

International Training Programme

Museums Association Conference and ITP Leadership 2022 report

29 October – 6 November 2022



Summary

The British Museum's International Training Programme (ITP) seeks to develop a sustainable global network of inspired museum and heritage professionals, through sharing knowledge, skills and experiences. The ITP alumni now totals 335 fellows from 57 countries spanning the world and the Museum aims to develop and deliver a wide range of projects and programmes to ensure the Programme thrives in the years ahead.

Philanthropic support for the ITP has enabled the British Museum (BM) to plan with added confidence and provide for the programme's growing network of culture and heritage professionals. In November 2022, with the generous support of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust and the supporters of the Lambert Fellowship, the Museum was able to support eight ITP fellows to attend the Museums Association (MA) Annual Conference in Edinburgh. During this week-long project, three of the fellows attended a Leadership legacy project at the British Museum in the days leading up to the conference. The remaining five fellows participated in associated programming at V&A Dundee, University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections, Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums and National Museums of Scotland, before the whole group met in Edinburgh to begin the conference experience.

This report provides an overview of the scope and delivery of both programmes, held in London and Edinburgh between 29 October and 6 November 2022.

ITP Leadership 2022

This legacy project opportunity was aimed at new, emerging leaders and those fellows looking to develop their leadership and management skills to enable their career development through a short programme centred around leadership and management.

The programme was made possible by the supporters of the Lambert Fellowship – gifts given in recognition of the tenure of Sir Richard Lambert, former Chairman of the Trustees of the British Museum. Those generous donations enabled the Museum to support a fellow on the Annual Programme 2022 and to develop and deliver a leadership course for further continued dialogue with our ITP global network.

‘The Museum learns as much from the ITP fellows as they do from their time in the UK. The alumni represent a global network with shared experiences and lasting friendships. The ITP’s impact is significant, and will grow with the passing of the years.’

Sir Richard Lambert, former Chairman of the Trustees of the British Museum

Three ITP fellows were invited to join us between 29 October - 6 November 2022 at the British Museum for three days focusing on museums and leadership followed by three days at the Museums Association (MA) conference and exhibition, Edinburgh. The fellows included:

- Ma. Yohana Frias, Media Production Specialist, National Museum of the Philippines (Philippines, ITP Fellow 2018)
- Andrea Terrón Gomez, Head of Galleries, Bateman Gallery Foundation, Victoria (Guatemala, ITP 2017, Senior Fellow 2018)
- Shambwaditya Ghosh, PhD Scholar, University of Delhi (India, ITP 2012, Senior Fellow 2015)

For the fellows’ full biographies, see **Appendix 1**.



Sessions at the British Museum shared experiences and knowledge from across the sector and provided practical tips and hints to support the successful candidate's leadership skills. Leadership styles were assessed alongside exploring areas such as governance; crisis management; leading change; collaborative leadership; digital transformation; civic leadership; leadership in action and managing resources. There was also the opportunity to spend time at museums and galleries around London.

All the sessions were interactive and explorative to define a new definition for leadership, since the meaning of the word 'leader' can be perceived in different ways. But the one point in our discussion is that we need an inclusive approach to managing cultural heritage.

Shambwaditya Ghosh (India, ITP 2012, Senior Fellow 2015)

I was lucky because I met colleagues and mentors who have the same passion for museum work and who encouraged me through the years. I wish to pay forward this generosity by becoming a better leader in my field. This training is thus crucial for my development as a potential leader in the museum sector.

Ma. Yohana R. Frias (Philippines, ITP Fellow 2018)

The 'leadership' days offered an opportunity to engage and learn from diverse and great professionals, people that have a lot to give and so many experiences to share; I learned from them, how to prepare for the future, how to adapt my abilities for the role I have in my institution and in future positions.

Andrea Terrón Gomez (Guatemala, ITP 2017, Senior Fellow 2018)



Museums Association Conference 2022

In November 2022, the ITP attended the MA Conference: Make Change Happen, in Edinburgh. With hope growing that the worst of the global pandemic is over, this year's conference explored how museums can create better places to live and work in a post-Covid world. To do this, museums need to tackle a number of crucial issues, including the climate crisis, inequalities and racism, the legacy of empire, and wellbeing.

The selected group of ITP fellows attended the ITP MA Conference Edinburgh following the associated programming which took place from Saturday 29 October to Sunday 6 November 2022 and was entirely based in Scotland.

The MA Conference programme was attended by:

- Nagwa Abdelzaher Mohamed Bakr (Egypt, ITP Fellow 2019), Community Engagement Officer, Ministry of Antiquities
- Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018), Curator, Institute of National Museums of Rwanda (INMR)
- Alsu Akhmetzyanova (Uzbekistan, ITP Fellow 2019), Consultant, The World Bank Project
- Ioan Oprea (Romania, ITP Fellow 2019), Conservator, National Museum of the Union Alba Iulia, Unity Museum
- Marine Mkrtchyan (Armenia, ITP Fellow 2014), CEO, Russian Art Museum

I can admit that the ITP shaped my career in so many ways and opened so many doors; so I applied for this programme because I was seeing it as another opportunity for developing my skills and an ideal place for exchange, sharing knowledge and discussing best practices to support my professional development. I was also hoping to develop long and lasting network connections to provide opportunities for future collaboration.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018),

For the fellows' full biographies, see **Appendix 1**.



Additional programming

An additional programme of visits and sessions were put together for the first three days in Scotland, prior to attending the MA Conference. A key aim for the week was to offer further opportunities for fellows and their institutions to develop skills and experiences and to create new networking opportunities with the hope of stimulating potential future collaborations.

The programme was structured in a very good way, that the first three days we visited different Museums in Scotland and got to know what they do, and I am glad that they tackled my points of interests, like community engagement, decolonization, inclusion, etc.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018),

V&A Dundee

An international centre of design, Dundee presents the brilliance of creativity and the best of design around the world.

The first day of the programme was with Jo Mawdsley, Head of and curatorial colleagues from V&A with the aim of gaining an insight Museum's community and local engagement and the role of museums in education and conservation.



V&A
Scottish
from

spent
Learning,
Dundee
into the

As a part of my trip, I enjoyed some wonderful trips to different cities and venues. The ITP team put great effort in to arrange for fellows a beautifully tailored programme with the opportunity to explore Scotland, its museums, wonderful cities, and people from Edinburgh to Dundee to Aberdeen. One of the highlights of our trip was the stopover in Dundee and visit to the V&A Dundee.

Marine Mkrtchyan (Armenia, ITP Fellow 2014),

University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections and Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums



The collections of books, archival material and museum objects of the University of Aberdeen are amongst some of the most important and valuable in the world. They reflect the local and international history of the university and tell the stories of the people who created, collected, curated, and encountered them.

During this visit, the fellows learnt about the history of the University's collection and international relations, meeting Neil Curtis, Head of Museums and Special Collections and Abeer Eladany, Curatorial Assistant – Collections Access, for a stores and former museum display tour. Neil spoke to the group

about the history of the collection and international relations such as loans, travelling exhibitions, repatriation and decolonisation. Abeer is originally from Egypt and as a former colleague of Nagwa, this was a great reunion for them after many years apart.

Aberdeen Art Gallery and Aberdeen Maritime Museum



This visit involved an introduction to the fine & applied art collections at Aberdeen Art Gallery, the Gallery's recent £30M redevelopment and a look at some of the back-of-house facilities. We learnt about how collections were taken out of the building, spaces were curated all at once, and collections brought back in. At the Maritime Museum, the fellows were given an introduction to the history collections, contemporary

collecting of science and industry, social history and the challenges that come along with that.

National Museums Scotland (NMS)



'Our mission is to preserve, interpret and make accessible for all, the past and present of Scotland, other nations and cultures, and the natural world.'

Two strands of history come together in the story of the development of National Museums Scotland: the desire to have a museum reflecting Scottish history and the wish to have a museum demonstrating international cultures, natural and physical sciences, and decorative art for Scotland.



During the last day before the conference, we met with the colleagues at NMS to learn about the department The Department of Global Arts, Cultures and Design including general Colonial Histories and Legacies work at NMS, which the Keeper of the department John Gibling leads on, who led these sessions. The fellows were also given an overview of the Learning and Education Department, collections management topics and National and International Partnerships.

This day was so important to me because my institution started a 10-year project of decolonizing one of the museums in

Rwanda, I was inspired by how they are addressing colonial histories and legacies in their daily work, afterwards we had the World Culture gallery tour by John Gibling.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018)

The Museums Association

The Museums Association (MA) is a professional membership organisation for museum, gallery and heritage professionals, organisations, and companies that work in the sector. The MA aims to share knowledge, develop skills, inspire innovation, and provide leadership whilst advocating for museums, setting ethical standards and running training and professional development programmes. The Museums Association Conference and is held annually and is the largest event for museum and

heritage professionals in Europe. Each year the International Training Programme organise a week-long programme structured around the MA annual conference.

By attending the MA Conference we aim to offer our ITP fellows further platforms to network and gain knowledge beyond what is traditionally offered through the Annual Programme. Our aim is for fellows to attend a new range of skills-building sessions, to hear from colleagues globally about current practices and projects, to engage in debates around the future of museums and their audiences, and to create networks that may be outside our usual remit.

A highlight for the ITP team and fellows was seeing Layla Salih (Iraq, ITP Fellow 2008) speak during the Culture during conflict plenary. Layla currently works as an Adviser for the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and joined speakers from around the world discuss the role of culture during times of conflict in this fascinating session.

Personally, holding the conference in Edinburgh was very encouraging because it is one of the cities I wished to visit, with its unique location, history, and heritage. It was a dream come true.

Nagwa Abdelzaher Mohamed Bakr (Egypt, ITP Fellow 2018),



Conference sessions covered:

- How museums can become more sustainable organisations and use their collections, buildings and knowledge to support communities to make positive environmental changes
- What systemic racism is; what an anti-racist museum looks like and what changes we need to create inclusive organisations
- Wellbeing and how museums can support workforce wellbeing and work with their communities to recover from the pandemic
- The legacy of empire and slavery, including how can we empower communities to help decolonise our museums in a dynamic, collaborative and inclusive way.

The event had a strong, happy impact on me; the MA conference talked several times about the museum's employee wellbeing, about the efforts and actions taken to improve their life as much as is done to improve the public visits in the museums, so I felt very good to be there because this is exactly what the ITP legacy project was doing and giving to us: a continuous process to make us better professionals and to strengthen our confidence in our work and in our international team work.
Ioan Oprea (Romania, ITP Fellow 2019)

The first day of the conference provided me with a lot of inspiration and motivation to think about new ideas and take risks with new projects. The conference themes and subjects demonstrated once again that we, as museum managers, must foster change and be examples of change within our countries, communities, organizations, and families.
Marine Mkrtchyan (Armenia, ITP Fellow 2014)

The ITP fellows were able to attend a diverse range of workshops and lectures during the conference and were impressed at the focus on inclusion and wellbeing. Culture during conflict, climate change and decolonisation-based sessions were also particularly valued by the group. The fellows felt that, particularly post COVID-19, it is easier to relate to issues facing museums worldwide and, in the UK, and to put them into the context of their own museum or workplace.

The fellows described the conference as truly inspiring and informative, full of opportunities for collaboration and knowledge and motivated them to think about similar issues and projects to apply in their museums and countries.

