

*PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT & CALL FOR PAPERS*

COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS  
GCAM WORKSHOP 4

**The Creative Museum: African Museums Using Culture for the  
Development of Children and Youth**

**Hosted by the Chief Albert Luthuli Museum  
Stanger, South Africa  
October 24–29, 2009**

**OVERVIEW**

The five-day study workshop will build on the success of three previous GCAM workshops in Kenya and Malawi that focused on the development of children's programming in African museums. Workshop 4 will continue to look at methods and examples of program design, with an emphasis on utilizing the museum's skills and knowledge of local conditions and culture to work creatively with multiple community partners to address contemporary issues with innovative programmes.

The theme of Workshop 4 is children and culture, and the potential uses of culture, traditional and contemporary, for the development of children and young people. Museums can use both senses of culture:

- first, culture as a worldview, a way of perceiving and interacting with people and the environment specific to countries and groups. Successful development depends on taking actions which can be integrated with our cultural values in traditional and new and dynamic ways. Our cultural heritage becomes a basic foundation for effective action.
- second, culture as expressed in song, dance, drama, fine arts and literature. Issues such as poverty can be combated by opportunities to be creative in ways which contribute to livelihoods and local economies through arts and crafts, music and dance. Through such programmes, children and young people as well as their communities can move towards a sense of their own empowerment to make a positive difference in their own lives and those of others and take pride in themselves and their achievements.

This fourth workshop will be based on presentations from participants which illustrate museums using culture in those two ways and will allow time for discussion of questions which arise. Attention will also be paid to the document *Putting Culture First*, recently published by the Commonwealth Foundation.<sup>1</sup> This document specifically deals with the importance of culture as a foundation and as a significant instrument of development, and its application to museums will be discussed.

The workshop will:

- distribute new material to date for the GCAM participants, including the final version of the *Manual for Children in African Museums*;

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<sup>1</sup> *Putting Culture First* can be found on the Commonwealth Foundation's website at [www.commonwealthfoundation.org/culturediversity](http://www.commonwealthfoundation.org/culturediversity).

- emphasise the involvement of children and young people in the museum and the process of making decisions with their needs, aspirations and sensitivities in mind, and with input from caregivers, parents, teachers and others;
- present detailed examples of practical programmes from African museums focusing on contemporary development and cultural heritage both tangible and intangible;
- discuss and develop methods to use culture for children's development through museums, involving the local community and other partners;
- work towards a version of *Putting Culture First* that will enable museums to use it to gain support and collaboration in the development and implementation of programmes to strengthen society and aid development;
- encourage follow-up with short workshops in participant's home museums / countries.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

**For further information and if you are interested in attending this meeting, please contact the Secretariat by June 30, 2009: Lois Irvine at [irvinel@fclc.com](mailto:irvinel@fclc.com) or Barbara Winters at [bawinters@shaw.ca](mailto:bawinters@shaw.ca).**

**Those interested in submitting papers should submit abstracts by June 1, 2009 (see below)**

The meeting is open to museum people from both Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries in Africa and elsewhere.

Limited funding of expenses will be available to participants from Commonwealth African countries. The selection of those who receive funding will be determined by the Programme Committee, based on a CV with a written statement of interest, professional competence and museum experience, available matching funds, geographic location and gender representation. Particular consideration will be given to those who meet the above criteria and whose papers are selected for presentation.

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Papers are invited on topics relevant to the focus and objectives of the workshop: developing museum programmes for children and young people, making culture a central aspect of those programmes, and working with community partners to create activities and programmes that address the needs and concerns of the community. Our young people represent the future of those communities, and museums can play a significant role by building partnerships to educate them about the societies in which they live and to prepare them to become fully participating citizens who contribute to the development of their societies.

Papers could discuss:

- museum programmes for children and their families developed through community partnerships
- museum outreach activities, that is, innovative programmes delivered directly to children in their communities
- how museums can involve children, youth and families to address social, economic and educational issues most important to local communities in culturally effective ways
- how museums can help children deal with social issues that affect them directly, such as poverty, discrimination, disease and abuse
- museum programmes in which children experience diverse cultural traditions, with a view to engendering tolerance and understanding
- participatory programmes for children and young people that feature contemporary artistic and cultural activities and engage local cultural practitioners

- programmes that foster the arts and associated creative cultural activities that illustrate opportunities for cultural careers

Presentations should be limited to 20–25 minutes to allow time for discussion, an important feature of CAM programmes. Case studies are welcomed. A fully written paper available for delegates must be submitted at the workshop. PowerPoint presentations may be used for presentation only. Video and other visual presentations are encouraged.

CAM requires that copies of all papers be available during the workshop and may be used for publication on the CAM website or in other CAM documents.

### **SUBMISSIONS**

**A clearly focused abstract of the planned paper must be submitted to the Secretariat by June 1, 2009.** The selection of papers will be based on the description and relationship to the objectives of the workshop, the range of topics, the types of museums represented, regional perspectives, and practical and theoretical approaches. The full version of the paper must be available at the time of the conference, preferably in electronic form but at least in hard copy.