A global network
Afghanistan, Armenia, Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Kurdistan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uganda
Introduction

A unique opportunity
The British Museum’s International Training Programme (ITP) works to develop a sustainable global network of inspired museum and heritage professionals, through sharing knowledge, skills and experiences. Working with countries integral to the Museum’s international strategy and in need of support in building and developing their museum sectors, the annual summer programme aims to provide a platform for the exchange of ideas through the staff and collections of the British Museum and programme partners.

Ten years of success
In summer 2015, the British Museum and 10 UK partner museums welcomed 28 culture and heritage professionals to the tenth annual ITP. From 26 July to 5 September colleagues from 13 countries took part in the programme, which aims to give participants a wide and varied an experience of skills and practice in the UK museum sector.

A global network
ITP participants comprise cultural heritage professionals in the early and middle stages of their career, or in positions of influence to develop colleagues back home. We welcome curators to conservators, managers to educators but our participants are all passionate about international collaboration and keen to share knowledge and develop skills. We work primarily with institutions and individuals in countries seeking museum training and in demonstrable need of additional support in building their museum sectors.

Looking to the future
This year we welcomed participants from four regions for the first time: Kurdistan, Malaysia, Tajikistan and Saudi Arabia. It is wonderful to see our global network continue to grow, and we look forward to having two more participants from Malaysia in 2016 and 2017 as part of the British Museum’s commitment to provide support and developmental opportunities while a new museum is built in Sarawak.
The summer programme is structured around group sessions and tailored departmental programmes to provide participants with a forum for cross-cultural dialogue and create an environment for exchanging skills and ideas.

In this interesting programme, I’m getting new experiences and ideas about the wide aspects of museology and cultural heritage every day.
Sharareh Farokhnia (Iran)

One of the many things the ITP gave me was confidence in bringing new ideas to the fore, and thinking outside the box. It allowed me to step beyond my designated role and engage with other museum functions. This not only gives me a better understanding of those other areas, but also a new perspective on education programming, my core responsibility.
Bilwa Kulkarni (India)

A mix of theory and practice
The summer programme is designed to share information through a mixture of presentations, hands-on workshops, panel discussions and working groups and covers a full range of museum activities, from exhibitions and security to conservation and staff engagement. Opportunities are also available to reflect on, discuss and debate current cultural heritage issues offering a mix of practical and theoretical learning.

Objects in focus
Each year participants are asked to plan and propose a temporary exhibition based on the physical space and concept of the Asahi Shimban Displays in Room 3 at the British Museum. Choosing a single object with their department mentors, participants take the lead in the fundamental aspects of planning an exhibition, including interpretation, display, marketing and curating. It is an opportunity for our participants to consolidate their skills and share their ideas and interests. It could also develop into a worthwhile and professionally rewarding legacy opportunity.

Continually evolving
Each year the programme develops to reflect the external evaluation, staff feedback, and recognition of current areas of concern in the heritage sector. In summer 2015, we added a presentation and tour of the Museum’s archives to the day on collections management. At the end of the programme the group divided into small working groups for specialist sessions on project management, exhibitions, international engagement, membership programmes and the development of the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre, all based on the participants’ role profiles and current projects. As a means to enable further interaction between the ITP team and the participants, new breakfast drop-in sessions each Wednesday allowed everyone to share concerns and discuss issues in an informal setting.

Forging professional links
An essential part of the summer programme is the time that participants spend with their departments. The selection is made based on the specific jobs of the participants, their research interests and the projects and programmes they are currently working on at their home institutions. In 2015 all the participants were based in departments where they had the opportunity to work with specialists relevant to their own cultures and skills, and to use the Museum’s libraries, archives and collection for their research. By splitting into smaller groups for tailored sessions participants enjoyed one-on-one or small group workshops allowing individual strengths to emerge and stronger professional bonds to be forged.
The British Museum's staff support the ITP through sharing knowledge, skills and experiences. Hosting sessions, giving tours, facilitating workshops and discussions all provide the participants with a full understanding of the Museum's policies, practices and procedures. The course contributors ensure that networking on a global scale is possible through additional, follow-up sessions to those who request them, and make themselves available as contact points for help, support and advice in the future. As the ITP is a 'skill-sharing' experience, British Museum staff also learn from our participants, exchanging information on collections, museum practice and possible future collaborations – as well as developing their own presentation, communication and networking skills. The ITP is also supported at the Museum by non-curatorial departments and volunteers who give their time, skills and energy to help deliver a fully rounded programme.

**Ancient Egypt and Sudan**

The Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan (AES) hosted five ITP participants in 2015 from Sudan and Egypt – curators from the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums of Sudan, the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities (museum team), the Egyptian Museum, and the National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation. Participants' time in AES started with visits to the collection in the first week, followed by more detailed discussions about interpretation and design during the second week, and preparations for the final Room 3 exhibition proposals in the last part of the programme. One-to-one and group sessions intensified upon returning from the partner institutions. By that time, the participants had roughly drafted their exhibition stories reflecting their own personal interests, experience and skills. All participants incorporated objects from their partner institutions as comparative material. They included a range of media into their exhibition presentations including posters and panels, leaflets and flyers, slideshows, and practical demonstrations showing their comprehensive knowledge of exhibition development and visitor engagement.

The 2015 participants were focused and immensely appreciated the programme. They had also clearly benefited from discussions with previous participants back in Egypt and Sudan as they were well prepared and had a good understanding of expectations. Following some of their predecessors, they expressed plans to organise workshops and discussion sessions after the ITP example.

We understand that mini ITP gatherings happen on a regular basis in Egypt and Sudan. Such local initiatives accelerate the impact of the ITP beyond the six weeks of the summer programme and the number of participants that physically attend. After 10 years, we notice the effects at the British Museum but also through extensive contacts with participants once back in their home country. As an example, one of the 2015 participants has now been employed locally in the British Museum's Egypt Documentation Project. In Egypt and Sudan, the ITP is regarded as a point of reference for museum curators and heritage managers. AES is keen to keep on contributing to the programme’s legacy.