In such a rapidly changing time we have to be aware and know how to react in such conditions. Moreover, we live in one world and we cannot isolate ourselves from all the chaos happening around which also connects to each of us and to how we respond. I mostly focused on the sessions which could add to my knowledge and give me a different perspective.

Alsu Akhmetzyanova (Uzbekistan, ITP Fellow 2019)

The conference and the discussions had an impact on me, motivating me to transfer my experience to my colleagues through several lectures that will be held during December, in which I will present an overview of museums and wellbeing, and decolonization.

Nagwa Abdelzaher Mohamed Bakr (Egypt, ITP Fellow 2018),

Networking

Networking is one of the vital elements of an ITP legacy project and the programme included evening and weekend events, providing an informal and relaxed setting for fellows, the ITP team and conference participants to engage. Holding two legacy projects at the same time in Edinburgh meant that there were even more opportunities for fellows to meet others in the network than previous conference years. Some of the fellows meeting for the first time discovered many common interests and collections in their museums and have started preliminary discussions on future collaborations.



Two of ITP's UK Partners joined us for the MA Conference - Sarah Gore, Teaching Museum Manager at Norfolk Museums Service and Ronan Brindley, Head of Learning and Engagement at Manchester Art Gallery. This provided a further networking opportunity and was a chance for some of the fellows to catch up with Ronan and Sarah, having previously met on the Annual Programme or to meet for the first time.

Social Media played a role, as always, in the project and Facebook posts, Instagram posts and tweets were regularly posted during the week by both the fellows and ITP team, using the conferences hashtags. The fellows also wrote blogs about sessions during and after the conference in order to share as much of this learning with the ITP network as possible, via the ITP website.

I hope there will be future collaborations from the network developed during my time in Scotland as I discussed some areas of collaboration with some professionals.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018)

I hoped with this legacy project to meet, in particular, professionals in the conservation field and I found even more than I expected. Among the museum professionals, I also found several companies who were dealing with the heritage conservation field – this is unusual in Romania, most of the time, the museums or their labs have to take care of everything.

Ioan Oprea (Romania, ITP Fellow 2019)

Outcomes

Clear and immediate results are demonstrated in the fellows' reports, which they each wrote on their time spent on their legacy projects:

- Enhanced relationships across ITP year cohorts and between curators from different countries.
- A clear desire from the group to share and disseminate their learning with colleagues back in their home institutions.
- The legacy programmes gave a level of support to the fellows which enabled them to think about and reevaluate their personal career progression.
- Enhanced relationships between the BM, our programme partner museums, the Museums Association and the global ITP network.
- Confirmation of the ITP's strategic aims up to 2025, particularly the potential impact of enabling our fellows to have access to international events that cost and logistics would otherwise bar.
- Interest in other legacy projects (the Annual Programme's Senior fellow role, for example) due to the two legacy projects crossing over and creating a wider ranging group of fellows.
- The fellows reports stated that these projects have given them new ideas that they wanted to put into practice back home.
- The size of the group meant that fellows could discuss issues and possible collaborations directly with our BM and UK partner museum colleagues and colleagues at the MA and, perhaps most importantly, with each other.

Conclusion

The MA Conference and ITP Leadership programme provided ITP fellows with a platform for discussion and sharing knowledge for the sixth time which again proved to be inspirational and motivating. The conference provides a change in dynamic to the annual programme and our other legacy projects and allows fellows to explore the cultural sector in the UK more freely, with more choice to choose particular areas of interest to focus on over the week.

The programme's key aim is to build a global network of museum professionals and the MA legacy project builds additional links between colleagues and strengthens the global community of museums.

The British Museum is very grateful to the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust and the supporters of the Lambert Fellowship for its involvement and encouragement of the project, and for providing support to enable fellows to attend. We would also like to thank our UK partner colleagues who gave up their time and shared their expertise and experiences so freely.

One of the best achievements of joining the programme is the great relationships, not only on the professional level, but also on the human level, creating networking and being part of a global family that always follow up and exchange news. We participated in many discussions, especially those dealing with societies, decolonization, restitution, recovery, and integration, presenting points of view from different backgrounds that reflect that human experiences are similar even with spatial and cultural differences.

Nagwa Abdelzaher Mohamed Bakr (Egypt, ITP Fellow 2018)

This programme was full of knowledge, networking opportunities, but mainly inspiration and a reminder of who I am and what I want to achieve in this life.

Alsu Akhmetzyanova (Uzbekistan, ITP Fellow 2019)

If I must summarize this week, I think the most important fact or truth is that the pandemic was hard on all of us, and cultural institutions are struggling with personal career changes, income definitions, hiring difficulties, and programming shifts, knowing that we cannot rely on international tourism and blockbuster exhibitions. We need to get to work with our communities and promote change from within.

Andrea Terrón Gomez (Guatemala, ITP 2017, Senior Fellow 2018)

Please see Appendix 2 for Fellows full reports

Acknowledgements

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Organisers

British Museum, UK

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- Helen Fothergill, Service Manager – Archives, Gallery & Museums, Aberdeen City Council
- Jo Mawdsley, Head of Learning, V&A Dundee
- Ronan Brindley, Head of Learning and Engagement, Manchester Art Gallery
- Sarah Gore, Teaching Museum Manager, Norfolk Museums Service

National Museums Scotland:

- John Giblin: Keeper, Department of Global Arts, Cultures and Design
- Jilly Burns: Head of National and International Partnerships
- Chante St Clair Inglis: Head of Collections Services
- Jane Miller: Community Engagement Manager
- Janie Hopkins: Head of Learning and Engagement

University of Aberdeen:

- Neil Curtis, Head of Museums and Special Collections,
- Caroline Dempsey, Museum Conservator
- Jenny Downes, Exhibitions and Public Engagement Manager
- Hannah Clarke, Assistant Curator – Collection Access
- Abeer Eladany, Curatorial Assistant – Collections Access

Appendix 1

Fellows biographies



Nagwa Abdelzaher Mohamed Bakr
Community Engagement Officer
Ministry of Antiquities
Egypt
ITP Fellow 2019

Nagwa has two masters degrees in Anthropology and Museum Studies. Her current PhD studies focus on the representation of women's heritage in museums. As a Community Engagement Officer at the Ministry of Antiquities, Nagwa is in charge of setting up community programmes aiming to engage local communities to benefit from the public knowledge available in museums and sites. Her projects especially target women and their engagement with local heritage and traditional crafts workshops.

Most recently, Nagwa worked on a summer project called the Library Museum Project. By collaborating with professional libraries such as ARCE, IFAO, Alexandria Library and the library of the Egyptian Museum, the project focuses on understanding museum collections through library materials in order to reinterpret and shed new light on objects from the collections.

At the British Museum

During her time on the International Training Programme in 2019, Nagwa was based in the Department of Egypt and Sudan, and her partner placement was spent at [Manchester Art Gallery](#), [Manchester Museum](#) and [Whitworth Art Gallery](#).

Nagwa worked with Sanjeewani Upaka Widyaratne (Sri Lanka) on her Object in focus project. Their exhibition proposal was titled Spiritual Journey.

Legacy Projects

In 2020 and 2021, Nagwa attended several of the International Training Programme's series of online subject specialist sessions.



Chantal Umuhoza

Curator

Institute of National Museums of Rwanda (INMR)

Rwanda

ITP Fellow 2018

Chantal Umuhoza is a museum curator at Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy, an institution that manages Rwanda Museums, National Library and National archives. She participated in different trainings/ fellowships, workshops, seminars in Rwanda, China, UK and Germany.

Among other responsibilities, she is in charge of collection management, planning and organising different exhibitions. She curated several exhibitions including a group exhibition of women artists living and working in Rwanda, “Messages of women artists: Each for Equal” and “African Art drawn from African cultural heritage”

She is interested in projects dealing with biodiversity and conservation, decolonisation of conservation practices, museum inclusion and museums as spaces of wellbeing. She is currently leading a project of Digitising Rwandan Heritage.

At the British Museum

During her time on the International Training Programme, Chantal was based in the Department Africa, Oceania and the Americas, and spent her partner placement at [National Museums Northern Ireland](#).

Chantal worked with Huyam Khalid Mohammed (Sudan) on her Object in Focus project, *Life after Death: A Chinese tomb figure*.

Legacy Projects

In 2020 and 2021, Chantal attended several of the International Training Programme’s series of online subject specialist sessions.

In 2020 Chantal also conducted an Online Subject Specialist Session for the International Training Programme titled, *The role of Rwandan Museums in protecting traditional knowledge*.

Chantal has regularly contributed to the ITP Newsletter Publications.



Alsu Akhmetzyanova
Consultant
The World Bank Project
Uzbekistan
ITP Fellow 2019

With a passion for arts and culture and a desire to contribute her knowledge into the development of society, Alsu is currently working as an educational consultant for the project of the World Bank. Also, she contributes her knowledge and experience in the projects of the small galleries and art communities of Uzbekistan. Previously, Alsu worked as a head of education at Arts and Culture Development Foundation. Alsu's role primarily involves the planning and establishment of different project goals and objectives and monitoring the achievement of these objectives over the project life.

One of Alsu's main projects was opening the first centre of contemporary arts in Uzbekistan and the programme of the museum's renovation based on the principles of self-sufficiency. As well as working on a long-term collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, Alsu was also working on a two-year project with Goldsmiths University to extend and increase the qualifications of museum workers.

At the British Museum

During her time on the International Training Programme Alsu was based in the Middle East Department and her partner placement was spent at [Glasgow Museums](#).

Alsu worked with Catalina Cavellier Adarve (Colombia) on her *Object in focus* project. Their exhibition proposal was titled *Eternal Provision for the Soul: celebrating life in ancient Egypt*.

Alsu's place on the International Training Programme was generously supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

Legacy Projects

In 2020 and 2021, Alsu attended several of the International Training Programme's series of online subject specialist sessions.

In 2020 Alsu conducted an Online Subject Specialist Session for the International Training Programme. Alsu led a session titled *The Samarkand Half Marathon, cultural accessibility and 'going digital' during COVID-19*.

Alsu has also contributed to the ITP Newsletter Publications.



Ioan Oprea
Conservator
National Museum of the Union Alba Iulia
Unity Museum
Romania
ITP Fellow 2019

Alongside working as a conservator at the [National Museum of the Union Alba Iulia](#) in Romania, Ioan takes an interest in Roman antiquity and is particularly knowledgeable on the ancient bone, ivory and horn artefacts from Apulum (modern day Alba Iulia, Romania) during II-III centuries AD. Ioan has a good knowledge of military inscriptions on bricks and tiles of the XIII Gemina legion in the Roman province of Dacia, having recorded thousands of inscriptions of this kind in the last few years. And Ioan is also researching the religious icons and books from Transylvania during the XVI-XIX centuries.

As a conservator it is Ioan's responsibility to ensure the collections of paintings, icons and books that the museum holds are safe and have a healthy microclimate in the stores and in the exhibitions. He is interested in how other specialists deal with this activity and is keen to explore the conservation profession across the world.

At the British Museum

During his time on the International Training Programme Ioan was based in the Department of Greece and Rome and spent his partner placement at [The Collection: Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire](#) and [Nottingham University Museum](#).

Ioan worked with Benedicta Gokah (Ghana) on his *Object in focus* project. Their exhibition proposal was titled *Shāhanshāh: money talks*.

