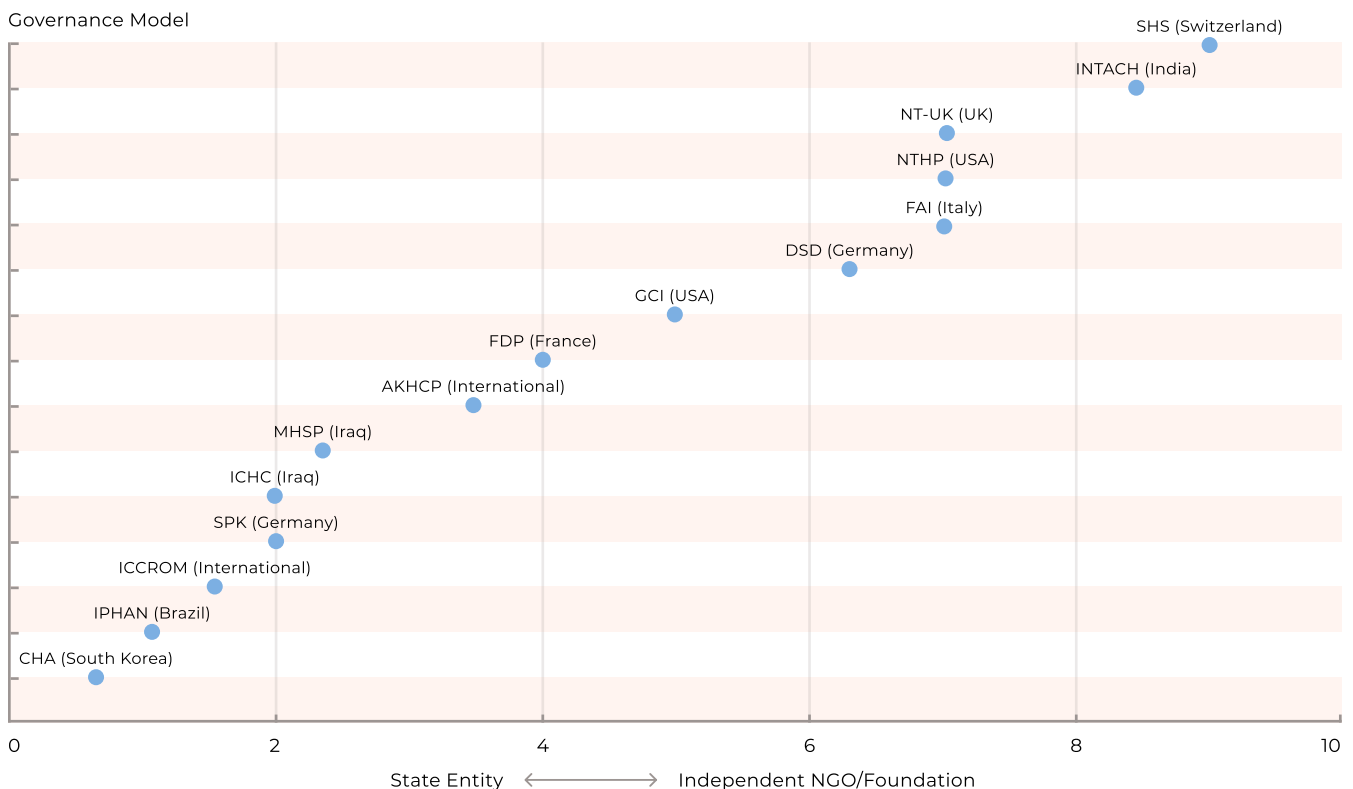
Ε – Comparing the Case Studies Along the Foundations' Parameters

To support the development of the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund (UCHF), we examine fifteen global case studies against four key institutional design parameters: **Governance Model, Funding Model, Scope and Focus, and Granting Model**. This comparative lens provides a clearer view of the landscape of cultural heritage institutions—how they are structured, financed, and operate—and helps position UCHF in a well-informed, strategic location along these spectra.

