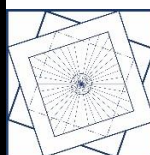


The British
Museum

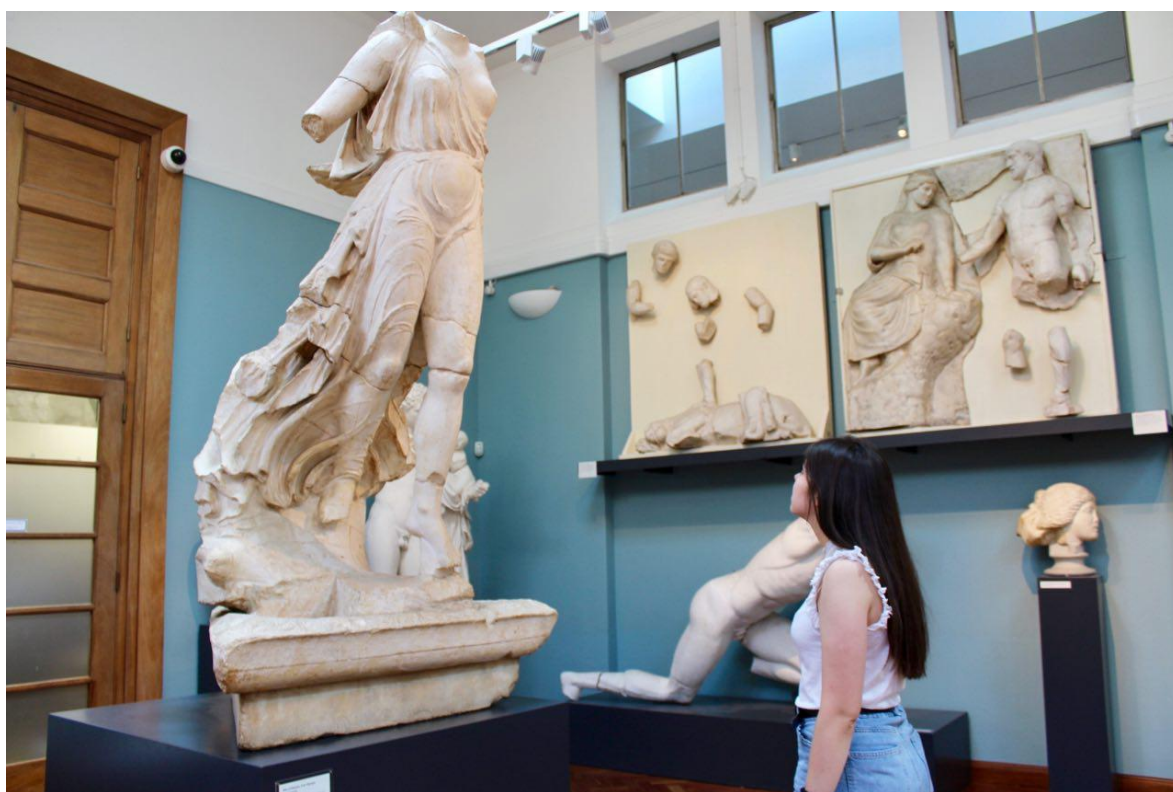
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ART AND CULTURE
DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
UNDER THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

ITP Final Report

by Alsu Akhmetzyanova



Executive Summary

This is the written report of the British Museum's International Training Programme participation in 2019 by Alsu Akhmetzyanova, ITP fellow from Uzbekistan. The British Museum hosts the International Training Programme for museum experts from around the world to learn more about best museum practice and to exchange ideas and share skills. This report provides information about the impact of the programme on the professional and personal development of the fellow, benefits and results of the participation, as well as future opportunities.





Acknowledgement

My participation in ITP 2019 would not be possible without the generous support of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for the opportunity to gain essential knowledge for the further development of museums in Uzbekistan.

I would like to express my gratitude to the ITP team including ITP Manager Claire Messenger, who always thinks long term about the future of ITP based on the present experience of every fellow. My special thanks to George Peckham, Emily Shaw and Mohamed Mokhtar who become our coordinators, colleagues and dear friends.

Also, I am very thankful to Zeina Klink-Hoppe and Venetia Porter, Curators of the Middle East Department, for their enthusiasm and attentive attitude, they have helped me in identifying the field of my professional development. I am very grateful to Patricia Allan, who dedicated the whole time to make our experience in Glasgow unforgettable. I want to express my gratitude to the British Museum staff

who shared their knowledge and experience which will I will apply in my home country.



Special thanks to my organisation, the Arts and Culture Development Foundation under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan which has given to me a lot of experience in the field of arts and culture, and opportunities for my further development. I owe a debt of gratitude to my family, my parents, my sister, and my husband who always believe in me more than I do.