Legacy Projects

Ioan was awarded an ITP Conference Grant in 2021 to attend the Muze.X Shaping Museum Futures, International Conference in Malta.



Marine Mkrtchyan
CEO
Russian Art Museum
Armenia
ITP Fellow 2014

Marine was a student at the Faculty of Culture, Department of Museum Studies and Monuments Preservation at the Armenian State Pedagogical University from 2001-2005, and qualified as a museologist and guide after graduation. Marine then entered Yerevan State University (YSU) where she received her second specialisation as an Art Historian. While at YSU she organised social-cultural programmes in different Armenian museums, for orphaned children and those with mental health disabilities. In 2007 she began work in the History Museum of Yerevan as a guide and joined the Yerevan State University History Museum where she quickly became Deputy Director. When Marine joined the ITP network in 2014 she was the Deputy Director of the Russian Art Museum in Yerevan, and has since become the CEO.

Since 2008 Marine has been a board member of the ICOM National Committee of Armenia and ICOM/UMAC. One of her proudest achievements was curating a new permanent exhibition on the 90th anniversary of Yerevan State University. The exhibition is a prime example of new approaches to museum management in University History Museums. In 2014 she became an Armenian correspondent of the European Museum Forum. Marine is currently working on her PhD, researching topics such as *The Role of Museums in the System of Education in Armenia*.

At the British Museum

During her time on the International Training Programme in 2014, Marine was based in the Middle East department and her partner placement was spent at [Manchester Museum](#) and [Manchester Art Gallery](#).

Marine's exhibition project proposal was entitled *Life in Miniature: Armenian Dress at the British Museum*.

Marine's place on the programme was generously supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

Legacy Projects

In November 2015 Marine attended the ITP Mumbai *Workshop Creating Museums of World Stories*. The workshop was held at CSMVS and was attended by many ITP fellows from different years and countries, UK partners and British Museum Colleagues. At this conference Marine began discussions with colleagues from Manchester Art Gallery, on hosting an education conference and workshop in Yerevan Armenia.

In October 2016 Marine, with the help of Davit Poghosyan (Armenia, ITP 2015) supported Hayk Mkrtchyan (Armenia, ITP 2014, Senior Fellow 2017) to host *Learning, Engagement and Museums*, a four day conference and workshop held at Cafesjian Centre for the Arts in Yerevan Armenia. The

event was attended by 19 Armenian museum educators from 18 institutions, UK partner museum educators from Glasgow Museums, Manchester Art Gallery and The Collections and ITP fellow museum educators from Egypt, India, Lebanon and Turkey.

Marine has attended the International Training Programme's series of online subject specialist sessions and has also contributed to the ITP Newsletter Publications.



Ma. Yohana Frias
Media Production Specialist
National Museum of the Philippines
Philippines
ITP Fellow 2018

Yohana is part of the curatorial team developing and implementing exhibitions and educational programs at the National Museum of the Philippines. She worked as a researcher in the Ethnology Division for almost six (6) years, implementing visual anthropology exhibitions and film programs. As part of the Ethnology division, she worked in diverse fields of collection management, field research of intangible cultural heritage, museum education, and exhibition design.

In 2021, Yohana transferred to the Exhibition, Editorial, and Media Production Services Division where she designs and produces exhibition materials, display systems, publications, virtual tours, and video featurettes.

Yohana's professional interests are mostly shaped by her degree in Behavioural Sciences and her work in exhibitions - she is highly interested in diverse fields of arts and the humanities, museum interpretation, design, and photography.

At the British Museum

During her time on the International Training Programme, Yohana was based in the Asia Department, and spent her partner placement at Norfolk Museums Service.

Yohana worked with Sarah Abdolattif Elsheekh (Sudan) on her *Object in focus* project, *Hunt Krater: A Journey of Culture*.

Yohana's place on the International Training Programme was generously supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

Legacy Projects

Yohana has attended the International Training Programme's series of online subject specialist sessions and has also contributed to the ITP Newsletter Publications.

In 2022, Yohana delivered an online subject specialist session titled *Behind the Scenes: Exhibitions at the National Museum of the Philippines* where she introduced the National Museum (NMP), gave an overview of the types of exhibitions the museum creates, and then focussed on their exhibition process.



Shambwaditya Ghosh

PhD scholar
University of Delhi
India
ITP Fellow 2012
Senior Fellow 2015

Shambwaditya is passionate about ancient history and archaeology and is fascinated by discovering how people lived and how society developed thousands of years ago, primarily through the recovery and analysis of the material culture they have left behind. His long term goal is to popularize archaeology within museums. In 2019 he completed an MPhil in History from the School of Liberal Studies, Ambedkar University, Delhi. Presently, he is a PhD scholar at the University of Delhi, Department of History with the research topic, 'Displaying Archaeology; politics and Identity in Bengal (1860-1940)' which falls in the areas of visual anthropology and politics of display and identity construction.

When Shambwaditya came on the ITP he was an archivist for EKA Cultural Resources & Research, New Delhi. In 2013 he became the Programme and Research Coordinator at Sahapedia (Online Encyclopaedia of Indian History, Culture and Art, India). In 2015 Shambwaditya became an Assistant Professor of Cultural Studies at Pearl Academy in Delhi before returning to studying.

Shambwaditya has prepared exhibition proposals and concepts for Chatrapati Shivali Maharaj Vastu Samgrahalaya and co-curated an exhibition for India International Center, New Delhi, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi, Centre for Community Knowledge, Ambedkar University, Delhi and Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France.

In 2018 Shambwaditya presented the following papers: *Historical Interpretations and Representations: A museographical Study of the Stein Collection* in 'Contemporary Practices of History' at the University of Delhi; *Contemporary urban landscapes and heritage gardens: the case of Sundar Nursery in Delhi* at the annual conference of International Geographical at the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia; and *Archaeological Interpretation: Assertion of Language and Politics in Bengal in Early Nineteenth Century* at the all Indian History Summit at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.

At the British Museum

During his time on the International Training Programme in 2012, Shambwaditya was based in the Asia Department and his partner placement was spent at [The Collection: Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire](#) and [Nottingham University Museum](#).

Shambwaditya's exhibition project proposal was entitled *Mithras: Cult and Mysteries*.

Legacy Projects

Shambwaditya was Senior Fellow for the 2015 summer programme. He supported the ITP team in the build up to, during and after the summer programme, attended by 24 museum professionals from 14 countries.

In November 2015 Shambwaditya attended the ITP Mumbai Workshop *Creating Museums of World Stories*. The workshop was held at CSMVS and was attended by many ITP fellows from different years and countries, UK partners and British Museum Colleagues.

Shambwaditya has attended the International Training Programme's series of online subject specialist sessions and has also contributed to the ITP Newsletter Publications.



Andrea Terrón Gómez

Head of Galleries and Collections
Bateman Foundation, Victoria, B.C.

Guatemala, based in Canada

ITP Fellow 2017

Senior Fellow 2018

[LinkedIn](#)

Andrea is an anthropologist from Guatemala and currently based in Canada, with over 12 years' experience in museums, national and private, working with cataloguing, documenting, exhibition planning, collection management, and other procedures that are core to any museum around the world.

During her career she decided to apply to study abroad and had the opportunity to study for a master's and PhD candidacy in Osaka, Japan. She studied at Osaka University and at the National Museum of Ethnology-MINPAKU-SOKENDAI. She then returned to Guatemala, to work as a curator, a professor at the Del Valle University and later as an independent consultant, collaborating with different exhibitions and storage planning projects. Now, she is working for the Bateman Foundation, as Head of Galleries and Collections, creating exhibits and working towards projects that relate art and nature with education.

At the British Museum

During her time on the International Training Programme 2017, Andrea was based in the Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas and spent her partner placement with [Norfolk Museums Service](#). Andrea worked with fellow Raneen Kireh (Public Programmes and Exhibitions Coordinator, The Palestinian Museum) on her exhibition proposal project, entitled *Red and Blue: The Evil Eye across Borders*.

Andrea's participation in the International Training Programme was generously supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

Legacy Projects

Andrea was the Senior Fellow for the 2018 summer programme. She supported the ITP team in the build up to, during and after the Summer Programme, attended by 23 museum professionals from 17 countries.

Andrea has also taken on the role of guest editor of the ITP Newsletter Issue 6 (2019), *Digital Engagement*.

Andrea has attended the International Training Programme's series of online subject specialist sessions and has also contributed to the ITP Newsletter Publications.

Appendix 2

Fellows' reports

Nagwa Abdelzaher Mohamed Bakr (Egypt, ITP Fellow 2018), Community Engagement Officer, Ministry of Antiquities

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust for supporting my place on this ITP legacy project. I am grateful to the British Museum with special deep thanks and gratitude to Claire Messenger, Manager of the ITP for the support, encouragement, and constant help. All thanks and respect to Anna Cottle & George Peckham for the support, guidance, and excellent organisation of the programme. Deep thanks to V&A Dundee for the quality of time in discussing different topics and for their great exhibitions about design and plastic besides their amazing activities with children, and various methods of interaction. Many thanks to the University of Aberdeen Special Collections and Museums. Deepest thanks to National Museums Scotland. Finally, thanks to my colleagues and ITP fellows who participated in the conference that made the time easier, sharing knowledge and having fun.

ITP and Museums professionals

ITP Fellows and other museum professionals I met during my time in Edinburgh: one of the best achievements of joining the programme is the great relationships, not only on the professional level, but also on the human level, creating networking and being part of a global family that always follow up and exchange news. We participated in many discussions, especially those dealing with societies,



decolonization, restitution, recovery, and integration, presenting points of view from different backgrounds that reflect that human experiences are similar even with spatial and cultural differences. We heard about colonialism and its impact on African museums, and the viewpoint of Western museums and their dealings with the heritage of other cultures. Motivation was given to myself, with my ITP colleagues on how to continue communication and participation in research on museums and heritage.

We also exchanged experiences during the visit to V&A Dundee during their presentation on design, textiles, and the plastic exhibition, sharing my knowledge in displaying textiles in Egyptian museums, the plastic disaster in Egypt, with the approach of Cop 27 in Egypt, and the Egyptian museums' green initiative. Moreover, we saw the collections of the University of Aberdeen Special Collections and Museums, especially the Egyptian collection, and how they are interpreted from a Western point of view, thinking about decolonization, not only through retrieval, but through the participation of societies in the interpretation of their heritage.



Participating in MA Conference 2022.

Professionally, one of my main motives in attending international conferences related to museums, is how they are greatly changing ideas and create learning about global visions in the field of museums besides developing my abilities to deal with contemporary issues as a specialist in the museum and society. The ITP supported participation in the conference, communicating and providing opportunities for the programme fellows, to participate in conferences and training that develop skills and knowledge. Also, the topic of the conference "Make Change Happen" was a stimulus – to get to know the vision of museum specialists of the future considering a complex and rapidly changing world. Personally, holding the conference in Edinburgh was very encouraging because it is one of the cities I wished to visit, with its unique location, history, and heritage. It was a dream come true.



MA Conference (Make change Happen) 3-5 November 2022.