1. Governance Model

X-Axis: State Entity (0) → Independent NGO/Foundation (10)

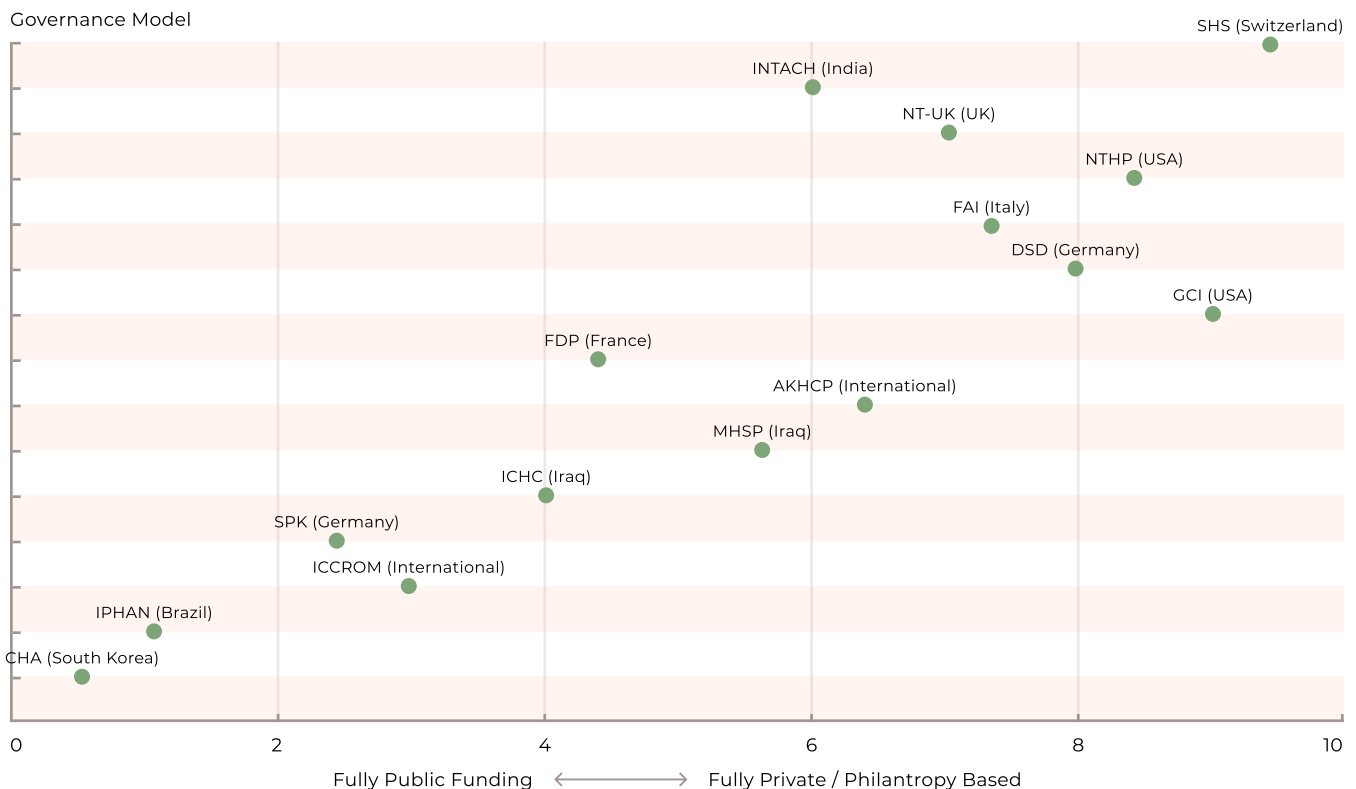
This parameter evaluates how closely an institution is tied to state structures versus how independently it operates. On the left, we find CHA (South Korea) and IPHAN (Brazil)—both are public bodies embedded in state ministries. In the middle, semi-autonomous or hybrid institutions like SPK (Germany) and ICCROM (International) balance public frameworks with operational flexibility. The right is populated by NGOs and charities like DSD (Germany), SHS (Switzerland), NTHP (USA), and INTACH (India), which operate independently, often with grassroots or philanthropic support.