Anna Garnett, Assistant Project Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

Ilona Regulski, Curator of Written Culture, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

**Asia**

The Department of Asia hosted ten ITP participants this year – two from India, one from Pakistan, one from Malaysia, and six from China. Our participants had expertise in curatorship, education, public affairs, digital media and conservation, and we planned our departmental programmes to cater for a large group with such varied interests. They were introduced to the day-to-day running of the department through curator-led tours of storage, permanent and temporary exhibition and gallery spaces, a session on Chinese painting conservation, and a discussion of developing and delivering a major exhibition (case study of the BP exhibition Ming: 50 years that changed China). They also visited collections at the V&A Museum, the Mary Rose in Portsmouth and the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers Museums in Oxford.

The participants also enjoyed regular group sessions with the Asia departmental representatives. These led to lively discussions on exhibition-related themes, including display and design, which helped the participants to shape their Room 3 exhibition proposals, and fed into their final presentations.

As in previous years, the presentations were interesting and wide ranging. Objects chosen represented the vast range of objects in the Museum, from ancient lacquer wares to modern prints, Cartier jewellery to Gandharan sculpture, a 19th-century hornbill sculpture from Sarawak to an Afghan war rug, different types of porcelain ware made for imperial use, the export market and the literati, as well as conservation practice.

It was a pleasure to work with the participants this year, and to build and develop relationships with them and their home institutions. We wish them the very best of luck, and look forward to continued collaboration with them in years to come.

Sushma Jansari, Project Curator: Asian Ethnographic Collections

Wenyuan Xin, Project Curator: China and South Asia
Coins and Medals

In 2015 the Department of Coins and Medals welcomed Sharareh Farokhnia as this year’s ITP participant. An archaeologist working in the Iranian Cultural Heritage Organisation, Sharareh had a good knowledge of pre-Islamic Iran and a keen interest in the continuation of traditions and survival of ancient motifs and symbolism.

As soon as Sharareh arrived we discussed the idea of a Room 3 exhibition and, after having looked at a range of objects, she chose a lion and sun medal from late 19th-century/early 20th-century Iran. She immediately started to research the motif, gathering a range of objects showing it and its application through the centuries. On her first free weekend she visited the V&A Museum where she found on display a magnificent plate and medal with the lion and the sun design. In the evenings she searched for relevant objects in Iranian museums, and also found a Persian poem which referred to the symbol.

Sharareh was the sixth Iranian ITP participant I have worked with. In the ten years since the creation of the ITP Coins and Medals has benefited greatly from hosting participants and being involved in various sessions on numismatic collections. It has been wonderful to work with fellow museum professionals from around the world, exchanging both knowledge and ideas.

It is amazing how quickly the six weeks seem to pass. A lot of preparation and planning on the departmental side occurs in the months prior, and yet as soon as the participants arrive, there is a heightened sense of buzzing activity, and all too soon the whole programme is over, and we start planning next year.

Vesta Curtis, Curator, Middle Eastern Coins

Greece and Rome

The Department of Greece and Rome (G&R) hosted three delegates in the 2015 ITP: two Turks, Eura Satici and Tugba Tanyeri-Erdemir, and one Greek, Esther Solomon. Eura Satici is Project and Event Coordinator at the Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC) and is the third delegate that we have welcomed from the same Istanbul research centre. Tugba is a lecturer at the Center for Science and Society Middle East Technical University and is director of the university museum. Esther is a university lecturer in Museum Studies at Ioannina. All three were very at home in G&R and contributed substantially to the department. In addition to the ITP, G&R provided a parallel programme of sessions, including visits to Buckingham Palace, the John Soane Museum and Kew Gardens.

For the Room 3 exhibition proposal Esra presented one of William Pars’ watercolour drawings from the first Buxian exhibition of the Society of Dilettanti (1764–1766). It shows the ruins of a building in Ephesus, and this she supported with other documentary material. Esther chose a fragment of Minoan wall painting, which she contextualised in a reconstruction of a bull leaping scene from the palace of Knossos by the Gilliérons—a father and son team of archaeological restorers who worked with Arthur Evans on the reconstruction of Knossos for over 30 years. Tugba chose a marble carved relief from the Nereid monument of Xanthos, showing the internationalism of the dynasty who was buried within the monument. These three highly committed participants are now firm friends of G&R and I am certain that we shall develop this friendship in creative ways in the future.

Ian Jenkins, Curator, Greece and Rome

Middle East

In 2015 the Department of the Middle East hosted participants from Kurdistan, Palestine, Armenia, Saudi Arabia and Tajikistan (our twelfth ITP participant from this country). The participants were actively and enthusiastically engaged in their departmental sessions and activities. Their various backgrounds and different outlooks and experiences often lead to quite interesting and animated, if not heated, discussions on various topics.

The departmental programme tried to cater for their diverse interests. The participants met curators who discussed with them in detail specific topics, projects and exhibitions. They were given insights into the breadth of the department’s collections through visits to storage areas, including Blythe House. The participants also seemed to enjoy the hands-on and practical sessions, particularly the ones on postcards and photographs, manuscript illumination, and gallery talks.

As in previous years, perhaps the most stressful, yet significant, experience was the Room 3 project. The participants approached their projects from different perspectives based on their personal interests and cultural backgrounds. They all enjoyed their discussions with the visiting audience and stated that they felt a huge sense of pride in the public presentation of their projects.

Hosting a large group of participants always presents a number of challenges, including issues of allocating computer and desk space. We look forward to our further involvement in the ITP, to continued constructive relations with our colleagues in different institutions in the Middle East and Central Asia, and to many more interesting and animated discussions with future participants.