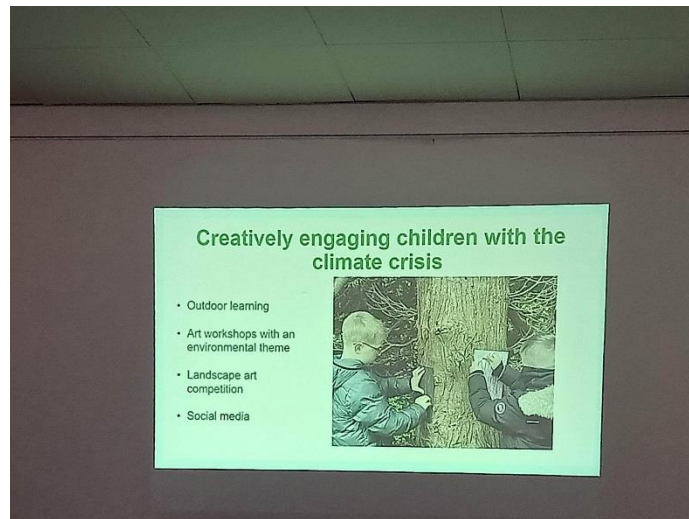
The conference programme was full of many distinguished sessions, which made me confused about which ones I should choose to attend. Finally, I decided to choose the one closest to the research that I am currently working on alongside the situation of museums in my country. Since Egypt was preparing to Cop27, I attended sessions about climate change.



The Museums for Climate Justice session shed light on: -

- Climate justice means working together - it is everybody's responsibility, the need to act, how can this improve the biodiversity?
- Museums using their platform to engage audiences. Not only to present the impact of climate change because that is very evident recently, but to act, highlighting the stories of individuals and communities.

- How we can adopt sustainable policies and practices while thinking of people with disabilities and people who are most impacted.
- Connecting art and culture and creating spaces for arts and cultural workers to discuss climate change.



Creating an anti- racist country- practical lessons from Welsh museums shed light on:

- History and culture of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities are repressed.
- 2021 - Wales became the first UK nation to make the teaching of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic history and experiences mandatory in the school curriculum.
- Efforts of the Welsh Government to become a truly anti-racist country through all the museums in the country.

Supporting Workforce Wellbeing

One of the best sessions I attended that discussed: -

- Wellbeing as the state of being comfortable and healthy, or happy. It is affected by our experiences of life and work.
- Focus on physical safety and on physical health and what does it take for museums to set this up.
- Types of self-care (physical – social – spaces – financial – emotional – personal – spiritual - work).

- The best part of this session was the exercise that allowed us to think about our work, our roles – such as activities that have psychosocial hazards, activities and tasks that create ‘strain and impact’.



Culture during conflict. Speakers discussed: -

- How to protect not only heritage but also people that look after that heritage.
- The different initiatives that have been launched during conflicts in different countries, for example, the heritage emergency response from volunteer teams to help respond in Ukraine, a website; Creative Memory of the Syrian Revolution, initiative for refugees and the Cultural Rescue Initiative at the Smithsonian.
- The definition of culture from the point of view of the speakers, during the experiences of war and conflict included knowledge, human culture, relation between a person and their surroundings, rediscovering things they do not know about, discovering places, marginalized people, reconnecting and rediscovering what values can unite people. Culture is letting people have their identity, their history, it is style of life, a powerful instrument to preserve us in a unique time of conflict.

My favorite tour was - Rediscover the Egyptian Collection.

National Museums Scotland's Ancient Egyptian collection comprises around 6,000 items, including many internationally significant objects. Dan Pottea, assistant curator, Ancient Mediterranean, presented a great tour for his Arts and Humanities Research Council project. The project sheds light on individuals who intersected the roles of excavator and dealer in British-led excavations in Egypt and Sudan and the

impact of their activities on the museum's collections today. There were many discussions with the participants about how museums engaged with Egyptian collections in new interpretation of their heritage.



The conference and the discussions had an impact on me, motivating me to transfer my experience to my colleagues through several lectures that will be held during December, in which I will present an overview of museums and wellbeing, and decolonization.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018), Curator, Institute of National Museums of Rwanda (INMR)

Report for Chantal Umuhoza: MUSEUM ASSOCIATION Conference and exhibition

From October 29th to November 6th 2022, I, Chantal Umuhoza, ITP Fellow 2018 and Curator at Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy, attended the ITP legacy project: Museums Association Conference Edinburgh that was held in the UK (Scotland).

I can admit that the ITP shaped my career in so many ways and opened so many doors; so I applied for this programme because I was seeing it as another opportunity for developing my skills and an ideal place for exchange, sharing knowledge and discussing best practices to support my professional development. I was also hoping to develop long and lasting network connections to provide opportunities for future collaboration.

I arrived in Edinburgh on Sunday 30th and after checking in at the hotel, I went out for sightseeing and when I was checking my google map, to my surprise I got a bouquet from a couple that wished me a good stay, what a nice welcome. From that moment I was certain that my week in Edinburgh would be the happiest week of my life



My first photos in Edinburgh

The programme was structured in a very good way, that the first three days we visited different Museums in Scotland and got to know what they do, and I am glad that they tackled my points of interests, like community engagement, decolonization, inclusion, etc

Monday: A visit to V&A Dundee



ITP fellows posing in front of V&A Dundee

We were welcomed by Jo Mawdsley and her team who shared how since the beginning of the development of the museum, they engaged local communities. They also shared different education and learning programmes that they have for schools, families and young people; how they collaborate with different organisations in Dundee, Scotland and in the UK. After lunch we toured the Plastic: Remaking Our World exhibition, an ideal example of addressing climate change issues in museums. We also visited the Scottish design galleries.

Lesson learnt:

Our museums have a lot to offer and share with and benefit from our communities, we as museum professionals are actors of the positive change in our respective societies but we cannot achieve whatever we want to achieve without the communities we are serving. So, community engagement is very key for the success of our activities in museums.

Another lesson is collaborating with other organizations that have similar ambitions and objectives to unite our strength.

Tuesday: Visit to University of Aberdeen Museums and Special collections, Aberdeen Art Gallery and Maritime Museum



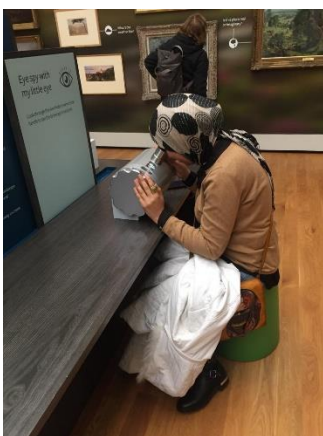
The photo of the group and the staff of the University of Aberdeen Museums

We were welcomed by Neil Curtis who gave us an overview of the work they are doing, such as some collections that were repatriated, reinterpretation of their collections on human culture, natural sciences and medicine for the sake of decolonization and increasing accessibility to museum collections, the project that they are doing together with other museums in Scotland (Reveal and Connect) to help in the repatriation process for different collections.

Lesson learnt: If we want to make change, we have to start somewhere - do not be afraid of failing.

We also visited Aberdeen Art Gallery and Maritime Museum in the afternoon.

Take home: There is too much to do in terms of inclusion in my museums. It doesn't have to take too much budget; we can start with little things.



My colleague Nagwa with an interactive screen / lense to help people with visual impairment reading the texts / the group posing for a photo in studio room at Aberdeen Art Gallery

Wednesday: Spending the day at National Museums Scotland

This day was so important to me because my institution started a 10-year project of decolonizing one of the museums in Rwanda, I was inspired by how they are addressing colonial histories and legacies in their daily work, afterwards we had the World Culture gallery tour by John Giblin.

Take home: Decolonisation in European museums is very different to the decolonization of the Ethnographic Museum in Rwanda, but we have started doing the work, simply changing narratives or putting the stories that were ignored previously whilst describing objects we have and recognising skills and knowledge of the object owners.

Thursday, the conference starts

In general, the sessions I attended were related to decolonization, restitution, climate change, professional development,

The countryside: Ten walks through colonial Britain, Museums for climate justice, Developing yourself and others, Who is afraid of decolonization, Reclaiming the narrative – violence against women and girls.

Friday:

I attended different sessions like Leading change, Exploring feminist interpretation, Exhibition design, Culture during conflict, Exploring and exchanging our stories and Collaborative approaches to restitution.



Session: Exhibition design, game: Keeping your audience and me acting as Cindy (Teen influencer)

- **Key notes and take home from the conference sessions**
- From the above mentioned sessions I learnt that we all have a role to play in shaping the future of our museums and their role in the society, but also make sure that our visitors, audiences and communities feel welcomed, represented and actively and creatively engaged in all aspects of museum work. In order to do this, we need to place people at the heart of everything we do.
- For our decolonization project at my institution in Rwanda, I learnt that it is a collective activity that aims to rebalance the power and representation.

- I hope there will be future collaborations from the network developed during my time in Scotland as I discussed some areas of collaboration with some professionals.

Saturday: This was another moment for me to enjoy the city but learn at the same time via the MA, I visited the Scott Monument on a tour, and attended a session at City Art Centre: Enhancing the wellbeing of young people through art.

In summary, I had a pleasant stay in Scotland



Enjoying my last day in Edinburgh with the team that attended the Museums Association Conference.

Observations:

In general, I appreciate how this programme was organised, because what was to be discussed during the sessions I attended, I saw it in practice visiting different museums in Scotland and from the tours organised by the Museums Association.

Acknowledgments

- Without Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust, my participation to the programme would not have been possible. A very **Big thank you** for supporting my place on this ITP legacy project.
- I would like to extend my gratitude to the ITP team for their continued efforts to make this programme successful and for always providing opportunities for ITP fellows to develop professionally. I would like to thank the British Museum for creating such a nice family (ITP) for museum professionals across the globe.
- I also thank V&A Dundee, the University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections, Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums and National Museums of Scotland for their participation and their will to share their works with us during the programme.
- I would like to thank my institution for giving me the permission to attend this important programme
- I would like also to thank my colleagues, Alsu, Ioan, Nagwa and Marine, for being good friends and for the knowledge and joy we shared throughout the programme.

Prepared by:

Chantal Umuhoza, ITP Fellow 2018

Alsu Akhmetzyanova (Uzbekistan, ITP Fellow 2019), Consultant, The World Bank Project

REPORT

**ITP Legacy Project MA
Conference 2022**

by Alsu Akhmetzyanova



This report is to describe my time spent in Scotland, the UK as a participant of the legacy programme by the International Training Programme, the British Museum.



In 2020, the next year after I became the first ITP fellow from Uzbekistan, I decided to apply to the International Training Programme opportunity to attend the Museums Association Conference in Edinburgh. The ITP provides a post-fellowship opportunity for further training and research to support the careers and institutions of the ITP fellows. The generosity of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Trust enables many fellows from around the world to receive support and participate in the annual programme and legacy projects. I am grateful for the support and trust of the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Trust which made it possible for me to participate both in ITP in 2019 and in the legacy project in 2022.

Initially, the theme of the MA Conference of the year I applied was Power to the People – Democratising our Museums - which resonated with the projects I was managing such as making the art and cultural institutions accessible for people with additional needs, campaigning for children with autism, the first tactile exhibition and many others. I anticipated that the sessions I would attend would contribute to my projects with the international experience and new perspectives.

The legacy project MA Conference is a programme based not only on the conference, but also visits to museums and collections around the venue. The fellows visited V&A Dundee, the University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections, Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums and National Museums Scotland this year. In each of the visited art institutions the fellows had a chance to explore the collections, meet the experts, and learn something they may use back in their home country.