2. Funding Model

X-Axis: Fully Public Funding (0) → Fully Private / Philanthropy Based (10)

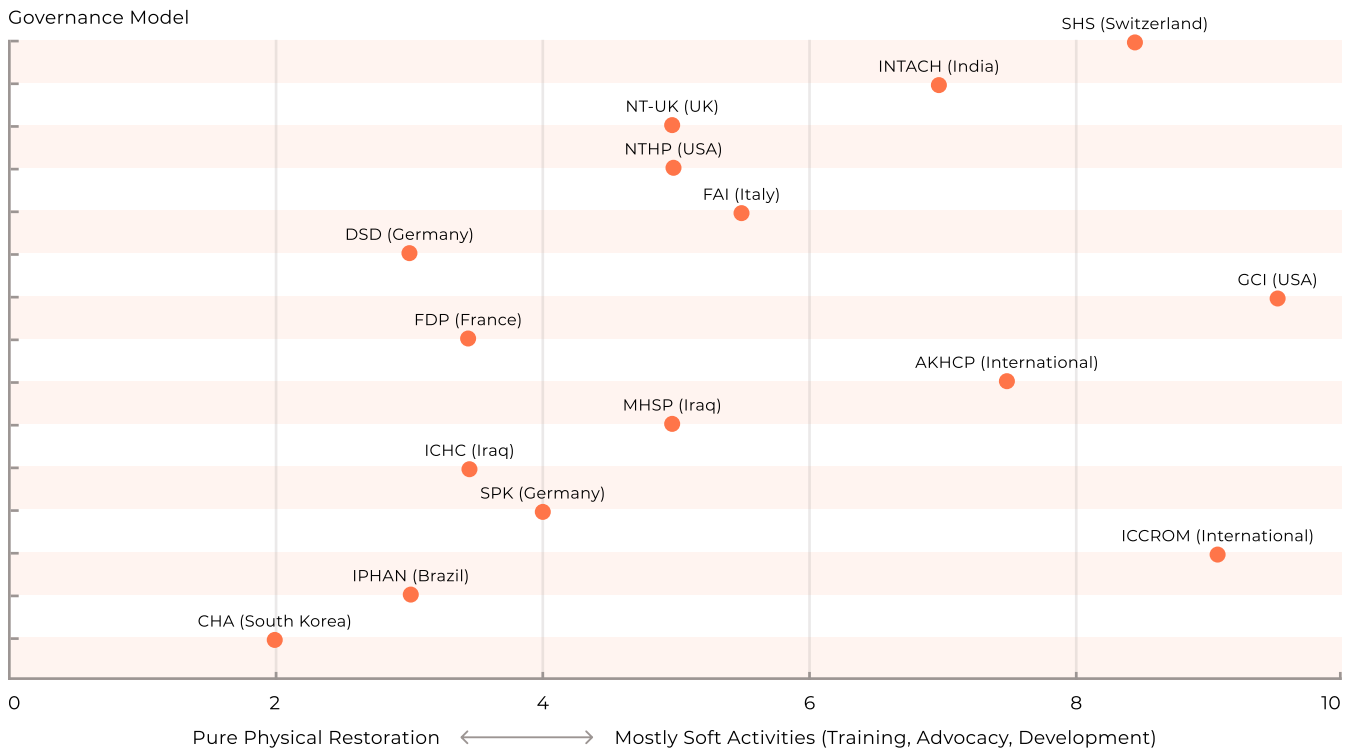
This axis reflects where institutions derive their operating budgets—from state allocations to private donors, endowments, or membership. Institutions like CHA, IPHAN, and SPK are public-funded and appear on the left. The middle includes hybrid models like FDP (France) and MHSP (Iraq). On the right, DSD, NTHP, and SHS rely heavily on private donations and philanthropy. GCI (USA) stands out with near-complete reliance on private endowment.