Zeina Klink-Hoppe, Project Curator, Modern Middle East

Photography and Imaging

The Department has supported the ITP since its first year. Initially we were asked to record as many of the sessions as possible but after a few years I was asked to give a presentation on how our team supports the Museum’s public programmes. We have since expanded the number of sessions to include small object photography, location work, a potted history of photography here at the British Museum, and tours of our new studios in the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre.

All of the photographers get to work with participants and the variety of challenges this provides us with is always welcome. Everybody takes photographs, and this means we always have a lot of questions to answer from the curious participants. Their enthusiasm for what we all do here at the Museum is both infectious and encouraging. We look forward to meeting each year’s new participants and having the chance to document their experience of the sessions and day trips. It is an outstanding programme and we are proud to be able to help record it for posterity.

John Williams, Chief Photographer, Photography and Imagining
Volunteers

Each year I travel from the USA to volunteer for the ITP because it gives young professionals access to practices and experiences which they can build upon as their careers develop. I enjoy being involved because it creates a grander view of heritage work and a better understanding of a participant’s place in it. In addition, it is a peace-building endeavour — people come together, exchange ideas and afterwards continue to communicate and help each other with support, suggestions and advice.

Before the summer programme starts, my main task is designing and editing the annual course book and slideshows. Once the programme begins, I assist as needed in any capacity, including troubleshooting, accompanying participants on their placements, and filling in where needed.

I always tell participants that nothing that they do in life is wasted and that the ITP improves their problem-solving skills. They become more valuable to their own organisations, and also deepen their own experience every day of their lives. This, to me, is the ultimate reward of having participated in the ITP.

Topy Fiske, ITP Volunteer

Topy Fiske with ITP 2015 participants.
An essential part of the programme is engaging with institutions around the UK who provide the participants with a unique perspective on museums, gallery and site management and practice. Their flexibility and proactive approach to their programmes enables them to target participants’ specific areas of interest and give as wide an experience of UK museums as possible. Participants spent ten days experiencing different approaches to museum practice at the following UK partner museums.

Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford
The Ashmolean has been a UK Partner for the last three years, and the opportunities it has provided have been hugely rewarding. As the programme celebrated its tenth anniversary we welcomed Fatima Ali Abbas Mohamed from the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Amal Ayia, from the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums, Sudan, and Saad Amira from the Palestinian Museum, Palestine.

Following a Museum tour by our Director, they acquired their Bodleian Library reader’s cards which gave them access to the Sackler Library’s excellent resources for ancient Egypt, Sudan and the Near East. Much of our discussions focused on the challenges faced in managing storage and access to the half a million antiquities in the Ashmolean. There were visits to the stores and discussions with the Collections Manager, tours of the Conservation Studio and talks by Registrars. The participants saw the Education team in action and met families from Oxfordshire’s Sudanese community, making and decorating clay pots. They also visited the Natural History Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum and Christ Church College’s Picture Gallery.

We learnt a great deal from our colleagues and enjoyed discussing the practical challenges of curation, and the role of a modern museum – in the UK and in their home countries. We look forward to hosting the next ITP participants in 2016.

Paul Collins, Jaleh Hearn Curator for Ancient Near East
Liam McNamara, Assistant Keeper for Ancient Egypt and Sudan

Birmingham Museums Trust
This year we hosted trainees from China, Iran, Kurdistan and Saudi Arabia. They were based at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery but their programme also involved visiting other sites managed by the Trust including Aston Hall, Thinktank Science Museum and the city’s off-site store – the Museum Collections Centre.

As in previous years, the programme included presentations, gallery tours and hands-on sessions delivered by colleagues working in different roles. The ITP participants learnt about fundraising and exhibition design, met conservators working on the Staffordshire Hoard and had a tour of the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, a converted jewellery factory.

Despite their busy schedule, the trainees made the most of their free time by including a visit to Shakespeare’s Birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Castle, both offering a contrast to Birmingham’s urban environment.

Birmingham Museums Trust has been hosting trainees since 2009 and we find it hugely beneficial to take part in the ITP in order to share skills, knowledge and approaches. The range of museum professionals we are able to interact with is immense and has helped us to make international contacts and friendships. We look forward to meeting trainees in the forthcoming years.

Adam Jaffer, Curator of World Cultures

Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives
This year we welcomed three participants – Bihca Kulkarni, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu (CSMVS) Mumbai, India, Wesam Mohamed Abdel-El-Alim, Ministry for Antiquities, Egypt, and Olivia Zheng Xuan, National Museum of China.

On day one they were thrown into a meeting with the strategic team leaders – it was then easier for staff to talk about their work. We try to tailor meetings to suit participants’ specific interests, rather than arranging meetings with every team, as we did in the past. All our colleagues contribute – talking to participants, taking shadows for a day or helping with arrangements.

We are still finding out how best to run the partner placements, and change the programme every year, partly to reflect the participants’ main interests and partly to reflect who is available from the staff here. We are thinking of cutting down on the number of sessions to give the participants more time to relax and work as needed – we realised that the day job doesn’t stop for six weeks in the UK.

Since 2010 we have had participants from Sudan, China, Egypt, Palestine, India, Turkey, Nigeria and Tanzania – places where Bristol would struggle to make connections. Being part of the ITP helps to connect BMAG internationally and build a network of colleagues and friends. It helps us to increase our personal cultural understanding, and the ITP participants reflect our service back to us from a different cultural perspective.

Sue Giles, Senior Curator World Cultures
Kate Newnham, Senior Curator Visual Art

The Collection – Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire
This year we welcomed three participants – Dayang Morzanah Awg Haddy from Malaysia, Luis Shauzhang from China and Omima Abdelrahman from Sudan. We also welcomed back Shambo Ghosh (ITP 2012) and Heba Abdelbashir, a PhD student at Middle Tennessee State University, researching the ITP’s impact on museums in Egypt.

During their stay we discussed a wide range of museum, archaeological and cultural heritage management issues here at the museum and with our partners. It is always stimulating to see how other countries approach such issues, and to debate (and sometimes justify) the way we do things here. It was a wonderful reminder that museums and heritage sites face the same challenges and pressures across the globe, and by working together we are in a much stronger position.