V&A Dundee was the first locale, the absolutely modern and breathtaking architecture by renowned award-winning Japanese architects Kengo Kuma & Associates and the collection of this place cannot leave indifferent even the most sophisticated art lovers. The brand signature V&A is definitely felt since it is the first V&A outside London. The fellows were hosted by the team including the designers of educational programmes, community outreach and family programmes. During

the presentation, we could learn about the current and past projects, the structure of the museum, collections, public engagement, educational programs and the way V&A Dundee functioned during the pandemic. The highlight of the visit was the temporary exhibition "Plastic: Remaking Our World" which made it possible to look at plastic through the lens of design, learn its history and challenge the relationship with this wonderful material.





Aberdeen, the third biggest city in Scotland became our next destination. In a divine building of the University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections Neil Curtis (Head of Museums and Special Collections) and Abeer Eladany (Curatorial Assistant at the University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections) introduced us to the rich history of the city, university and collection. Also, during the showcase of the storage, it was interesting to have a talk about rethinking the current collection and the

future plans of the museums.

The Aberdeen Art Gallery also opened the doors to the fellows, Helen Fothergill, Service Manager, archives, gallery and museums, and Madeline Nehring, Museum and Gallery Collections made a tour around their collection of fine and applied art where we could observe the innovative displays, ways of public engagement including children, women and people with additional needs, interactive activities and other contraptions which can be used back in our home countries.

The conclusion of Aberdeen was the Aberdeen Maritime Museum with the amazing tour of the history collections, contemporary collecting science and industry by probably the most enthusiastic curators, Jim Inglis and Jenny Brown.





The National Museum of Scotland was the last one in the programme before the conference, but not for me, as I have visited so many others in order to see, enjoy and explore more, but more on this below. The NMS is the museum with the richest collection in Scotland having galleries similar to the British Museum, V&A, National History Museum and Science Museum inside. Considering this fact, the museum works with many other museums in the country and abroad by sharing their collection and expertise. John Giblin – Keeper, Department of Global Arts, Jilly Burns, Head of National and International Partnerships, and Chante St. Clair Inglis – Head of Collections Services, kindly made a presentation introducing the way the museum works, the international projects, public engagement, working with minorities, educational programs and entertainment. Their perspective is very futuristic for most museum professionals, they try to find an approach to different types of visitors and even to those who do not consider museums to visit at all.





The Museums Association Conference 2022 was held in a hybrid mode; however, I was lucky to attend it in person which let me feel the atmosphere, meet museum specialists, discuss the most relevant topics and make new friends which were not possible last year online. This year the conference analysed how museums in the UK and around the world can create better places to live and work in a post-pandemic world. The sessions, workshops, networking meetings and in-practice sessions tackled such topics as well-being, decolonisation, anti-racism, sustainability, climate crisis, inequality and many others.

Considering my area of speciality, I mostly focused on the sessions which could add to my knowledge and give me a different perspective. This was the main session “Emerging Museum Professionals: We are the future” where young professionals discussed the possibility of the involvement of emerging museum professionals in decision-making, empowerment of these young people and raising this awareness among

the current leaders. The topic is relevant for me and my country since the existing hierarchy within the system of cultural institutions shut out the young staff and discourage them to work, express themselves and make changes which could have been a great opportunity to make museums a more friendly space for visitors and for workers.

Another amazing plenary on leadership, well-being and decolonisation was “Leading Change” where the directors of different museums shared their experiences on how they reacted and adapted to the challenging pandemic time, and what they have learnt from it. It was truly inspiring and informative; leadership is about accountability, making a difference, driving and empowering people, helping, seeing people flourishing, and knowing when it is time to leave the position.



The next highlight for me in this conference was the plenary “Culture during conflict” where panelists from the UK, USA, Ukraine, Syria, and Iraq shared their experiences and discussed the role of culture, priorities, and values during times of conflict. Many would say that it is not relevant for Uzbekistan; however, in such a rapidly changing time we have to be aware and know how to react in such conditions. Moreover, we live in one world and we cannot isolate ourselves from all the chaos happening around which also connects to each of us and to how we respond. Besides, I have also attended the sessions on areas of my interest like violence against women and girls or exploring feminist interpretation which gave me a hint of what kind of projects I would like to manage in the future by raising awareness and changing the attitude since it is currently an emerging topic in our country.



At the conference, I had a chance to have a small talk and to discuss the topics raised during the conference with the director of People’s Museums Somers Town, Diana Foster, director of programmes at National Saturday Club, Dhikshana Pering and the director of the Dovecot Studios, Celia Joicey. I hope that one day I will meet all these people again for another discussion or for possible collaborations.

sessions gave me an insight into possible future projects which can happen in Uzbekistan soon.

Words cannot express my gratitude to the International Training Programme and the kindest and most professional ITP team, the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Trust, V&A Dundee, University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections, Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums and National Museums of Scotland for such a life-changing opportunity.

**Ioan Oprea (Romania, ITP Fellow 2019), Conservator, National Museum of the Union
Alba Iulia, Unity Museum**

**Edinburgh Museums Association Conference ITP Legacy Project, 29 October – 6
November 2022**



The journey to Edinburgh and the MA conference actually started before the pandemic and the long awaiting time just made the moments there even more appreciated. More than that, it being a legacy project of the ITP painted the entire

experience in a more beautiful and professional light; it was also a happy reunion with the ITP team and family, with 2019's friends, but also with other ITP members I knew only from the network. The event also had a strong, happy impact on me; the MA conference talked several times about the museum's employee wellbeing, about the efforts and actions taken to improve their life as much as is done to improve the public visits in the museums, so I felt very good to be there because this is exactly what the ITP legacy project was doing and giving to us: a continuous process to make us better professionals and to strengthen our confidence in our work and in our international team work.

“Make change happen” – the conference’s main theme – has lots of meanings, different for every one of us. A famous ancient quote says “change is the only constant thing in life”; it’s in our nature to seek it, to do it, to follow it. In our case, as museum professionals, it is our job to seek improvements in our and for our work; we seek to meet other professionals, to change ideas and solutions for our daily museum activities. I hoped with this legacy project to meet, in particular, professionals in the conservation field and I found even more than I expected. Among the museum professionals, I also found several companies who were dealing with the heritage conservation field – this is unusual in Romania, most of the time, the museums or their labs have to take care of everything. I had very good conversations in the breaks



between the conference presentations and workshops, with representatives of Deepstore Records Management (their solution to deposit various artifacts into a salt mine which had been transformed into a deposit, seemed like a great practical idea); Turtlebox (safe transportation for museums), IPARC (International Platform for Art Research and Conservation) etc. I was also impressed that most of the representatives were aware of climate action protection and their solutions for the museum were created accordingly, to the environment protection standards; for example, Turtlebox products have an estimated life of 20 years, during this period, its estimated that more than 40 trees are saved and even more,



and it can be recycled after this time of use. I think the idea of having these companies during a scientific event is a must for future museal events, theory must meet practice whenever is possible.

Among others, the MA conference highlighted several times, through presentations or workshops, that the

environment is everyone's responsibility, the museums must increase their educational role, the modern audience is increasing in diversity and the museums are transforming themselves into cultural ecosystems with very active roles in people's lives; they get people together for greater good, for the same purposes, for equality and last but not least, for inclusion.

This edition of the conference was a very good reminder about the status of our career and themes - how to analyse it and how to improve it; where are our goals, what motivates us and how do we plan what we want – these areas were explained and discussed during the workshops, as well as tough reality exercises and questions sessions. During the sessions, I was particularly interested in the “Culture during conflict”; it was a pure example of the museal real life in the 21st century under modern conflict. We can deal with many things, but in the ugly case of a military conflict, nothing rational works and then heritage becomes a “thing” to conquer or to destroy in order to impose the winner's point of view. Speakers from Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, UK and the USA pointed out the museum's role in these scenarios and how important it is to save heritage and to use it for (re)building community stories and identity. This was a highly important lesson, especially with the ongoing conflict near our borders and a very good memento to improve our conservation standards, to update and re-think our plans for saving heritage in case of a conflict or other major situation.

The legacy project in Edinburgh was a very happy reunion with ITP 2019 friends, Nagwa and Alsu; we felt so “adult” now being an older generation from the ITP and we also felt very proud to be part of a network with such a strong identity. I also had the pleasure to meet Chantal and Marine. Our museum has a rich collection of ecclesiastic art objects and sharing some details about them with Marine, we realised we can start work for a future event, for a cultural bridge between Romania and Armenia; we both have common interests and research subjects that would be appreciated in both our countries. So, let the future begin!

In the previous days of MA project, we had some amazing visits behind the scenes and meeting with the staff at V&A Dundee, (a fantastic) tour in the collection and deposits of University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections and Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums, Aberdeen Maritime Museum and the gem was National Museums Scotland – with a huge collection of artifacts, special thematic tours of the collections, professional staff and so many stories for the public and for the museum employee as well; they also held the main party of the MA conference and proved to be great organizers as well.

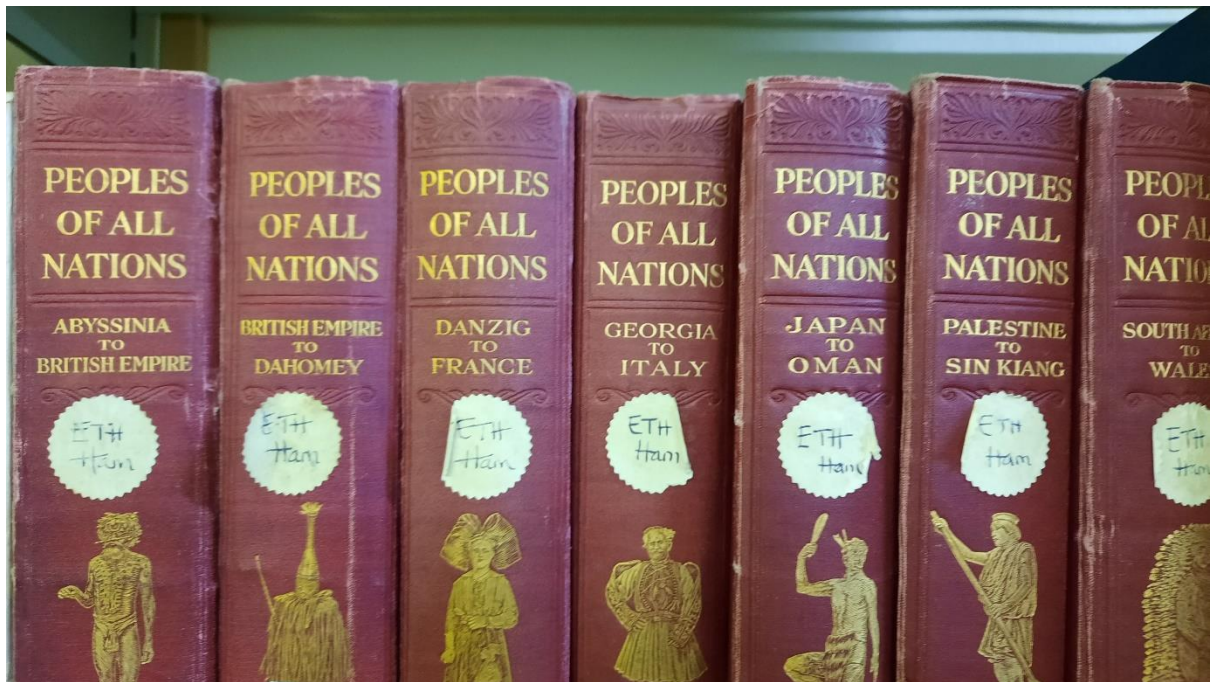


As usual, the ITP experience and opportunity will remain among the great life events for me and I am very grateful to have been chosen for the Edinburgh legacy project. Such a chance happily obliges me to increase my work for the international museal field. Special thanks for this to Claire, Anna and George!



