* + Laila: director of communications for development
  + Rodrigo: director of policy, research and evaluation
  + Rida: director of community engagement and outreach
  + Maria: director of strategic planning

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### Home

### What can we write here? Or could parts of ‘about us’ go here instead?

### About Us

Hello, world! We are Cultural Advocacy Lab, a collective of individuals interested in working with communities on issues of cultural rights and heritage.

We care deeply about issues of cultural identities and the role heritage, tangible and intangible, plays in the social, economic, and political aspects of people’s lives.

Cultural Advocacy Lab offers pro-bono technical advisory on cultural heritage policy and projects to grassroots practitioners and voluntary community organizations. We also offer services of design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of heritage projects, as well as qualitative research and specialized publications.

Our areas of expertise include the UNESCO conventions, tangible and intangible heritage, heritage education, community archaeology, sustainable tourism, sustainable handicrafts, health and culture, and musical heritage.

If you’re looking to explore solutions in safeguarding cultural heritage that puts communities first, please get in touch (hyperlinked to contact us page) with us for more information!

### People

Rida Arif:

Rida Arif is a cultural heritage management professional with several years of experience in international project management. She holds a Master of Arts degree in Archaeology from Bilkent University in Ankara, and is a Co-Founder and Director of Community Engagement and Outreach at Cultural Advocacy Lab, a collective of cultural heritage professionals focused on centering community in cultural development.

Rida is also working with Educult, a Vienna-based non-profit on SoPHIA, a European cooperation project on developing a model and framework for holistic cultural impact assessments. Since 2019, she has been working with UNESCO to implement community-led sustainable development projects, with a focus on closer collaboration between culture and education in heritage management. Prior to this, she led the implementation of cultural diplomacy and documentation projects with The Citizens Archive of Pakistan. She has also worked on conservation and digital documentation of finds from Kinet Hoyuk (Turkey) and Swat (Pakistan) excavations. Rida is also a documentary photographer whose work has been displayed at exhibitions, and has been published online and in print.

Rodrigo Chocano:

Rodrigo Chocano is a Co-Founder, and Director of Policy, Research and Evaluation at Cultural Advocacy Lab.

He is a researcher, educator, and international consultant on cultural heritage. He obtained a PhD in Ethnomusicology from Indiana University and he is an incoming postdoctoral fellow at the Smithsonian Institution. He has written three books and several articles in English and Spanish on Intangible Cultural Heritage, music, and ethnic minorities. He has also worked as a culture sector officer at UNESCO and the Peruvian Ministry of Culture.

Maria Gulraize Khan:

Maria Gulraize Khan is the Co-Founder and Director of Strategic Planning at the Cultural Advocacy Lab.

She is a social development consultant based in Pakistan with 18 years of project management and consulting experience in education sector planning, teacher professional development, Culture for Sustainable Development, behaviour change communication (BCC), strategic planning and institutional development.

### Projects

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### Work

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Laila Rajani has a background in community engagement and applied anthropology and her current interests lie at the intersection of health inequity and culture. In the past, she has worked in academic research (Collective for Social Science Research), journalism (Herald, Dawn) and development (UNESCO) and is currently working in areas of communication strategy (UNFPA), social policy (World Bank) and social enterprise (Roots Network).

In the last three years, Laila has been involved with the Kalasha community as part of UNESCO