The participants explored Lincoln, from Roman remains to the famous Cathedral and Castle. They also visited local National Trust property Belton House, which was hosting a First World War re-enactment. During their time at The Collection, the participants spent much of their time examining our collections and exhibition processes and practices. We were well supported by colleagues – participants spent time with staff in our education and preservation teams. This year’s programme was delivered in partnership with Nottingham University Museum, who hosted the participants for two days. The programmes complemented each other by showing differing types of museum governance, access to collections and management procedures.

We have once again greatly enjoyed our involvement with the International Training Programme this year and have taken a great deal of value from it. We look forward to our continued involvement in the future.

Antony Lee, Collections Access Officer (archaeology)
Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM)

For 2015, TWAM had the pleasure of hosting Esra Satici (Turkey), Jomi Davlatov (Tajikistan), and Chenchen Hou (China). Their first day was spent at Discovery Museum, including an induction, an overview of TWAM’s structure, exhibitions and projects from Bill Griffiths, Senior Manager and Head of TWAM Programmes, and a talk and tour from Venue Manager Carolyn Ball.

Curatorial Assistant Rob Murray showed them around the galleries of the Great North Museum: Hancock, and they saw the Spineless exhibition. Their next visit was to Segedunum Roman Fort and Bath House where Virginia Wilkinson, Learning Officer, gave a tour and talk on the site, focusing on the venue’s learning programmes. A fun and interactive highlight of the ten days was the conservation activity, where participants were encouraged to have a go at colour matching paintings and ‘reconstructing’ objects – this year it was a ceramic cat!

The TWAM programme is packed with tours, talks and visits, so a well-earned day off is needed. This year we visited Alnwick Castle and Garden in Northumberland. Typically, the north-east weather kept us guessing when the sun might come out, fortunately it did later in the day, providing a lovely picture opportunity for Jomi and Chenchen in front of the water cascade in Alnwick Garden.

TWAM have been involved with the ITP since 2007. We continue to take part because we value the opportunity to meet with colleagues from around the world in a way that allows us to get to know them and to compare and contrast our practices so mutually enhancing our experience. It also allows us to think about our own practice and to gain a wider perspective on the sector. We continue to be involved with the ITP because we enjoy it!

Jackie Bland, Training Services Officer

Manchester Museum, Manchester Art Gallery and Whitworth Art Gallery

Manchester hosted four participants in 2015, from Greece, Egypt, Pakistan and China. We enjoyed sessions around the Museum, in areas including Marketing and Development, and with our Learning team and Archery curator. There was a behind-the-scenes chance to see textile collections at the Whitworth – the newly announced ‘Museum of the Year’. Activities at Manchester Art Gallery covered a range of topics, focusing on fine and contemporary art. As always, there was an opportunity for an informal chat with staff over tea and cake. The participants especially enjoyed their time in Manchester, the UK’s ‘Northern Powerhouse’ as a contrast and complement to London-based activities. Particular praise was expressed for the standard of participants’ accommodation in Central Manchester! The spirit of collaboration was typified when Mohamed Mokhtar from Egypt and I – having previously met in Cairo – proposed some practical ways in which Manchester Museum might support displays on crafts in the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization.

Campbell Price, Curator of Egypt and Sudan, Manchester Museum

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Glasgow Museums

This year Glasgow Museums hosted four ITP participants – Davit Poghosyan from Armenia, Vasundhra Sangwan from India, Tugba Tanery Erdemir from Turkey and Dai Xuejing from China. The programme at Glasgow was an eye-opening experience for all involved, with participants engaging in a wide range of experiences within the city’s varied museums and archives.

The ten days began with an introduction to Glasgow Museums and included a tour and discussion of the ongoing redevelopment of Kelvingrove Museum & Art Gallery. Sessions focused particularly on outreach and engagement, audiences and education – areas of special interest to the participants. The diverse backgrounds of the ITP group meant that visits to the world cultures, Chinese and Islamic collections were greatly appreciated.

This is the eighth ITP Glasgow Museums have been involved with and we are very excited to work with new international colleagues in the coming years.

Martin Bellamy, Research & Curatorial Manager, Glasgow Museums

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Campbell Price, Curator of Egypt and Sudan, Manchester Museum
The ITP aims to give its participants as many skill-sharing and networking opportunities as possible and working with our programme partners helps the Museum deliver that. Working with other museums and institutions provides us the tools to ensure that the programme has many different voices and can cover current and contemporary cultural and heritage issues outside our usual sphere of expertise.

South London to the south coast
In 2015 participants spent a day at the Horniman Museum and Gardens, with tours of the museum’s galleries followed by smaller group sessions including outreach and education, exhibitions and conservation. They also visited The Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove for a day exploring their current projects, programmes, exhibitions and galleries. Cultural heritage and peace building with Jasper Chalcraft of the University of Leicester, explored present situations where cultural heritage is at risk due to social and political upheaval. This session focused on various case studies which prompted participants to share regional examples of how cultural heritage is facing threats in different contexts.

New partnerships
2015 marked the first involvement of English Heritage with the ITP, a welcome addition to the summer programme. This created a platform to discuss how heritage sites and buildings are managed in the UK. It also helped to introduce the issues around Stonehenge before the participants’ visit to this iconic World Heritage site. Another first for the ITP was a full-day session at the Russell Cotes Art Gallery and Museum in Bournemouth, which allowed participants to see the travelling exhibition From temple to home: celebrating Ganesha—conceptualised by Manisha Nene (India, ITP 2011). Staff also helped participants learn more about the collections, both front and back of house. The participants attended a reception at Wellcome Collection, where they met colleagues from the Wellcome Trust to learn about their international and national projects, and to take part in engaging and interactive hands-on workshops. As well as offering participants additional experiences and networks, these new programme partnerships are sowing the seeds for the ITP’s future development.
A continuing dialogue

The Mumbai workshop made our conviction stronger that our museums should work closely and increase the scope for cultural interaction. We hope this has opened that opportunity. It will be a pleasure to continue this relationship ahead and work on a constructive project.

Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Director, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya

With so many alumni of previous ITPs gathered together in Mumbai, there was an unprecedented energy of friendly collaboration which enabled curators from such different countries and cultures to work creatively together. It was a moment that perfectly demonstrated exactly what the British Museum... can do

Neil MacGregor, former Director, British Museum

Overview

One of the most important achievements of the ITP is to establish close relationships between professionals from all over the world who specialize in a variety of areas within the field of cultural heritage. Continuing to work and talk with our alumni is essential to maintaining the network of colleagues the summer programme works to foster and in turn this network helps to support the Museum’s international projects. Some of the ongoing relationships and projects the ITP alumni are working on are explained below.

Creating museums of world stories: Mumbai workshop marking ten years of the ITP

To mark ten years of the ITP, the British Museum, in collaboration with the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) Museum in India, devised and delivered a workshop hosted by CSMVS in Mumbai entitled Creating museums of world stories. Supported by the Getty Foundation, the key aim was to provide an opportunity for global museum and heritage professionals to brainstorm and debate proposals to develop new forms of “encyclopaedic” displays or museums that might be created beyond Europe and North America. These museums, displays or temporary exhibitions would present familiar local and national histories in the context of global stories. The participation of the ITP and the British Museum’s Leadership Training Programme (LTP) colleagues and the international directors was intended to move this debate beyond the museums of Europe and North America. The workshop also provided an opportunity for past ITP participants to reconnect with colleagues and to introduce them to participants from across the ten annual summer programmes (2006–2015). It was also a forum for networking with museum and heritage professionals from around India and the rest of the world.

Through an open application process the British Museum was able to bring 45 past ITP participants from 14 countries to Mumbai. Additional delegates included British Museum staff and Trustees alongside representatives from UK museums who partner with the ITP. The workshop also linked the ITP to the LTP, a collaborative project with the Ministry of Culture in India and the National Culture Fund, delivered in 2012–2014 and designed to support the development of museum leaders to help facilitate change in the Indian museum sector. Invitations were also extended to a group of museum directors from the Middle East, Asia and Africa in order to provide input and a response to the delegates’ feedback and project outlines.
PAST PARTICIPANT FACILITATOR 2015

I was initially a bit hesitant to apply for the position of past participant facilitator, as I am not directly associated with any museum. As a project coordinator for a cultural heritage management organisation called ‘Sahapedia’, which creates online resources on Indian history, culture and arts, I also work on documentation, archiving, publications and exhibitions, and have recently coordinated scholars for a multi-volume documentation project on India’s premier building, Rashtrapati Bhavan (House of the President). The ITP allowed me to acquire skills which helped me start a career as an independent curator/researcher.

The ITP past participant initiative gave me an opportunity to work behind the scenes before, during and after the summer programme. It offered me management experience in administration, communication, finance and logistics, and I found that different methods and approaches were needed to adapt and focus on the needs of our main stakeholders, the participants. Their diverse interests, experience and skills affect the programme’s execution, which gives the flexibility of learning about both personal and professional interests. In my opinion, this most essential part of this position is to observe, analyse and act accordingly.

This position can be encapsulated in three stages: organising, managing and performing. Being a bridge between the ITP team and the participants demands an attentive mind for listening to difficulties, explaining causes and finding solutions. This is an exchange process in which the past participant gets involved with the team and their intentions.

I was also able to brush up my knowledge on recent developments in museology. The ITP provided me the chance to refresh my own ideas and perceptions. The summer programme blends formal and informal learning processes, accompanied with individual projects, responsibilities, which is a sure path to success. After each year, there is a need to assess the successes and challenges faced during the programme. Such an evaluation gives us the opportunity to develop skills in analysing critical situations, policy-making and to use them for the future.

As a project coordinator these skills are the most tangible aspects of this new role I have been offered. I have been fortunate to be part of a team which caters to diverse audiences and stakeholders. My personal achievement was to observe the programme intensively from its beginning to its end, and to work towards its further development for the future.
British Museum staff breakfast
Each year the ITP team hosts a breakfast and presentation for British Museum staff sharing important updates and news. This year, three past participants – Njeri Gachihi, National Museums of Kenya (ITP 2010), Nourah Sammar, Birzeit University, Palestine (ITP 2009), and Nelson Abiti, Uganda National Museum/University of East Anglia (ITP 2013) – were invited to London to speak about their own personal experiences, and how the ITP has affected their institutions and countries. The breakfast presentation was followed by a week-long programme of sessions providing further insight into museum practices and issues. This allowed the past participants to reflect on the ITP’s past, and share ideas about its future. Full reports by Njeri, Nourah and Nelson are available on the British Museum website.

Director’s dinner
In 2015 the Museum’s annual Director’s dinner celebrated the success of the ITP and invited the Museum’s Patrons and supporters to help secure its future. The Museum was delighted to invite back Nourah Sammar (Palestine, ITP 2009) and Nelson Abiti (Uganda, ITP 2013) to attend the dinner as honoured guests, and speak about their experiences on the ITP and the impacts on their professional and personal development. The evening was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our participants and the ITP.

Amara West
Shadia Abdu Rabo, our colleague from the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums, Sudan, works as an inspector and archaeologist for the Amara West Project, directed by Neal Spencer, Keeper of Ancient Egypt and Sudan, British Museum. Shadia was also a participant in the first ITP in 2006, and since then has become an integral member of the Amara West team, and a strong ITP advocate. As part of her research, Shadia studies the clay and stone “fishing weights” found across the site. We were delighted to welcome Shadia back to the Museum for a research visit in June 2015 to study the “fishing weights” excavated by the Egypt Exploration Society from Amara West during the 1930s and 1940s. During her time at the Museum, Shadia recorded and illustrated these objects, applying documentation skills acquired in the field and from her work at the Sudan National Museum. This will go a long way towards improving the Museum’s records of the objects, and our understanding of their purpose in the wider context of an ancient Egyptian settlement in modern northern Sudan. Her time on the ITP laid the foundations for Shadia to further pursue a career within the fields of museums, archaeology and scientific research, the results of which were a pleasure to witness during her time in London as a visiting researcher.

Anna Garnett, Assistant Project Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

Dresden Research Fellowships 2015
Our relationship with the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (SKD) is a successful example of international collaboration and the commitment to maintaining our legacy. The SKD shares a common goal with the British Museum: to encourage intercultural dialogue, long-term skill sharing and development. In 2015 the SKD offered two further research posts in one of its museums to past participants of the ITP. The fellowships, lasting between six weeks and three months, give fellows the opportunity to join the team on one of SKD’s international research projects and to further their knowledge, skills and international connections. It also offers SKD colleagues new, global perspectives on their collections and helps them to expand their own networks. Two participants from Greece and Palestine were selected, through an open application process, for the Dresden Fellowships 2015: Constantinos Vasiliadis, Senior Conservator – Coordinator of the Sculptures Conservation Laboratory, Acropolis Museum, Athens (Greece, ITP 2014), and Ayman Al-Shweiki, Collections Curator at Birzeit University Museum (Palestine, ITP 2012).

Constantinos’ final project Conservation of a Standing Male Sculpture (Athlete) focused on the examination and cleaning of a previously restored sculpture of an athlete in the SKD’s collection, while Ayman’s project Damascus Room – Daily life in 19th century Syria and Palestine (Levant/Bilad al-Sham) provided invaluable research for the SKD’s forthcoming reconstruction of a Damascene Tea Room.

SKD have offered two more research fellowships for ITP alumni in 2016, and we are very much looking forward to continuing this invaluable partnership in the future.
Looking ahead

The great thing about this programme, which is very different from other programmes I participated in before, is that we learned a lot in our specialty, we built friendships with other participants and also we had fun. I can tell that on the final day at the supporters’ reception we were filled with good feelings when people came to share their opinions about our projects – we forgot that we were tired and we only remembered the lovely words people said to us when they saw our work.

Mohamed Mohamed Mokhtar (Egypt)

I got the opportunity to know about different museums around the world. All participants gave me different new theories about museums. It seems I visited all of those museums in one day.

Bahra Salih Abdulrahman (Kurdistan)

External evaluation

Our external evaluations have become an integral part of developing and improving the summer programme year on year. For 2015 the surveys were digitised, allowing our course contributors, departmental representatives, UK partner representatives and participants to give detailed and constructive feedback online. Our evaluation methods are continually adapted and fine-tuned to maintain a reactive and adaptive programme.

As in previous years, there was a strong engagement with practical and hands-on sessions and theoretical discussions. There has also been increased desire to take part in further group work on current issues, such as cultural heritage and peace-building, project risk management, and to perhaps include an entire day on similar urgent topics. The complete external evaluation is now available at britishmuseum.org/itp

Past participant facilitators

Shambwadiya ‘Shambo’ Ghosh, our 2015 ITP past participant facilitator, is our third participant to take on the challenging and invaluable role of assisting the ITP team. Taking feedback from Shambo, we have continued to adapt and refine the facilitator role, our expectations and application processes so that participants have a clearer idea of their responsibilities and how they can benefit.

ITP Voices

2015 saw the pilot ITP Voices project developed by Shambo Ghosh, with group interviews where participants shared their ideas on cultural heritage, ambitions for their home institutions and countries, and current issues affecting their work. A full summary report and clips from the interviews will be available at britishmuseum.org/itp and our ITP blog at the end of this year. We will continue with the ITP Voices project in future programmes, integrating it with our past participant facilitator role.

Digital engagement

The ITP team is constantly looking for new ways to keep our global network talking and working together. Working from our own communications strategy, and taking into consideration the British Museum’s new digital strategy, we have been developing new online content for later in 2016.

To connect with our international network, we have launched a pilot Twitter account and will be collaborating with the Marketing team to develop this audience.

As part of the Museum’s partnership with Google, we hope to explore and utilise the Google Cultural Institute, an online platform allowing institutions to create their own virtual galleries and exhibits. In 2016 we will be developing an online digital exhibit promoting the work of the ITP and its participants. This space may also be used to showcase participants’ exhibition proposal projects, or to demonstrate the outputs of ITP collaborations and projects.
ITP Newsletter – issue 3

The ITP Newsletter allows us to share experiences and news with articles from our participants, partners and departmental representatives. For our tenth anniversary year we will be developing a commemorative ITP newsletter, with contributions from across our global network on collections in focus, celebrations, ten years of the ITP and forthcoming anniversaries around the museum world.

A generous pledge

In 2015 the Marie-Louise von Motesiczy Charitable Trust generously pledged a challenge fund of up to £500,000 for every pound the Museum could raise to support the continued development and delivery of the ITP. The gift was made in honour of the directorship of Neil MacGregor (2002–2015) and recognised the huge success of the programme in its tenth year. The Museum reached this ambitious goal through successful appeals to British Museum Members and Patrons, alongside additional gifts from the American Friends of the British Museum as well as legacies and renewed grants from foundations. The Marie-Louise von Motesiczy Charitable Trust will continue to support five participants each year for the next five years. The Trust was also keen to support further engagement and help the Museum to develop a wide range of projects and programmes for ITP alumni.