I am grateful for this important opportunity for my career to the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.

My sincere thanks go as well to V&A Dundee, University of Aberdeen Museums and Special Collections, Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museums and National Museums of Scotland for their participation in the programme.



VOBIS PLURIMAS GRATIAS AGO!

**Marine Mkrtchyan (Armenia, ITP Fellow 2014), CEO, Russian Art Museum Community
Exhibition Officer, Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities**

REPORT

Almost 16 years of professional activity in the museum sector of Armenia brought me to different harbors. Out of the 16 years, I have been managing the Museum of Russian Art (Abrahamyan collection) for almost 7 years. During my professional journey I have been a founding member of 2 professional networks; ICOM Armenia and the Association of Museum Workers and Friends. But a special place in my career path goes to the British Museum's International Training Programme where I became a fellow in 2014.

During my work career I have been part of several professional gatherings in the frames of state, private and ICOM led conferences, however, I have always had the desire to take part in the Museums Association led conferences. Since my student years I used the MA journal for my study and research. I never thought I would get any opportunity to be a part of 130 years of this legacy. As a member of the ITP network, I was notified of a wonderful opportunity to attend the UK Museums Association conference from November 5-7 2022. So, after a lengthy break, I was delighted to return to the United Kingdom. This time, ITP fellows had chance to attend a fantastic professional gathering in Edinburgh hosted by the Museums Association of the United Kingdom. The Museums Association Conference "Make Change Happen" started on November 3rd in Edinburgh. The conference brought together professionals from all over the world to discuss and debate global transformations that are occurring everywhere, such as the fight against climate change, natural and man-made disasters, racism, and so on. Several interesting speeches and ceremonies followed one another. One of the exhibitions "Still Parents: Life After Baby Loss," had a profound impact on me. This is what museums must do: speak out about difficult stories and create platforms for their people and communities. It was not surprising that this exhibition was named the Best Museum Change Lives Award winner.



The first day of the conference provided me with a lot of inspiration and motivation to think about new ideas and take risks with new projects. The conference themes and subjects demonstrated once again that we, as museum managers, must foster change and be examples of change within our countries, communities, organizations, and families.



As a member of ICOM Armenia and a representative from the Armenian museum community, I was making comparisons with themes and topics offered by ICOM. What is surprising here in the UK is that the center of the whole conference was human, with its current problems, challenges and success stories. All the projects in the UK so far are about courage and passion, working collaboratively, inclusively, and ethically. The museums champion diversity and equity, they campaign for social and climate justice and finally, they change by example. The Museums Association mission “Inspiring museums to change lives” and “Inclusive, participatory and sustainable museums at the heart of their communities” seems to be deeply rooted into museums activities across the UK.



During the conference I participated in the sessions about Museum Ethics, developing yourself and others, Emerging Museum Professionals: We are the future, Supporting workforce and wellbeing etc.



Among the topics, “well-being” was of great interest to me. Environmental factors that affect us and the experiences we have throughout our lives are all part of our well-being. They may be related to traditional areas such as economic policy, health, and education. However, well-being is also important in the aspects of our lives in which we define ourselves: our own abilities as individuals; how we treat ourselves; the quality of our relationships with others; and our sense of purpose. I got introduced to terminology and universality as well as to projects which are carried out in the frames of this campaign.



As a part of my trip, I enjoyed some wonderful trips to different cities and venues. The ITP team put great effort in to arrange for fellows a beautifully tailored programme with the opportunity to explore Scotland, its museums, wonderful cities, and people from Edinburgh to Dundee to Aberdeen. One of the highlights of our trip was the stopover in Dundee and visit to the V&A Dundee. Dundee is one of the cities in Scotland, where museums are actively cooperating with local communities. As well as the beautiful architecture, the museum offers some wonderful community-led projects, finding solutions to everyday challenges. As such, an exhibition under the title "Plastic" in the museum addressed one of the most problematic issues for the whole world. The exhibition takes the visitors through a journey where one can get acquainted with the origin of plastic, its historical development, the damage caused by it, and what kind of programmes society organises today in relation to recycling and cleaning nature of them. Besides the V&A Dundee we also visited the University collections in Aberdeen where diverse collections from across the globe are stored. I must also highlight National Museums Scotland. The museum was a mix of traditional and contemporary. Every gallery of the museum makes you feel you are at a crossroads of different civilizations. I must point out the part of the exhibition where curators showcased the narrative for people with different sexual orientations.

Participation in the conference helped me to rethink my working methods used to deliver projects in Armenia. As always, the highest standards of the project implementation in different museums across the UK starting from design, showcases narratives made me reimagine the picture of my museum. The relationship between museums and the community is astonishing, which is something we need to install in our country. However, step by step, if not completely, I will include all the above-mentioned issues in the activities of the museum I lead. It was very nice to get to know ITP fellows from different years and share our experience as well as discuss some collaborative projects. I have had some preliminary discussions with Ioana from Romania to organise a joint exhibition dedicated to Russian Icons in 2023.



I am very grateful to the British Museum's International Training Programme for this wonderful opportunity. Thanks to the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust for supporting my place on this ITP legacy project. Special thanks to my beloved Claire and her team Anna and George for another unforgettable and life-changing experience.



Ma. Yohana Frias, Media Production Specialist, National Museum of the Philippines (Philippines, ITP Fellow 2018)

**The British Museum International Training Programme
Leadership Training and Museums Association Conference
Ma. Yohana R. Frias Report**

28 October 2022 – 06 November 2022 | London and Edinburgh, United Kingdom

From 28 October to 06 November 2022, I, Ma. Yohana R. Frias from the National Museum of the Philippines (NMP), went to the United Kingdom to participate in the British Museum International Training Programme (BM ITP) Leadership Training.

Our institution suffers a high turnover rate. In my 7 years of working here, I have seen countless employees come and go. Working for a government institution can be frustrating, and change is not as fast as working in a private museum. There is a saying here—that those who stay for long are either very passionate in their job or are already wealthy enough not to care. The motivation to stay takes a hit in many ways—a toxic environment, budget cuts for projects, lack of opportunities for growth, politics, and low compensation. I was lucky because I met colleagues and mentors who have the same passion for museum work and who encouraged me through the years. I wish to pay forward this generosity by becoming a better leader in my field. This training is thus crucial for my development as a potential leader in the museum sector.

During the training, I also went to different galleries and museums during our free time. The following are some of the key sessions and exhibitions which stuck with me the most:

HIGHLIGHT SESSIONS

Leading a Curatorial Department at the BM *Daniel Antoine, Keeper, Department of Egypt and Sudan*

“What does it take to be the Head of Department?” Daniel said it was sacrifice. The museum should come first, then your department, and finally yourself. In this regard, he mentioned half-jokingly that academics are bad managers. They must **think away from their discipline** and not think too much about themselves. One needs to be a people-person, and think about other perspectives. A good manager also does not need to be an expert on everything. Knowing the right experts to talk to for decision-making is more important.

Strategic thinking entails leadership, vision, and governance. A good manager makes sure that the vision is shared by the staff and work towards it within the guidance of the museum’s mandate. Governance does not mean micromanaging—which we all agreed to be the worst trait a manager can have. It meant understanding the chain of responsibility, acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the department, assigning the right staff to the right job, and assessing how they can work better with other departments. Leadership entails identifying staff who needs support and training. Never forget to put yourself in the beginners’ shoes.

Daniel advised us that whatever job we go for, we should take management courses so that even if we don’t get the job, we can be a better person. Communication is key.

Managing Staff and Collections

Evan York, Collections Manager, Department of Collection Care

For Evan, being a leader means you know how to manage the level of responsibility of your staff. Knowing your team is very important when balancing workload and coping. For example, should you give a member of staff more work because you know they can handle it more? But you



must give more freedom and leeway in other aspects. A leader must also make sure that no one is taken advantage of. “Can they exceed the responsibility they’re paid with? The answer might be yes, but **should they?** Yes, you are capable but if you’re not paid for the responsibility, what happens if something goes wrong?”

MA Conference

Developing Self and Others

A leader has the capability to improve oneself while keeping in mind the improvement of others. The following competencies are used to assess if a museum is inclusive, sustainable, and participatory: developing self and others, empowering collections, engaging audiences and communities, leading and change making, managing money, people, and organizations, and sustaining relationships and partnerships.

Career conversations, for example, help staff to discuss with managers their long-term career aspirations. During our discussion, we were asked, “What does career success look like for you?” Personally, I wish to work in an organization that values me through **extrinsic** (proper compensation) **and intrinsic** (being appreciated, trusted to handle larger responsibilities, given a voice in decision making) and **rewards**.

Emerging Museum Professionals (EMPs) – We are the Future!

EMPs are defined as individuals who are either new to the museum sector or wish to progress further into their museum career, regardless of age. EMPs usually do most of the museum’s groundwork and frontline services despite being undercompensated. Those in management sometimes get filtered out of necessary information that comes ‘from the bottom.’ Some critical issues that ground staff face doesn’t reach them. “If people are making decisions for you, they need to include you.” EMPs are usually diverse, and they often bring new ideas from their experience outside of museum work. Unfortunately, our curatorial staff at the NMP aren’t as diverse, which made me think of the negative effect of **in-group bias** in psychology.

To support EMPs, museum leaders must start by listening to them. Labor is not only physical and mental, but the speakers also quoted “**emotional labor**.” We can be involved directly by holding workshops and steering groups. There should also be honest discussions around why people are leaving the sector. During the last pandemic, they assessed how the cost of living affected EMPs. EMPs should be active in local and national groups as an important support network. There are multiple EMP groups in European countries and in America—the speaker encouraged that we could also set up one in our own countries. Finally, the speakers encouraged the audience to “**Join your Union!**”

In-group bias refers to favoring people with the same interests, abilities, or background (ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, academic, etc.) over others. In employment for example, this poses a risk of homogenous thought in which a team may face problems thinking beyond their own discipline because there is little to no diversity in the team members' backgrounds.

Emotional labor is the invisible work put in by employees, to accept rules and techniques of feeling and emotion management to fulfill the requirements of their job. For example, tour guides are expected to always smile and be nicer than usual even when dealing with troublesome visitors. The suppression of genuine emotional expression may lead to estrangement to one's true feelings, which is a coping mechanism but may become an occupational hazard in the long run because feelings are supposed to be that which connect us to our environment.

Mutual Support

During the pandemic, the heritage network in Scotland utilized virtual platforms for conversations. The challenge was to ease the “wartime feeling” during the pandemic and urge people to move away from their personal COVID ‘silos’ and instead connect to a larger museum community. Thus, the Lothians Museum Forum was born, which provided a safe space for common concerns to be aired out. Monthly connections via Zoom were held for training, wellbeing support, and for discussions about emergency funds and employee adaptation during the lockdown. It was a chance to **counter isolation, and discuss shared experiences**. Instead of mandatory presentation-type meetings that cause Zoom fatigue, these informal conversations allowed a smoother facilitation and a more organic group dynamic.