3. Scope and Focus

X-Axis: Pure Physical Restoration (0) → Mostly Soft Activities (Training, Advocacy, Development) (10)

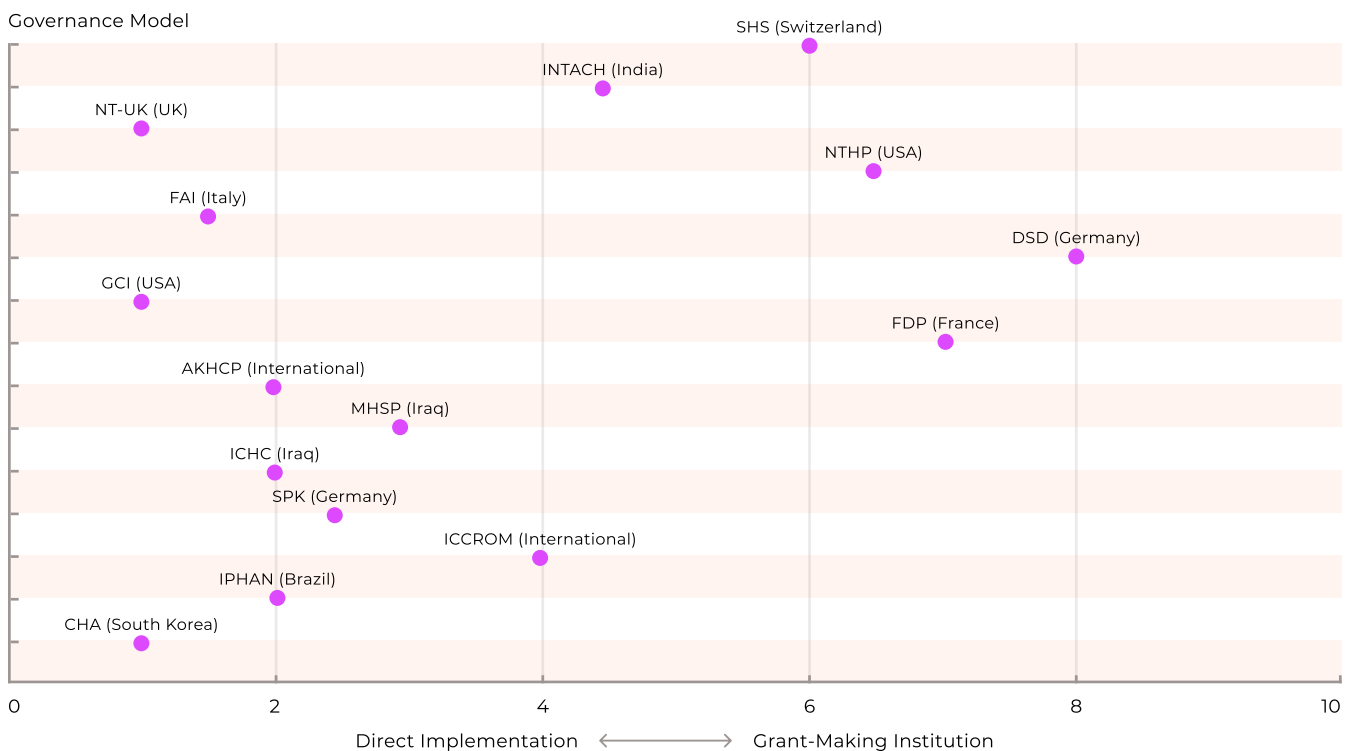
This measures whether institutions concentrate on restoring buildings or expand into policy, training, and community development. On the left, CHA, IPHAN, and DSD focus on restoration. In the middle, institutions like MHSP, NT-UK, and FAI mix restoration with public programming. On the right, ICCROM, SHS, and GCI work extensively on soft components like training, education, and advocacy.