This generous support from the Marie-Louise von Motesiczy Charitable Trust and the match-funders will make a positive and long-lasting impact on ITP participants, partners, and the entire global network.
The British Museum allows for an understanding of the complex relationships between the world’s societies like no other institution, and the ITP plays a leading role in helping the Museum achieve this. The ITP is entirely dependent on external funding, and each year the Museum works to secure support for running costs and individual placements. All placement costs are fully covered so that involvement is not limited by financial restrictions of participants or their institutions. The ITP will continue to build on the successes and achievements of the past ten years but will only thrive with continued support. Contributing to the ITP provides an opportunity to be a part of the global initiative and will help secure its future. The Museum welcomes all levels of support towards the costs of hosting participants.

Tadas Khazanavicius,
Head of International Philanthropy,
British Museum
Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the following institutions for their invaluable contributions
Horniman Museum and Gardens
Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove
Petrie Museum
Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, Bournemouth
The Wellcome Collection
University of Leicester
English Heritage

Departmental mentors
Ben Alsop, Vesta Curtis, Anna Garnett, Alexandra Green, Jessica Harrison-Hall, Sushama Janari, Ian Jenkins, Zeina Klink-Hoppe, Ilona Regalaki, Yufika Sharma, Nigel Talis

Other British Museum staff

Programme support
Kasuma Barnett, Frances Carey, Hisham Eliehly, Topp Feke, Richard Wolf, Constance Lutz and all the staff at Schafer House, University College London

Visa assistance
Brian Brivati, Helen Davies, David Fairbank, Simon Hayes, Ghassan Jawad, Eileen Laca, Janice Moore, David O’Toole, Rinnie Paterson, Simon Phillips, Melinda Prakash, Rania Sa’adeh, Lai-Ming Sui, Mike Vosey, Chris Waite, Alison Wood

A Partnership UK project
Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford
Birmingham Museums Trust
Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives
The Collection – Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire, and University of Nottingham Museum
Glasgow Museums
Manchester Museum, Manchester Art Gallery and Whitworth Art Gallery
Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums

UK Partners
Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford
Diane Bergman, Shaileen Bhandare, Nicola Bird, Dave Bone
Bosch-Puche, Anha Bartenshaw-Jane Beadle, Elizabeth Ferring
Christina Gernon, Maya Herbolzheimer, Helen Hovey, Francesca Leoni, Hannah Masslow, Mark Norman, Paul Roberts, Alexander Sturgis, Cat Waris, Helen Wilton-Godberfode, Helen Ward

Birmingham Museums Trust
Adam Jaffer

Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives
Ray Barnett, Sue Giles, Kate Newham

The Collection – Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire
Dawn Heywood, Antony Lee, Andrea Martin

Glasgow Museums
Martin Bellamy

Manchester Museum, Manchester Art Gallery
Ronan Brindley, Campbell Price, Stephen Welsh

Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums
Carolyn Ball, Jackie Bland, Bill Griffiths, Rob Murray, Virginia Wilkinson

Programme Partners
English Heritage
Kate Davies

Horniman Museum & Gardens
Margaret Bailey, Tim Corum, Jamie Craggs, Julia Gresen, Joanne Hutton, Victoria Flemington, Robert Storrie, Paula Thomas, Janet Viney and Kirsten Walker

Petrie Museum
Alice Stevenson

Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove
Jody East and Sarah Posey

Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum
Elissa Kelley, Sarah Newman and Duncan Walker

University of Leicester
Jasper Chalerafi

Wellcome Collection
Ken Arnold, James Peto and Rachel Sturgis
Appendices

Speaking with a wide variety of people, from the Museum itself as well as the ITP participants from different places, backgrounds, experiences and issues, also instilled a great sense of belonging, community and confidence. It was heartening to realise that, at the end of the day, despite these differences, we were all working towards a similar and larger goal, that our visions were in fact essentially the same.

Zarmeene Shah (Pakistan)

I have benefited tremendously from this programme. It has brought me inspiring thoughts, wide-ranging knowledge and practical skills.

Huan Zhang (China)

Appendix 1

Project weekend

The remit
The aim of the project weekend was for the participants to visit another London-based museum and to use their experiences of the ITP and as a heritage professional to assess it. They travelled in groups to one of seven museums and considered the following questions:

• What do you think of the museum’s website? Is it easy to use, does it answer all your questions, what else would you add or change?
• Does the museum appeal to a particular audience (e.g. international tourists, UK visitors, the local community, adults, children or students) and, if so, how?
• What factors influence the choice of objects, the way they are displayed, and the levels of information provided on panels and labels?
• If there are temporary exhibitions, is it obvious why they were chosen?
• What do you think of the overall visitor experience (activities, events, interactivity, tours, cafes, cloakrooms, facilities, and the helpfulness of staff)?
• If you could make two changes to the museum you visited – a quick win (which required little or no budget) and one big change (with an unlimited budget) – what would they be and why?
• Your group will have a varied background of skills, experiences and cultures. Did you all agree on your assessment? If not, why not, and did your background determine that?

They presented their findings in five-minute presentations to the whole group.

Museum of London
Liu Shuzheng, Dayang Morzanah Awang Haddy, Omima Abil Rahman Mohammed

William Morris Gallery
Vasundhra Sangwan, Xuejing Dai, Davit Poghosyan, Tugba Tanyeri Erdemir

Imperial War Museum
Jomi Davlatov, Chenshen Hou, Ebru Ersa Satici

London Transport Museum
Sharareh Farokhnia, Buhra Saleh Abdulrahman, Randah Al-Arifi, Huan Zhang

Design Museum
Mohamed Mokhtar, Zarmeene Shah, Li Lan, Esther Solomon

National Maritime Museum
Bhavya Kulkarni, Wesam Mohamed Abul-El-Alim, Olivia Zheng Xuan

The Foundling Museum
Fatma Ali Abbas Mohamed, Amal Aria Allia Gaber, Saad Amira
Appendix 2

The participants, their UK partners and sponsors

Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford
Fatima Ali Abbas Mohamed, Curator (Papyri and Coins), Egyptian Museum, Ministry of Antiquities, Egypt
Supported by the Sfumato Foundation
Amal Atiya Alla Gaber, Curator, National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums, Sudan
Supported by Lady Keswick
Saad Amira, Research Assistant, Palestinian Museum, Palestine
Supported by the Aall Foundation

