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Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture 2023 Competition Begins

Youth Association of Finno-Ugric Peoples (MAFUN) and URALIC Centre today announced the start of the competition for the title of Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture 2023. Thematic focus of the competition continues to be the upcoming International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032. Winner of the competition will be announced on January 14, 2022, in Otepää (Estonia).

Established in 2013, the programme of Finno-Ugric Capitals of Culture is a flagship initiative of MAFUN and URALIC Centre that aims to raise awareness of Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic peoples as well as Uralic languages, to strengthen collective Finno-Ugric identity and to stimulate sustainable local development in different corners of the Finno-Ugric world.

To date, the title of Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture has been awarded to nine villages or cities: Udmurtian village **Bygy** (2014), Seto village **Obinitsa** (2015), Hungarian village **Iszkaszentgyörgy** and City of **Veszprém** (2016), Karelian village **Vuokkiniemi** (2017), Mari village **Shorunzha** (2019), Mari-speaking village **Mishkan** in Bashkortostan (2020) **Abja-Paluoja** in Mulgimaa region of Estonia (2021) and the Udmurtian village **Bayterek** (2022).

The title of Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture has helped raise the profile of the title-holder both domestically and internationally, including via cultural tourism. Even more importantly, the status of a Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture has strengthened local communities and provided new opportunities for development.

For the competition of Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture 2023, villages, towns and cities from any Finno-Ugric country or region are welcome to apply, except national capitals (in the case of Estonia, Finland and Hungary) or regional capitals in the Russian Federation. The only region that is excluded from the current competition is Udmurtia (Russian Federation), given that Bayterek will be the title-holder for 2022.

The special theme of the competition for 2023 title continues to be the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032. Hence, applicants are encouraged to place preservation and revitalization of Indigenous Finno-Ugric languages at the centre of their programmes.

Application materials of the Finno-Ugric Capital of Culture 2023 competition are available on the programme's website www.uralic.org/projects/capitals/downloads. The deadline for written applications is December 13, 2021, and the winner of the competition will be selected on January 14, 2022 in Otepää (Estonia) – the location of the Secretariat of Finno-Ugric Capitals of Culture.

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