Open Space: Exploring Feminist Interpretation

Space Invaders is a non-profit organization in the UK campaigning for equal space for women in the museum and heritage sector. Part of their manifesto is to use interpretation in exhibitions to **include intersectional and often overlooked stories** of different genders, ethnic groups, and religious and cultural communities. They developed an interpretation strategy to make sure that the right stories are being told and that all sectors are represented as much as possible:

Display Theme	People featured in the story	Gender identity of individuals	Race/ethnicity	(Dis)ability	Faiths	Age	Loneliness and Social Isolation	Class and power relations	Slavery and Exploitation
Black Death	General population	50% Male 50% Female	European	Possibly as a result of disease	Possibly Christianity	All ages	Isolation from medical		

							perspective (quarantine)		
Jewish Community	Jewish community	Mostly male Female	Jewish European		Judaism	Adults	Social/community isolation from a race bias point of view	Powerlessness	Exploitation
Religious Institutions	Spitalfield's Cemetery Various people involved in the church	Mostly male One female story	European	Yes – woman has a fused knee and was looked after in a hospital run by a church	Christianity-protestant Christianity-catholic	Adults	Social isolation from the perspective of people with disabilities	Power of religious institutions	
Nobility and Peasants' Revolt	General population William Walforth, Mayor of London, Wat Tyler, leader of the Revolt Various noble families	Mostly male Female	European			Adults Young and Old		Class wars Challenging power	Exploitation

This table helps in identifying possible narratives, target audiences, and gaps to the storytelling. Current issues such as loneliness and social isolation, poverty, environmental sustainability, and mental health and wellbeing can be relatable themes due to the pandemic; class and power relations speak to audiences with different socio-economic backgrounds; while exploring narratives of slavery and exploitation is an important step towards decolonization.

An object's **inherent story** should come first and foremost—it is the starting point of a narrative but it shouldn't be the ending point.

Exhibition Design



The speaker opened her lecture by pointing out how museums have become spaces of advocacies. Political correctness, LGBTQIA+ representation, contested histories—the question is to how can we attract the “other side” or audiences who have biases against telling these stories? The question she posed is, “Can we get past our justice movements to reach reconciliation?”

Thus, the multiplicity of interpretation of an object is important to make the audience aware that there may be other **non-threatening perspectives about a story** that others might understand better. To demonstrate what she meant, they conducted an activity entitled, “Keep your audience,” which was held in the form of a game show.

The painting in focus is a portrait of the former First Lady Michelle Obama. Our exercise was to think of themes and perspectives which can be derived from this painting to appeal to different types of audiences. For example, a social media influencer who loves fashion would focus on the dress and its design while an art student would love to know the technique used in painting. Other people might be interested in politics, cultural significance, or the monetary value of the painting. As much as possible, a variety of themes must be presented in order to “keep our audience” (usual target population), while appealing to new audiences (i.e. social media generation, common folk, etc). For example, what about donors who are Trump supporters?



The solution is **layering**—defined as a method of exhibition design wherein information about the objects are presented in different ways that are accessible to visitors of different backgrounds, interests, and even disabilities. Since **objects carry complexity, and sometimes contradictions**, it is important to make visitors understand that there are multiple interpretations. Different themes and perspectives, can be layered through the inclusion of a curator label, a community story, an activity/interactive, and a multi-sensory experience. Many would argue that there is a risk for visual clutter, but this is crucial to bring people together and facilitate dialogues and conversations with conflicting perspectives—not necessarily to change someone’s mind but to facilitate learning.

Collaborative Approaches to Restitution



This was an interesting session to pick as my final one. Led by female Africans, they started with their interpretation of African objects exhibited outside of their country. To them, that object is a symbol of all the things and lives that were lost or taken, cultures that they have no access to, bringing in themes of conflict between nations, and **ethnic belonging**.

This is where restitution comes in. They were quite radical with their presentation, pointing out that too much conversation is ongoing as if purposely made as a delaying tactic rather than quickly moving towards actual restitution. In France alone, there were 90,000 African objects. The speakers emphasized that there should be no debate whether the objects should be repatriated and that they should instead be discussing the terms and logistics of bringing it back to Africa.

There is the usual concern of the African museums' capacity to handle the objects in terms of storage and conservation. The speaker admitted that there were indeed instances like that in the past but pointedly said, "Let us Africans handle our own problems." I thought perhaps the better answer is they cannot secure funding for better storage facilities or for training and other equipment because the culturally important objects were taken from their museums.

Big museums have a fear of loss for their objects, but Africans have been feeling it for years. The speaker grieved that it is demanded from Africans to come to the table polite, respectful, and open to conversations. But they carry too much pain, and it is better to be authentic instead of hiding behind the word "respect."

After their passionate lecture, the open forum followed and as expected, almost nobody wanted to ask or raise a point. There was a feeling of consensus to just keep our own opinions to ourselves due to the nature of the lecturer's feelings, which was the opposite of what these sessions aimed to achieve—a **space for dialogue**.

EXHIBITIONS IN FOCUS

Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience



This exhibition did not contain any original works of Vincent Van Gogh, but is filled with digitally projected and printed images. A digital exhibition like this does not and will never replace museum galleries but it offers a different experience—a chance to see all of Van Gogh's versions of sunflower painting side-by-side, or all of his self-portraits in one room. There is the question whether seeing or not seeing originals would matter if the learning experience is the

same—if not enhanced—by seeing everything in one place and being able to compare all his works. This idea came up several times during our discussions in the following days of the program.

Stonehenge: People, Meaning, Landscape

“The purpose of Stonehenge is lost to us. There will always be a debate about its meaning.” I found it interesting that the museum did not impose a single truth, but rather present multiple research-based findings that may shed light to the stones’ meanings. It fulfills one of the most important purpose of museums— to **encourage free thought and facilitate discussion**.

National Museum Scotland

I feel that in order to cater to visitors who have a limited time to view everything, the use of gateway objects is crucial. Also, a section text that summarizes the whole theme of the display should be designed differently (i.e. contrasting colors) than the other layers of text in an exhibition to highlight it. Overall, I felt like this museum attempted to encompass everything by displaying a huge number of objects from the collection. To counter information overload, perhaps the highlighting of several objects should be applied rather than presenting them all equally without **visual hierarchy**.

A Taste for Impressionism - National Gallery Scotland



Our visit here provoked a return to our discussion about the power of digitization. Andrea is working in the Bateman Foundation, which was founded by the painter and environmentalist Robert Bateman. He produced multiple copies of his work - that act was regarded in a negative light by artists at that time. These are later on regarded as ‘fakes.’ When a museum-goer visits, the first thing they usually ask of the object is, “Is it the original?” Andrea asked me whether it matters. I answered that perhaps it’s a bragging right to see the original with your own eyes, or perhaps it’s a form of elitism in the art world to dismiss reproductions and copies as ‘fakes.’

In the case of fine art, should it matter to the viewer if it is the original object they are looking at, if they could not tell the difference? Well-made reproductions, whether by the same artists themselves, or scanned and reprinted by institutions, provide the same learning experience as originals. You can’t touch them anyway.

There is also the issue of accessibility. The majority of the population will probably never get the chance to see Van Gogh’s original paintings which are scattered all over the world, with the most famous ones in Amsterdam (Bedroom in Arles, Wheatfield with Crows, Tree Roots), Paris (Starry Night over the Rhône), New York (The Starry Night, Self-Portrait), and Los Angeles (Irises). And there are many other of his paintings in private collections that may or may not be seen by the public at all. The existence of these pop-up digital exhibitions, is thus

a blessing for people who cannot afford to see all of those in a museum setting. Granted, these “immersive, digital, exhibitions” are not a substitute for a real gallery, but it still provides a different learning experience wherein you have a chance to see and compare the different works of Van Gogh, all in one place.

Seeing reproductions may also encourage the viewer to *want* to see the original. In this case these digital exhibitions actually **pique interest for new audiences** and may serve as their **introduction into the art world**.

I have prepared a more detailed report of every session and every museum I visited during this program which I will submit to my institution. Each exhibition I visited during our free time was an invaluable learning experience as I noted unique display systems that I can apply to my work in the exhibitions division. I am also scheduled to do a presentation next year in hopes that what I learned can be applied to change and modify our existing policies.

When I first joined the ITP in 2018, the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust funded me, and I will never forget how life-changing that was. The BM ITP not only furthered my career but also allowed me the capacity to disseminate the knowledge and skills I acquired to the museum community in the Philippines. I gained the confidence and competence to apply for graduate studies. Due to unavailability of funds, I withdrew my admission to the Masters of Exhibition Planning and Design at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia but I am now trying my luck for the Chevening Scholarships which would hopefully allow me to formalize my learning in the UK. Here's hoping!



I am grateful to the British Museum and supporters of the Lambert Fellowship for this opportunity to learn once again, and this time, the scope is much larger, with more people and relationship-focused. Andrea Terron and Shambwaditya Ghosh, Senior ITP Fellows, were constant sources of inspiration, ideas, and support throughout the one-week program.

“The Three Musketeers,” as Andrea called us.

L to R: Shambwaditya Ghosh, Andrea Terron, Ma. Yohana Frias.

Shambwaditya Ghosh, PhD Scholar, University of Delhi (India, ITP 2012, Senior Fellow 2015)

Colouring the Space - Museum as an inclusive institution

ITP Leadership Week Report from 28th October to 5th November 2022.

Summary: The British Museum International Training Programme (ITP) organised a week-long museum and heritage sector leadership workshop from 31 October to 2 November. This workshop was linked with the annual conference of the Museums Association, which was held this year in Edinburgh from 3 November to 5 November. The theme of this year's conference was 'Making Change Happen', looking at the global perspective, what museums can bring as new discourse on the sustainable environment for living and professional growth, social justice and inclusive approaches towards interpretation and outreach. There were several parallel sessions in the conference discussing what change museums can bring for well-being, developing a sustainable environment, climate change, social and ethnic inclusion, and human rights. Both the workshop and the conference were aligned with similar themes. Though the discussions were centred on different issues and topics, one can relate that all these discussions were pointing towards developing a structure of the plan. A plan of action will change the museum from a space full of antiquities to an active, inclusive social-cultural space.

After attending the workshop at the British Museum, I joined the other ITP team members and other fellows in Edinburgh to attend the Museums Associations (UK) annual conference. The scenic beauty of the train journey from London to Edinburgh was worth mentioning, as the North Sea appears just next to the railway track. As usual, all ITP re-unions are memorable: going out, having dinner together, laughing over jokes and sharing news. This time it was similar too, especially the exchanges of small gifts before returning to our own country.

Objective: The objective of this workshop was to get oriented with the recent developments in the management of museums and the heritage sector. The term 'management' was used to convey the idea of heritage management beyond the traditional concepts of curatorial practices and museum management. The museum's management and cultural sector are comparatively new, looking at the museum's history. Even museums as an institution have changed over the period. Especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, there are changes and challenges museums have been facing. It is not only the existence of museums; there is a bigger question of the institution's sustainability with changing global economic and environmental causes. Therefore, when we discuss 'leadership', we need to have a holistic approach to define the leader's new definition.