Birmingham Museums Trust
Sharareh Farokhnia, Cultural Heritage Organisation, National Museum of Iran
Supported by the Aljan Trust
Bulira Salih Moharrakah, Archaeologist, Slemani Museum, Kurdistan
Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust Fellow
Ahmad Al Amri, National Museum of Saudi Arabia
Supported by the Barakat Trust
Huan Zhang, Guangdong Museum, China
Supported by the Sino-British Fellowship Trust and an anonymous gift

Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives
Bhavya Kulkarni, Education Officer, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu (CSMVS), Mumbai, India
Supported by Steven Lazenby and Sujoy Lodayker
Wesam Mohamed Abd-El-Alim, Ministry for Antiquities, Egypt
Supported by the John S Cohen Foundation
Olivia Zheng Xuan, Assistant Research Fellow, Social Education and Publicity Department, National Museum of China
Supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (UK)

The Collection – Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire
Lin Shuizheng, Assistant Research Fellow, Collection Department II, National Museum of China
Supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (UK)
Dayang Morzanah Awang Haddy, Sarawak State Museum, Malaysia
Supported by the Sarawak Museum
Omima Abd el-Rahman Mohammed, Curator, National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums, Sudan
Supported by the Aall Foundation

Glasgow Museums
Vasundhara Sangwan, Outreach Officer, National Museum New Delhi, India
Supported by the Charles Wallace India Trust
Xuejing Dai, Shandong Museum, China
Supported by the Sino-British Fellowship Trust and an anonymous gift
David Poghossian, Lecturer and Researcher, Armenian State Pedagogical University and Service for the Protection of Historical Environment and Cultural Museum-Reserves, Armenia
The Dresden Fellow
Tugba Tuner Erdemir, Deputy Director of the Centre for Science and Society, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey
Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust Fellow

Manchester Museum, Manchester Art Gallery and Whitworth Art Gallery
Mohamed Mokhtar, Temporary Exhibitions Coordinator, National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, Ministry of Antiquities
Supported by the Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust, the British Council and the Rangoonwala Foundation
Zarmeene Shah, independent art curator and critic, Pakistan
Supported by the Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust, the British Council and the Rangoonwala Foundation
Li Lan, Painting and Calligraphy Department, Shanghai Museum, China
Supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (UK)
Esther Solomon, Lecturer, Museology, the University of Ioannina, Greece
Supported by the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust Fellow

Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums
Joni Davlatov, Specialist, Excursions and public engagement Department, National Museum of Tajikistan
Chencheng Hou, Digital/ Web Department, Palace Museum, Beijing, China
Supported by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (UK)
Ebru Eser Satici, Projects and Events Specialist, Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilisations (RCAC), Istanbul, Turkey
Supported by the Aall Foundation
Appendix 3
Exhibitions proposal

The remit
Each participant was asked to plan and propose a temporary exhibition based on the physical space and concept of the Asahi Shimbun Displays in Room 3 at the British Museum. They were asked to:

• work with their departmental mentors to choose a single object for their exhibition
• learn more about the fundamental aspects of planning a major exhibition, including interpretation, display, marketing and curating
• use a combination of their existing museum experience, their own culture, and the skills learnt during the programme, and share their ideas and interests
• consider not just their object displays, concepts and interpretation, but also their audiences, marketing, merchandising and events
• present their proposals to Museum staff, partners and ITP sponsors at an evening reception
• view and discuss their fellow participants presentations with a view to possible future collaborations

Exhibition titles

Frog conversation through the ages
Davit Poghosyan

Door guards: Chinese traditional New Year paintings
Li Lan

Daily life in the Forbidden City: fangaeai bowl with peonies
Chenchen Hou

Imperial beauty: exotic hang from 18th-century Jingdezhen, China
Olivia Zheng Xuan

Involved by literati: changes of the Yixing teapot
Liu Shuzheng

The light matters: caring for ancient paintings
Huan Zhang

Craftsmanship in ancient China: lacquer wine cup cradled in Han Empire
Xuejing Dai

Shaping lives: mud brick craft in ancient Egypt
Mohamed Mokhtar

Wrestling in ancient Egypt
Fatma Ali Abbas

280 days of excuses: work excused absence in ancient Egypt
Wesam Mohamed Abd-El-Amin

The Gillierons at Knossos: visions of painted Minoan Crete
Esther Solomon

Carrier and the Maharajas: a unique fusion of east and west
Vasundhara Sangwan

Sakyamuni Buddha: the icon of Gandhara
Bilwa Kalikarni

The Iranian lion and sun: a symbol of identity and eternity
Sharareh Farokhnia

Small objects narrating a great story: cylinder seal from Mesopotamia
Bahra Salih Abdulrahman

Kenyalang: the wooden hornbill
Dayang Mozanah Awang Haddy

Culture and conflict: the woven narrative of the Afghan War rug
Zarmeen Shah

Palestinian children are stronger than occupation
Saad Amira

The Babylonian Map of the World
Abdulaziz Al Amri

The potters’ craft: handmade ceramics from ancient Sudan
Amal Atia Ali Gaber, Omima Abd el- Rahman Mohammed

Golden chariot: the Oxus Treasure
Jomi Davlatov

Between east and west: mobility, interaction and authority in the ancient world
Tugba Tanyeri Erdemir

The projects and images from the evening are available on the ITP blog at bmtrainingprog.wordpress.com
Appendix 4
Celebrating Ganesha spotlight tour – future venues

Oxford Museum
26 September 2015 – 12 January 2016

Cartwright Hall, Bradford
16 January – 15 May 2016

The Bowes, Durham
21 May – 18 September 2016

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
24 September – December 2016

The Horniman Museum, London
January – April 2017

Brent Museum, London
April – July 2017