

CCI sector Cooperation between Estonia and Namibia in 2023-25

The Estonian and Namibian National Commissions for UNESCO launched a collaboration in 2023, focusing on the creative economy, cultural heritage, and digital skills. The vision is grounded in SDGs and shared values: youth engagement, cultural diversity, supporting sustainable development through education and innovation, and multi-stakeholder cross-sectoral engagement.

2023: First Steps of Cooperation

The cooperation gained momentum under the leadership of **NGO Creative Estonia** through a *Creative Entrepreneurship Academy* held in Windhoek in the end of October 2023. The program included:

- a high-level conference: “*Heritage & Innovation: Finding Business Opportunities in our Cultural Roots*”
- and a youth-oriented hackathon “*Hack the Heritage*”

The winning teams that continued developing their ideas with Estonian mentors in a virtual accelerator program were:

- an augmented reality app to present and preserve heritage stories
 - water-saving technology for cultivating medicinal herbs
 - climate-friendly clothing inspired by traditional patterns
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2024: Education and Future Outlook

In 2024, the collaboration expanded to the level of higher education. The Activities in Windhoek under the *Creative Entrepreneurship Academy* initiative included:

- the conference “*The Role of Education in Preserving and Digitizing Cultural Heritage*”
 - and a *Training of Trainers* programme, where the University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy shared their experiences with the University of Namibia on the integration of creative disciplines, digital technologies, and entrepreneurial skills in the curricula.
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2025: Youth and Innovation

In March 2025, the second hackathon “*Hack the Heritage – Growing Digital*” took place in Windhoek. Participants represented different generations and regions across Namibia. A total of 13 ideas were developed, including:

- a digital platform for promoting local artists
- an e-book preserving grandmothers’ traditional weaving techniques
- educational dolls introducing children to traditional clothing and customs

Estonian experts led workshops and supported participants together with local tutors. Selected teams were invited to a three-week online accelerator program.

Cooperation partners: NGO Creative Estonia, University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy, Creativity Lab, Estonian and Namibian National Commissions for UNESCO, UNESCO Windhoek Office, University of Namibia

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More information: <https://unesco.ee/en/culture/cooperation-with-namibia-national-commission-for-unesco/>

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