



Safeguarding Pioneers

Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies

Nguyen Chi Ben, Ph. D. (Director, Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts)

Established on 1 April 1971 as the Institute of Arts, after a number of name changes, the Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) adopted its current name pursuant to Decision No 2845/QĐ - BVHTTDL on 25 June 2008 by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MoCST).

Functions and Duties

VICAS is a scientific institution under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MoCST), which conducts research and scientific activities and provides graduate training in culture and arts. It has been assigned the following specific duties:

- Carry out research and develop scientific foundations for MoCST to develop strategy and build instruments and policies for state management of culture, family life, sports, and tourism; carry out both theoretical and applied research on the history, culture, families, arts, sports, and tourism of Viet Nam.
- Carry out research on foreign cultures, families, arts, sports, and tourism in accordance with the Institute's functions and duties; provide suggestions for implementing findings and experiences of foreign researchers on culture, family, and arts in a Vietnamese context.
- Collect, research, and safeguard intangible cultural heritage; build up, manage, and develop a databank on the intangible cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups.
- Develop doctoral programs in culture and arts with six majors as follows: Cultural Studies; Cultural Management; Folklore; Theory and History of Theatrical Arts; Theory and History of Fine Arts; and Theory and History of Cinematography and Television.
- Collaborate on scientific research projects and graduate training programs with Vietnamese and foreign institutions working in culture, family, sports, and tourism in accordance with the relevant laws.

Organisational Structure

Institute's Board of Directors

Director: Associate Prof, Dr Nguyen Chi Ben

Vice Directors: Dr Hoàng Sơn and Associate Prof, Dr Luong Hong Quang

Functional Offices

- Office of Science-International Collaboration
- Office of Training
- Office of Information-Library
- Office of Finance
- Office of Administration-Organization

Professional Departments

- Department of Cultural Policies and Development
- Department of Cultural Heritage Studies
- Department of Ecological Culture and Tourism Studies
- Department of Foreign Culture and Arts Studies
- Department of Theoretical and Historical Studies of Culture and Arts
- Department of Arts Studies
- Department of Family Culture Studies
- Center of Northeast Asian Studies
- Center of Cultural Heritage Data
- Center of Public Opinions on Culture, Sports and Tourism

Organisations Directly under the Institute

- Scientific Committee
- Sub-Institute of Culture and Arts in Hue City
- Sub-Institute of Culture and Arts in Ho Chi Minh City
- Journal of Cultural Studies

Outstanding Achievements

For many years, VICAS has been one of Viet Nam's leading institutions in theoretical research and cultural policy development. It participated in the development of National Decisions 5 (the Eighth Session), in the conclusion of the ten-year implementation of the National Decisions 5, and in the design of a national cultural development strategy in 2010 as well many other important theoretical issues and policies of the Vietnamese Communist Party and Government.

The Institute has built up three successful UNESCO Cultural Heritage candidature files: *The Space of Gong Culture in the Central Highlands of Vietnam* (2005), *Quan Ho Bac Ninh Folk Songs* (2009), and *The Giong Festival of Phu Dong and Soc Temples* (2010); and the candidature file of *The Worship of Hùng Kings in Phu Tho*, submitted to UNESCO for the cycle of 2012.

VICAS has carried out four scientific projects at the state level and many projects at ministerial, provincial, and municipal levels. The Institute also directs and monitors the National Target Program on collecting, safeguarding, and promoting

intangible culture heritage. Through this program, thousands of items of intangible cultural heritage from all over Viet Nam have been collected, safeguarded, and promoted, and a number of items of intangible cultural heritage have been saved from the risk of disappearance or loss. Several research projects on issues relating to rural and urban culture and cultural change under the impact of modernisation and globalisation have been carried out, resulting in publications and management strategies for application in the field.

VICAS has the largest doctoral program in the field of culture, sports, and tourism in Viet Nam. In the course of just over a decade, more than eighty VICAS doctoral candidates have successfully defended their work, representing an outstanding achievement of Vietnamese higher education and providing an important intellectual resource with tremendous potential for contribution to the cultural development of the country.

VICAS has collaborated on research projects and graduate training programs with many international institutions such as Temple University in Philadelphia, the University of Toronto, the University of South Australia, the China Institute of Arts, and the Korea Institute of Culture and Tourism.



Conference on Safeguarding and Promotion of Cultural Heritage in the Modernisation by VICAS and the UNESCO Hanoi Office (Photo by Vu Tu Quyen)

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