**Long term strategy Craft of the miller**

23 February 2024

The Craft of the Miller network was created following the inclusion of the miller's craft on the UNESCO list of intangible heritage. The network is currently mainly focused on organizing conferences and workshops. In addition, a knowledge platform is being developed. The network consists of around 600 people from more than 30 countries.

The steering committee of the Craft of the Miller network is considering its future and is working on a longer-term strategy for the next 10 years. The ambition is to further strengthen, enlarge and broaden the network.

**1. Conferences**

The network organizes 3-4 online conferences and workshops per year. The steering group wants to continue this. The conferences vary in subject and format. Sometimes it is a presentation about mills and mill conservation in a certain country, sometimes it is a substantive topic (e.g. the mill biotope), sometimes it is about education and how we transfer knowledge. Until now, the format has always been online, with participants breaking up into subgroups to continue talking to each other there. In addition to the knowledge that is transferred, mutual contact is also of great value.

The steering group wants participants from the network to volunteer to organize an online conference. The steering group encounters a language barrier. Until now, the conferences have been in English, which means that non-native speakers are less part of the network and certainly do not organize conferences at all. The steering group therefore wants to organize the conferences in German, French and Spanish in addition to English. Artificial Intelligence may be used for this. This way, presentations can be presented in more languages ​​and people from the same language area can exchange further knowledge in their own subgroup.

**2. Knowledge platform**

On behalf of the steering group, De Hollandsche Molen is working on a knowledge platform about the miller's craft. This knowledge base consists of images, texts and videos about the miller's craft in all its facets. The first design of the knowledge platform is ready (still in Dutch) and a pilot is starting to fill the knowledge base with data. After this pilot, millers in the Netherlands and then from all over the world are called upon to provide material that will be included in the knowledge platform. Naturally, the material must meet certain substantive and technical requirements.

We may also be able to collaborate with TIMS on this point.

In addition to knowledge about the craft of the miller, other themes can be addressed on the platform. Think about information about the mill biotope and how to protect it, safety measures around the mill or even fundraising for your mill.

* What does the steering group think, should the Craft on the miIller also focus on influencing? To be an international voice to help protect the mills, the craft, the biotope?

**3. Training as a miller**

The water miller training course has recently been translated into English and became available online. The translation of the training to become a miller in a traditional windmill is expected to follow in 2024. This will also be available online. The training can be supplemented with files on, for example, safety at the mill, the weather and specific matters such as checking steel stocks.

**4. Expanding the Network**

The steering group aims to grow the network, both in participants and in the number of countries. It is important to offer the conferences and the knowledge platform in multiple languages. Growth is not a goal in itself, but the steering group does want to facilitate mill enthusiasts all over the world to maintain their mills and the craft.

Also we can stimulate millers to get in contact with each other and even maybe visit mills abroad. Millers can exchange practical experience this way.

**5. Organization of the steering committee**

The steering group was once set up on the basis of the organizations that submitted the application to UNESCO. Over time, additions have been added from the UK, US and Germany. It is wise to think about the future of the steering group and how members of the steering group succeed each other and how newcomers are added.

The idea is that the steering group consists of a basic group and is supplemented on a rotating basis. For example, the basic group would consist of a representative of De Hollandsche Molen (it facilitates the network), Het Gilde van Molenaars (as the largest representative of millers in the Netherlands), the RCE and KIEN. Added to that, the group includes at least representatives from four other countries in addition to the Netherlands. The members of the additional group are appointed for a period of 4 years, which can be extended once. It is logical to work with an on-and-off roster based on shifting terms. Participants of the network are invited to apply.

All members of the steering group speak English, which is the working language in the steering group.

**Addition?**

Another international network is the Via Molina (viamolina.eu). The Via Molina website contains walking, cycling, car and motorcycle routes along mills. The routes encourage visits to mills, also in other countries, for millers and the general public. The Via Molina website is currently a separate website, not linked to the Craft of the Miller network.

* What does the steering group think, should Via Molina be a part of the Craft of the Miller Network of is it totally different that we should keep it separate?