Last but not least I want to thank my British ITP family, my international colleagues from around the world

which have become valuable network and dear friends to me.

Introduction

My professional path in the field of arts and culture started in the Arts and Culture Development Foundation more than a year ago. At that time, I was an art amateur with a managerial educational background. After some time of being involved in this sphere I have realised that it is my passion to be there, and in order to proceed in my career I have to have a professional background in the arts.



After finding out about the International Training Programme at the British Museum I became obsessed with the idea to become the next fellow. I clearly



understood that this type of programme can help me to grow into a more professional and efficient project manager. The same year my dreams came true and I turned into the member of ITP 2019 alumni which is a milestone in my professional and personal development.

Accomplishments

The main purpose of my participation in the ITP is the development of the field of arts and culture in Uzbekistan using the experience of the best British museums. Indeed, the ITP has given me more than just knowledge I may apply, it has become the greatest achievement in my professional and personal life.

Being the first ITP participant from Uzbekistan I feel great responsibility in applying my knowledge and helping my nation to advance. The Arts and Culture

Development Foundation has placed high expectations on me in assisting with and managing significant projects.

The top management of my organisation has recognised me as a valuable manager who can bring a lot to the company. Besides my long-term projects on a Museum Management course with Goldsmiths University, scholarship programmes and the educational part of the Centre for Contemporary Arts in Tashkent, I was also appointed to manage the following projects: a round table discussion within the Samarkand Half Marathon (<https://samarkandhalfmarathon.uz/en>) and national participation in the 17th International Architecture Exhibition in La Biennale di Venezia.

At the moment I am preparing a report about the benefits and ideas from the ITP which can be implemented in my country. The report may be useful for the administration not only of my organisation but also of the Ministry of Culture.



The ITP is a programme which gives you an insight of every component of museum studies from collection management to restoration. As a project manager I found this programme very useful since I face difficulties due to my inexperience in some of the art spheres. According to an internal report of the company Hewlett-Packard women take on a project only if they meet 100% of the criteria listed. Now I feel that I have enough knowledge and skills for any projects in my workplace. Moreover, I understand that I will learn even more by doing new projects.

Furthermore, I have seen different types of activities in the museums of the UK, some of which I would like to introduce in my country.



First of all, the storage and archives of most of the UK museums are not only places to save objects and documents. Many people, mostly researchers, can make a request about a particular object to see it for further study. In Kelvingrove Museum (Glasgow), there are children's guided tours in the stores where they can see behind the scenes, be more engaged in museum work, and even handle some of

the objects. In my country, people from public institutions have to request an official permission from the Minister of Culture for this access.

Secondly, in the British Museum, there are object handling activities which are conducted by volunteers for people of all ages so they may come to the museum and discover the history of some objects by touching them. This experience is widely used in different museums for children, the Kelvingrove Museum has a special corner where all the objects may be handled, and the Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic World in the British Museum has some objects on the shelf at children's heights. Furthermore, there is a new trend of 'open museums' which includes different sets of objects according to the themes which are transported to schools, hospitals and other establishments.

Thirdly, I was impressed by the museum access for differently-abled people, which includes touch tours, special audiobooks, guidebooks in braille language and with big letters for visually-impaired people. There are ramps, lifts and other architectural solutions for wheelchair users and other facilities for this minority group.



At the moment, I am conducting negotiations with the Department of Equality and Diversity to improve access in the museums of Uzbekistan using the experience of the British Museum. Since I work in a public institution it is possible for me to offer some of these ideas to be implemented in the museums of Uzbekistan. In order to make the ideas come to reality, the mind-sets of the Ministry of Culture and museum workers have to be changed. This may be done with training and trips abroad for top management of these institutions to see these activities and understand the importance of them.

The ITP, my new friends, the British mentality and amazing atmosphere of London has changed me as a person. Now I feel more confident, open-minded and ready to conquer new heights. I am free to express my thoughts during both business meetings and casual conversations. Every time I feel nervous before some kind of a meeting or project I remind myself that I have done a personal exhibition in the British Museum and even talked to the Director of one of the greatest museums in the world. Furthermore, it was my first time in London, in the city which has given me a lot of beautiful memories; I have left my heart there forever. Additional to the places which were included in the programme, I used to go and spend quality time

visiting museums, galleries, parks, and other sightseeing spots to get the most out of my visit. I feel so different coming back to my country full of knowledge, inspiration, confidence and the desire to change things here.



The ITP is not just a summer programme, but a long-term project for every participant which gives the opportunity to develop and keep in touch with highly qualified experts. I keep in touch with some of my friends from the UK, Palestine, Ghana, the Philippines and Colombia and we about our professional and personal lives. I am planning to apply to be a senior fellow for a future ITP since I know that it is a perfect role for me due to my management skills, experience and knowledge. Moreover, my biggest dream is to come back to London because I left my heart there.