

## **Siham Alsadiq Abdu Elsalam: Final Report British Museum's International Training Programme**

Due to the international circumstances of COVID 19, the programme was divided into two parts, the first part started in August 2021 and it ended in October of the same year. This was online learning including remote lectures from the British Museum, accessed via the internet by the 16 participants who participated in the ITP from Sudan, Bhutan, North Macedonia, Cambodia, Palestine, Tajikistan, Chile (Rapa Nui), Iran, Nigeria, Greece, Turkey, India, Ghana and Uzbekistan, India, and Greece. We all became acquainted via the e-Learning before our arrival to the U.K.

The online part of this programme was difficult due to the location of the National Museum in Sudan where I accessed the internet, which is far away from my own town, in addition, the political situation deteriorated which resulted in instability of everything, including the internet service.

Regarding the second part of the programme at the British Museum, which started on 12th March and ended on 9th April 2022, we were warmly welcomed and accommodated in a comfortable hotel adjacent to the Museum - for me, this is my dream come true - visiting the U.K and the British Museum.

The programme was comprehensive and covered all the areas that we needed, the usage of visual and audio aids motivated us and made us open minded. Moreover, we prepared ourselves to deal with people of different cultures and ages.

We visited all parts of the British Museum, we focused (me and my colleague Nosiba) on Sudanese and Egyptian objects. We visited stores and concentrated on the methods of preserving items, mostly from humidity. It is worth mentioning that I noticed there are significant community and schools programmes at the British museum.



I had amazing journeys to different museums with my colleague from Cambodia in Newcastle, it is a really nice city. We appreciated those in charge at the museum who organized an enjoyable city tour for a week from 27th March to 2nd April 2022. We visited the university and the museum in Newcastle which gave me a flashback to the very beginning of my school days when we learned about Thomas Edison, the inventor of electric lamp, and George Stephenson, inventor of the locomotive; both of them are from Newcastle.



At the end of the journey in Newcastle we were invited to a delicious supper made by local community chefs. During the programme, we also visited Stonehenge and Oxford, I can't describe my feelings regarding these fantastic places. I was really surprised during our touring of London, especially museums in which we observed high levels of technology being used. The displays and lighting were very sophisticated, moreover the visitors were being received with friendly smiles.



All museums we visited had well organized libraries and I feel that generally, museums have vital roles towards communities. For example, there was good care for schools and for their children in order to increase their knowledge and abilities.





As a participant, the International Training Programme gave me a lot of experience and this will be a turning point in my career, it was a beneficial programme, in fact. Museums in Sudan have been suffering, visitors cannot find what they want. Although there are valuable historical, collectible antiquities, there is no infrastructure or modern means to attract visitors. No doubt, this kind of programme will provide us with creative thinking which will benefit our museums.

From my own point of view, I came out with new thoughts and views, hopefully to be implemented in Sudan. To connect with the world and to achieve our goals we have to organize similar courses and programmes in different countries. I was impressed with the positive energy in all the museums that I visited in the U.K, which motivates me to do what needs to be done in my country.

To be honest, the team in charge of training are nice people, they treated us elegantly and humbly, especially Claire. We appreciated their co-operation, devotion and the warm welcome and farewell we received.

Notes on the programme:-

Before we visited the Stonehenge, I thought that there were no acquisitions from that period in British museums, but when we entered the exhibition space we were really surprised to realise how the British are very proud of their heritage. We noticed entry to all museums was free and donation was optional.

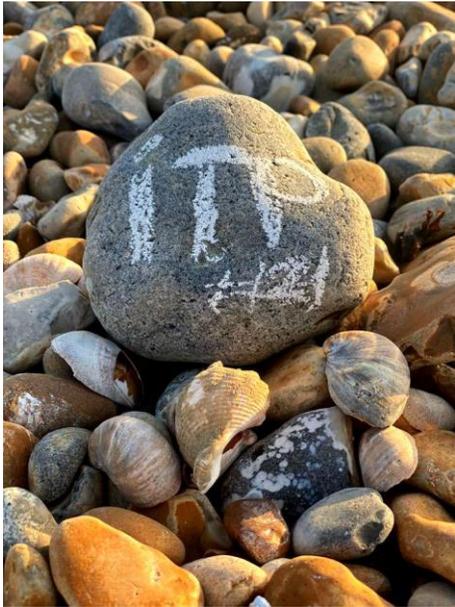


The time we spent at the British museum was pressed, so we didn't find any spare time to visit London which has represented my dream for a long time and I also didn't have time to visit Madame Tussauds either. We were supported and equipped with all essential knowledge concerning our jobs by the nice team in charge of the training programme who spared no effort to provide us with the necessary information we needed, without them we couldn't have achieved our goals in the short time.



It is worth mentioning the that the International Training Program connected different cultures and melted ethnicities together, despite the fact we were from different countries. We became acquainted and exchanged views and by doing this, we benefited from each other's thoughts. I think without this programme, we could not meet those nice colleagues with whom we enjoyed evenings with near the hotel in which we stayed. Furthermore, we were invited along to a delicious Indian restaurant in which

we exchanged views about different cultures, social customs and different food and we all hope for the continuity of this friendship in addition to exchanging visits with one another.



The UK museums we visited spared no effort to make visitors feel comfortable and safe and so deserve appreciation for that unique and attractive feature.

I would like to practice all lessons that we learnt and experiences that I gained from the programme to my small community in my beloved country. Despite the obstacles and hindrances that I may face, I will do the best and exert more effort to facilitate and pave the way to create a brilliant future for our museum (located near an archeological site) in particular and museums in Sudan generally, I think this can be done by sharing ideas with our local community in order for them to co-operate with us.

Finally, may Allah the almighty bless you and raise your status in repairing and rehabilitating all museums and the tourism field which represents a mirror that reflects our cultures and values.

The days of the training programme are remarkable unforgettable, and subsequently what I feel is indescribable.

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