4. Granting Model

X-Axis: Direct Implementation (0) → Grant-Making Institution (10)

Shows how institutions use their resources: direct implementers (CHA, FAI, NT-UK), mixed approaches (ICCROM, MHSP, INTACH), or grant-making bodies (DSD, FDP, NTHP).



F – Recommendations: Strategic Positioning of UCHF

Drawing from the institutional mapping, global case studies, and Ukraine's current cultural and political context, here is a proposed clear strategic position for the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund (UCHF) along each of the four foundational parameters. These recommendations aim to balance credibility, sustainability, and impact, while ensuring alignment with international best practices and Ukraine's long-term cultural recovery.

1. Governance Model: Independent NGO (Registered in Ukraine, Option for International Legal Base)

UCHF could be established as an independent non-governmental organization legally registered in Ukraine, with operational independence from the government and oversight by a diverse board. Given current geopolitical instability and donor preferences, an international legal registration (e.g. in an EU country or Switzerland) may be considered as an interim or parallel structure—particularly for receiving and managing foreign funds.

Why this makes sense:

- Builds international trust and avoids the perception of political interference.
- Offers legal and administrative flexibility for fundraising and partnerships.
- Maintains a Ukrainian identity and public legitimacy through national registration.
- Supports a gradual transition to full Ukrainian anchoring post-conflict.

Risks and trade-offs:

- May require dual legal structures, increasing administrative complexity.
- Coordination with the Ministry of Culture and national stakeholders must be carefully managed to avoid friction or duplication.

2. Funding Model: Hybrid – Private and Public International

UCHF could adopt a hybrid funding model, combining state and international public sources (e.g., EU, UNESCO, bilateral donors) with private philanthropy, including the Ukrainian diaspora, foundations, and individual supporters.

Why this makes sense:

- Diversifies financial risk and broadens the coalition of support.
- Creates alignment with successful international models like DSD (Germany) and NTHP (USA).
- Offers flexibility to scale funding streams depending on project type and donor interest.

Risks and trade-offs:

- Requires strong donor relationship management and clear communication.
- Compliance with multiple funders' regulations can be resource-intensive.

3. Scope and Focus: Primarily Soft Activities

UCHF could focus primarily on soft cultural heritage activities, including training, professional development, capacity building for institutions, policy advocacy, and heritage education. While physical restoration remains important, it should be pursued through partnerships, rather than being the fund's direct focus.

Why this makes sense:

- Addresses urgent capacity gaps in Ukraine's heritage sector.
- Easier to mobilize, scale, and adapt in wartime and early post-war conditions.
- Encourages long-term sustainability by investing in people and systems.

Risks and trade-offs:

- May lack the "visibility" of physical restoration, requiring a strong narrative to maintain donor engagement.
- Needs strong collaboration with restoration-focused entities to ensure comprehensive cultural recovery.

4. Granting Model: Grant-Making to Implementers

UCHF could function as a strategic grant-making institution, allocating funds through open calls, discretionary grants, or strategic co-financing to implementers such as museums, local governments, NGOs, and cultural operators.

Why this makes sense:

- Empowers local actors and promotes professionalization of the sector.
- Allows the fund to stay lean and focused on oversight, learning, and strategy.
- Encourages diverse project models and geographic reach.

Risks and trade-offs:

- Requires strong internal grant-making systems, including due diligence, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Some regions or institutions may lack the capacity to apply for and manage grants, requiring targeted support.

UCHF Strategic Definition in Conclusion:

The Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Fund (UCHF) is an independent, Ukrainian-registered NGO with optional international registration, funded through public and private sources, that supports Ukraine's cultural resilience by empowering local implementers through soft-sector grants, training, and strategic partnerships.