Expectations: The leadership week workshop was planned to gain knowledge on museum practices related to revenue generation, risk management, public engagement and advocacy. The workshop was designed in a participatory mode of interaction and exchange. It was expected to develop a dialogue through case studies and references to understand the critical parts of museum management. The workshop started with an overview of the new definition

of leadership but gradually developed a sustainable leadership model. The idea was to derive a multi-faceted module which can be shared and applied within the ITP network.

The Programme: The programme of the leadership week was prepared in line with the role of an emerging leader in the heritage sector. The Museum as a space and an institution has changed in the last few decades. Along with the antiquities, now the communities are also an integral part of the functions of museums. Thus, traditional curatorial skills require a fresh perspective to make a museum a public institution. The core idea was how a prospective leader could address the issues related to the institution and the broader community of heritage professionals.

The session in the workshop started with how we can define leadership and how it is different and more challenging than other professional sectors. What would be the new definition and dimensions of leadership in the museum and heritage sector? Therefore, to support this structure of 're-defining leadership in a museum', there were sessions that will supplement this action plan for emerging museum leaders.

There were sessions on revenue generation, community engagements, and risk management, which means every possible threat and challenge the museum as a space and institution can face, the marketing strategy for dissemination and public engagement, and the museum's future.

As mentioned before, the Museums Association and the UK conference were integral to this programme. Therefore, there were similar discussion points as at the British Museum, at the conference.

The Museums Association conference provided case studies that have perfectly shown leadership in promoting ethnic and queer inclusivity in the museum space, re-interpretation and reclaiming the intellectual part of the museum narrative, which has been ignored for an extended period. The conference showed that there is a necessity to redefine a gendered assertion definition of leadership.

The takeaway from the programme: The exposure to leadership work and the Museums Association conference was a different experience. The workshop emphasised the challenges of leadership while the conference stimulated intellectually by demonstrating the changes a leader can bring into museum practice. The presentations and discussions in the leadership workshop were quantitative analyses of what museums can survive and ways to collaborate with other similar institutions. The conference provides qualitative and quantitative analysis of museum practices and shows what methodological change a leader can introduce to make the museum more inclusive and diverse. Here the fundamental question was whether we are looking at museums as just a repository or whether we need to make the archive objects socially viable, accepting the voices of others and providing a space for marginalised people.

Therefore, a balance between the workshop and the conference gave us a larger perspective of the issues as part of the museum's functioning. Not only dissemination of knowledge or

bringing in audiences but the attempt to engage the audience with the space and lets objects speak for them.

Conclusion: My experience attending the leadership week has made me think that some fundamental changes are happening in the functions of the museum and its objectives. We are aware of the survival methods of any museum and the challenges they face in preserving and conserving antiquities, displaying them for public appreciation, and developing cooperations and exchanges. However, there is a more significant issue which needs to be addressed. Moreover, that is how it has been answered; how we see museums now. The change is happening by introducing what has been ignored or denied and which is now included. The space is no more with only objects; we have started giving those objects a voice. The museum is getting coloured now; it is no more white!

Acknowledgement: I would like to thank the sponsors whose generosity and kindness supported my visit. I am grateful for my sponsor's support. I want to acknowledge the support and help from the ITP team, Claire, Anna and George, for everything they have done for my visit and stay and the company they have given. Thank you for everything!

Shambwaditya Ghosh (Senior Fellow, 2015).

Research Scholar, University of Delhi. India.

Andrea Terrón Gomez, Head of Galleries, Bateman Gallery Foundation, Victoria (Guatemala, ITP 2017, Senior Fellow 2018)

International Training Programme: Leadership week - Oct 31 to Nov 5

The programme was divided in two, the first two days at the British Museum and the following four days in Edinburgh for the UK Museums Association Conference.

At the British Museum we were scheduled to talk to different people that work at the BM in different positions:

- Keeper of Collections for the Department of Egypt and Sudan.
- Collections Manager for the Department of Collections Care.
- Head of Membership and Client Relationship Management in Advancement.
- Volunteer Manager: Access & Equality, Learning and National Partnerships.
- Head of Procurement, Finance and Alice Carrington-Windo, Project Manager: Sustainability and Finance.
- Head of Internal Audit.
- Manager for the International Training Programme.

At these sessions, with Yohana Frias (ITP 2018) and Shambwaditya Ghosh (ITP 2012), together we talked about how we are doing at work, with our studies and the plans we have for the future. We were conversing and in a general sense, being grateful because we are part of an international network of professionals, and it is wonderful to see the same enthusiasm and hopes for a better future for museums, culture, and our careers. Many, many thanks to the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky-Charitable Trust for giving me this opportunity, I am thankful for all these ITP opportunities that have led me to improve my career and have given me a positive feeling about the future.

In these sessions a few things came to mind, these specialists and leaders are knowledgeable on their subjects, on their work and their role for the institution they are working for. They believe in the Museum, they believe in their position, and they are aware of their responsibilities and impact for the BM and for the public. I think that is very important to be able to lead a team, because you believe in the project, in the idea and in your human resource. You cannot lead if you are not committed and convinced of the final purpose.



The 'leadership' days offered an opportunity to engage and learn from diverse and great professionals, people that have a lot to give and so many experiences to share; I learned from them, how to prepare for the future, how to adapt my abilities for the role I have in my institution and in future positions. Looking at these exchanges, we are growing individually and realizing we can be better and improve ourselves. We all want to have a global impact, or if we cannot go global, local, within our communities and families.

With short programs like this, we can improve presentation and communication skills; I think these opportunities provide a platform where you can express your ideas, hear from experts, and generate questions and comments that will ultimately strengthen the quality of work and contribute directly to your team. I am always scared about these reports because I have more questions and *To-Do Lists than I have for answers. Which in the end is a good thing, it gives me the opportunity to research and learn more, guide me through other subjects and in the end, find the answers.

With our time at the British Museum exhibitions, permanent and temporary, I could also take home some ideas about exhibition design and mounting options and how to include interpretation in the galleries.



We then travelled to Edinburgh and the following day we started at the MA Conference. For these kinds of events, it is always important to choose the sessions you want to see, beforehand, and have a pre-schedule with several options. Sometimes you go into a room, and it is not what you expect, and you can run to the other session and take with you, helpful information.

Key messages from the sessions where I found myself having questions on how to apply the information to my work and career:

1. All exhibitions and histories are multidimensional, we must understand the layers of content and the histories of all participants, the importance of inclusion
2. Protect family histories, learn from the stories behind the objects but also learn about the interactions between families and why it is important for them. Pay attention to details, it is hard, sometimes, to hear the stories but we must start

3. What do we do with the *sense of identity*, what do we do with self-identification, how can we communicate it and what to do with it? How can you explain what you are, to give explanation of your life decisions, jobs, opportunities, and realities?
4. Museums for climate justice means to have an intersectional approach including social justice. We need to have a platform in which we can engage with audiences and talk about climate justice, people need to come together for the greater good.
5. There is inequality in access to information in different countries, and in the different museums, we all need to be informed because we need a collective voice and action. We all must be well informed and learn what are the ways, particular ways, in which we can contribute; these levels are different, between and within institutions, and there is no problem with that, we have to stop generalizing and adapt to our own realities
6. Our contributions should be specific, and planned, what is important locally, what is your level of awareness, and what can we do to improve this awakening?
7. Have a compelling narrative and bring your audience along. Don't lose your audience! What is happening locally? You are going to them, gain their trust!
8. Do we have sustainability policies? I need to find examples and propose policies
9. What are the priorities when talking about climate change? What gets in the way? Is it authority, indecision, resources, or knowledge...find it, find solutions and do it!
10. Who is your audience? And it will always be diverse! Pay attention!
11. E.D.I. Equality-Diversity-Inclusion
12. Have a SWOT analysis, what position are you looking for, what you want to do, what is your objective, what can you do, what inspires you, and be confident in your abilities. (Added material in another session for competencies framework)
13. Sector change in museums positions and job availability, after the pandemic the objectives might have changed for most institutions, find what you can contribute. We are 'EMP', we are emerging museum professionals, we are at the forefront of our institutions, we have diverse backgrounds, we bring a diversity of thoughts, let's bring a holistic perspective/approach to the table, and we can contribute. Let's support the networks by sharing our experiences and understanding why we are in the sector and why we don't want to leave the sector.
14. Museums must be inclusive, participatory, and sustainable. There were a lot of conversations about museum structure, hierarchy, roles, positions, job options, long-term, part-time, career goals and career options, we are changing, the opportunities are changing, and we need to learn how to adapt, we cannot be the same, if there is something the pandemic has shown us, it is that we need to change
15. Make change happen
16. Approach green and sustainable institutions, get partners, get ideas, and reduce your carbon footprint, how can we measure our carbon footprint? Be engaged and be involved. Understand and communicate that is for the betterment of society. We must make it important. Find carbon literacy courses, get funding, and teach. I will talk to the BCMA to see if they are thinking about giving courses or if that is something we need to do for all our institutions.
17. The purpose/role/objectives/stand of the Museum has changed, is not the same, it is not the collection, it is not the exhibitions. In my own experience, our change goes to

community engagement, going into being active and not neutral, forgetting about the untouchable temple concept, be the change. We are looking for an experience, a connection, a conversation, let us be that space. Who are we serving? Dare to be different, to think differently. How do we make it political, it is a fight for ideas, for stands, what are we doing to achieve our action?

18. Community co-creation: we depend on our communities, being local, the people that host us, have a say, and we have a responsibility. Bring the community in, share the collections, and create a local network and local partnerships. Co-curation of exhibits. How can you empower the participants to grow? Let them emerge as artists.
19. Sustained learning, travelling exhibits, digital platforms, and accessibility. Our relationship with the world needs to have different approaches/perspectives, it must be digital and immersive.
20. Layering meaning and content, having an object, and seeing what people think and how they react. Layers: Materiality, relationship with society, norms, and models (can be a movable way of behaving) and symbols.
21. We give a guide... just some ideas and let them develop their own appreciation. How much information do we need to give? Are we scared of being seen by new audiences? What is the level of interpretation?
22. More information, different perspectives. Focus on similarities and not differences, focus on learning not on doing it all, not expert responses, come down to earth...relate. Visual clutter? What is too much? We are offering a great experience!
23. Let us be a catalyst of change!

If I must summarize all these points, I think the most important fact or truth is that the pandemic was hard on all of us, and cultural institutions are struggling with personal career changes, income definitions, hiring difficulties, and programming shifts, knowing that we cannot rely on international tourism and blockbuster exhibitions. We need to get to work with our communities and promote change from within.

I think Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are the words of the moment, but we must understand that because we are different and we have different backgrounds, we can be useful, we can be part of the change and promote change, starting with the hiring process and the role definitions. What is our community offering, what specialties do we have access to and what do we need to look for? Different is good!

We need to make a difference by teaching about the environment, we must start looking and analyzing our carbon footprint and change it and have an impact on our policies and future programming. If we know about the environment, if we know about nature, we will protect it and conserve it. Museums, galleries, and cultural institutions need to be that space of change, prepositive and open for dialogue and be ready for what the future world brings.

Thank you again for this opportunity, thank you to the ITP team, the BM, the Museums Association and the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust.