



AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE DAY

5 MAY 2021

Since the proclamation of African World Heritage Day in 2015 by the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, every 5 May, African cultural and natural, tangible and intangible heritage is celebrated across the globe, raising awareness of the benefits of its promotion and preservation, as well as the related challenges the continent faces.

In the face of climate change, armed conflict and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, among other challenges, African countries must ensure that their remarkable heritage is able to adapt and thrive in today's environment. In this light, the African Union (AU) declared the Year 2021 as the “AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want”.

To celebrate this day, UNESCO in collaboration with the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) and their partners, will organise a series of events across the continent that will highlight the resilience, opportunities, and wealth to be gained from African heritage, as well as explore solutions to the challenges facing the continent.

What's on the programme?

29 April – 5 May

5th African World Heritage Youth Forum

5 May

10:00-12:00 (CET) | Webinar: Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want

14:30-19:00 (CET) | African World Heritage Day Live Instagram Concert

5 – 31 May

Open Competition: Mobilizing Youth Engagement in the Celebration of African World Heritage Day

29 April – 5 May

5th African World Heritage Youth Forum

Since 2016, as a build-up to the African World Heritage Day, young people, aged 18 to 35, from all over the African continent come together at the African World Heritage Youth Forum to discuss and exchange on their involvement in the conservation, management, and promotion of World Heritage. The African World Heritage Youth Forum is aimed at motivated, active and driven African youth interested in engaging in a World Heritage network and eager to implement the outcomes of the Youth Forum in their home countries and among their communities.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year the 5th edition of the African World Heritage Youth Forum will be held online under the theme **'Youth, Entrepreneurship and Heritage Sustainability: Building the Africa We Want'** from **29 April to 5 May 2021**. The five-day Forum will consist of interactive oral presentations from youth participants and experts from different fields (e.g. business, leadership, heritage, etc.) combined with hands-on activities, group discussions and workshops. The Youth Forum will be implemented fully online using the Zoom platform.

A **pre-Forum workshop** will be held three weeks prior to the Youth Forum to help participants gain an understanding of the various concepts of entrepreneurship with a view to developing sustainable, scalable, and "bankable" business ventures, provide a background on entrepreneurship in the field of heritage in Africa and promote networking and exchanges ahead of the Forum. In addition, an **online course** will be provided in partnership with the acceleration firm, Impact Amplifier, on its business start-up operating system.

The 5 May celebrations will include a **webinar** entitled 'Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want' on the implementation of the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, with concrete examples of activities in Africa. The results of the Forum will be presented on the last day of the Forum during an ceremony, during which awards will be granted to three participants who have demonstrated a great understanding of the work learnt throughout the Forum and presented the strongest business pitches. The evaluating panel will include the mentors and coordinators who have been a part of the Youth Forum and witnesses the progress of participants.

The Forum is organized by UNESCO, the African Union Commission (AUC), the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), and International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and the Africa Business Group (ABG).

2021 Theme: Youth, Entrepreneurship and Heritage Sustainability in Africa

Youth are the 'torchbearers' of the African Union's Agenda 2063 - The Africa We Want - and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and have a pivotal role to play both as beneficiaries of related actions and policies and as partners and active participants in their implementation. Fully recognising their key contribution, Aspiration 6 of the Agenda 2063, explicitly calls for an Africa whose development is people-centred, which relies on the potential of African people, especially women and youth.

According to UNOPS, **Africa is the world's youngest continent**. This burgeoning young population is both an opportunity and a challenge for the continent. 60% of all unemployed Africans are aged 15-24, while the share of the young 'working poor' has increased by up to 80% in the past 25 years in a continent where up to 70% of workers are below the poverty line - the highest rate in the world¹. **Entrepreneurship has been identified as a key driver towards the structural economic transformation** envisioned in Agenda 2063, with the potential to create millions of jobs, reduce poverty and generate innovations in fields contributing towards sustainable development on the continent.

There is a **strong potential for investment in supporting and strengthening the heritage sector in Africa** for the youth, creating momentum for heritage assets, generating income and creating jobs, protecting identities, as well as promoting cultural diversity and social inclusion. Yet, the cultural and natural heritage in Africa is exposed to a number of threats and challenges, including climate change; loss of traditional know-how,

¹ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_513739.pdf

customary and intangible practices; insecurity, vandalism and armed conflict; as well as issues related to unsustainable development and uncontrolled tourism, and lack of visibility. Therefore, addressing the challenges related to the promotion, management and conservation of heritage in harmony with sustainable development in the continent requires a multi-pronged approach grounded on the active involvement of the African youth through concrete actions.

Forum objectives

The 5th edition of the African World Heritage Youth Forum aims at **building leadership and entrepreneurship capacities in the framework of the current AWHF training programs on World Heritage**. The objectives of the Youth Forum are as follows:

- **Empower African youth through training and mentorship** that will equip them with innovative and creative entrepreneurship skills in the field of heritage (e.g. business opportunity identification and evaluation, business management, financial resources mobilization, financial sustainability and innovation, entrepreneurial mindset skills, communication and networking);
- **Mobilise young people and harness youth creativity and innovation** in World Heritage promotion and sustainable development efforts in Africa, including by developing sustainable initiatives in their countries that take into account the present-day issues and Aspirations of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda;
- **Provide an opportune platform for the creation of networks**, exchange of knowledge, sharing of experiences and success stories between and among youth across Africa;
- **Raise youth awareness and appreciation of issues and threats** facing Africa's World Heritage while stimulating their involvement in entrepreneurship activities that could bring direct economic benefits to local communities living in or around World Heritage sites in Africa;
- **Encourage youth to become responsible guardians of World Heritage sites** across the region;
- **Provide two grants to participants** who have demonstrated innovation and implementable business projects.

Expected outcomes

At the end of the Forum participants are expected to:

- **Gain innovative and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills** in business opportunity identification and evaluation, business management, financial resources mobilization for business start-ups and/or expansion, communication and networking, as well as business plan development and sustainability, to support the safeguarding and promotion of World Heritage and surrounding areas.
- **Be able to identify innovative and creative ideas, products or processes** in the heritage field that can be used to form successful and sustainable business ventures and contribute to the overall preservation of heritage.
- **Assess their own personal work product(s) - and critique those of their fellow participants** - with regard to thoroughness and creativity and identify the most recognized sources of potential funding and financing in the heritage field for their own business start-ups and/or expansion.
- **Produce a feasibility study of their business concept and develop a business plan** for their own business start-ups and/or expansion.

Learn more about the Forum at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/2277/>

5 May (10:00-12:00 (CET))

Webinar | Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want

The African continent is universally recognised for its cultural and natural diversity and for the richness of its arts. Expressed through its arts, crafts, clothing, cuisine, music, and languages, the wealth of African culture serves as a catalyst for the socio-economic development of the African continent.

As the sole United Nations agency with a mandate in the field of culture, UNESCO is uniquely positioned to support culture-related policies and design, develop and implement cultural projects on all continents. Through its Culture Conventions, UNESCO strives to safeguard and promote cultural heritage and creativity to build peace and advance sustainable development. Encompassing from tangible and intangible heritage, to the diversity of cultural expressions and creative industries to the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property, these Conventions contribute to the economic, social and environmental development of the countries that are Parties through culture and provide mechanisms and tools to support local and national development strategies and promote cooperation based on the respect for human rights.

Within the framework of the African World Heritage Day celebrations, a webinar will be organized by UNESCO in collaboration with the African World Heritage Fund (AWFH) with a view to **highlight the roles, challenges and opportunities of the different UNESCO Culture Conventions and draw up a comprehensive state of play of culture in the continent**, while reflecting on possible synergies and conceivable steps to leverage culture for development. Speakers will give an insight into the implementation of the various Culture Conventions, provide concrete examples of activities undertaken in Africa and participate in an open debate on the future prospects for the continent. The webinar will be broadcast online on the **UNESCO Webcast**.

Provisional Agenda

10:00 – 11:05	Opening and Welcome by Ms Mechtild Rössler <i>Director – UNESCO World Heritage Centre</i> Strengthening synergies between the Culture Conventions in order to better safeguard and protect African heritage.
10:05 – 10:10	Opening Remarks by H.E. Mrs Amira Elfadil Mohammed Elfadil / Ms Angela Martins (TBC) <i>Commissioner for Social Affairs, African Union Commission</i> “2021: Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want”: catalysts for the socio-economic development and integration of the African continent
10:10 – 10:15	Opening and Welcome by Mr Souayibou Varissou <i>Director - African World Heritage Fund</i> Significance of African World Heritage Day <i>Group photo</i>
Moderator	Ms Susan Keitumetse, UNESCO Chair in African Heritage Studies and Sustainable Development, University of Botswana
10:15 – 10:25	1970 Fighting against the illicit trafficking of cultural property Mr Samuel Sidibé Former Director-General of the National Museum of Mali, Member of the Acquisitions Commission of the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac Member of the Scientific Committee of International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict areas (ALIPH)

10:25 – 10:35	<p>2003 Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage Ms Claudine Angoué Anthropologist, teacher-researcher at the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences of the Omar Bongo University (Libreville/Gabon)</p>
10:35 – 10:45	<p>2005 Protecting and Promoting the Diversity of Cultural Expressions Mr Michel Saba Delegate General Regional Center for the Living Arts in Africa (CERAV / Africa) UNESCO Category 2 Center (Bobo Dioulasso/Burkina Faso)</p>
10:45 – 10:55	<p>1972 Protecting the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in Africa Mr George Abungu Founding Director and Lead Consultant Okello Abungu Heritage Consultants Emeritus Director-General of the National Museums of Kenya</p>
10:55 – 11:50	<p>Engagement Session with Panellists Facilitated by Dr. Susan O. Keitumetse Research Scholar and Holder of the UNESCO Chair on Heritage Studies & Sustainable Development, University of Botswana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Ishanlosen Odiaua • Mr Mulugeta Feseha • Ms Njeri Mbure • Mr Mr Lassana Cissé • Mr Gueye Mallé • Ms Affoh Gueneguez • Mr Charles Akibodé • Mr Claudio Zunguene • Ms Hamida Rhouma • Ms Maïssa Acheuk-Youcef <p>Statement from the Youth Forum Representative (2-3 minutes)</p>
11:50 – 12:00	<p>Closing remarks by Dr. Thomas Panganayi Thondhlana Director of the Centre for Culture and Heritage Studies, holder of the UNESCO Chair on African Heritage, Great Zimbabwe University</p> <p>Poetry reading by Eileen Almeida Barbosa (Cabo Verde)</p>

5 May (14:30-19:00 (CET))

African World Heritage Day Live Instagram Concert #MyAfricanHeritage

In light of the multiple challenges currently being faced by the African continent, including the impact of climate change, the various ongoing regional armed conflicts and the global COVID-19 pandemic among others, Africans must ensure that their remarkable heritage is able to adapt and thrive in today's environment and build on its strength, creativity and richness to overcome these challenges. In recent times we have witnessed the extent to which the vibrant culture and the outstanding heritage of Africa are central for its resilience. With the aim of sharing Africa's resilience with the world and celebrating its exceptional culture, UNESCO will be organising a **live concert on Instagram**, featuring performances by artists from across the continent.

This initiative aims at raising young people's awareness of the African Union's theme for 2021 through the use of digital technologies and social networks, further engage Africans in the promotion and transmission of World Heritage in Africa, support and promote African artists at the international level and increase international visibility of African Heritage and the vibrancy of its culture.

Live sessions

A series of live performances will be organized by UNESCO in collaboration with the African World Heritage Fund in the afternoon of 5 May 2021. These sessions will feature different forms of artistic expression and will highlight the continent's cultural diversity. The artists, connected through their own Instagram accounts, will interpret the African Union's theme for 2021: "Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want", through their live performances to transmit the power of the arts as a positive driver for change and a lever to build the Africa we want.

The live performances will start at 15h (CET) on May 5 and run throughout the day. They will end with a musical session at 19h (CET).

1st Session Concert	
3.pm – 3.30 pm (Paris time)	Musician – Dela Botri
2nd Session Illustration performance	
4.pm - 5.pm (Paris time)	Drawer - Zakaria Gnaoui
3rd Session Dj Set	
7pm - 8.30 pm (Paris time)	DJ set by Dj JeuneLio

5 - 31 May

Open Competition: Mobilizing Youth Engagement in the Celebration of African World Heritage Day

In Celebration of African World Heritage Day in 2021, and in the framework of the African Union Year 2021 for “Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want”, UNESCO’s Regional Office for Eastern Africa and the African World Heritage Fund are launching, on 5 May 2021, an open competition for youth (individuals and/or groups) in all 13 countries covered by the UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa², aged 18 to 35 years old to develop a project proposal for raising awareness and engagement of youth in the protection and promotion of African World Heritage.

Proposals may focus on raising awareness and/or engagement among youth for one World Heritage site in Africa, all World Heritage sites in a specific country or the Eastern Africa region, or the entire Africa region. More information on the World Heritage Convention and World Heritage in the Africa region can be found at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en>

The deadline for submission of proposals is **31 May 2021**. Proposals must be submitted in Word or PDF format by e-mail to the following address: AWHDayEA@unesco.org.

Proposal requirements

The proposals must follow the basic format provided by UNESCO and the African World Heritage Fund and may be submitted in English or French. All proposals must be signed and endorsed by the Secretary General of the UNESCO National Commission in the country where the youth submitting the proposal reside. (Contact details for National Commissions can be found here: <https://en.unesco.org/countries/national-commissions>).

The proposed activity(-ies) must be feasible to carry-out between **1 September and 1 December 2021**. All proposed activities must respect national and World Health Organization (WHO) health guidelines and prevention measures for the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as national security and legal guidelines. Moreover, all proposals must respect human rights and promote respect for cultural diversity.

All proposals must also include a detailed budget breakdown indicating the estimated costs for all activities in USD for a total amount up to 5000 USD.

Selection process

An advisory panel with representatives of UNESCO, the African Union, the African World Heritage Fund, and the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee (ICOMOS, IUCN, ICCROM) will be designated to review the proposals submitted and select the winning proposals to be funded.

Criteria for selection will be based on innovation and impact of the proposed activities in awareness raising and engagement of youth in the protection and promotion of African World Heritage. Only proposals signed/endorsed by UNESCO National Commissions for UNESCO will be considered.

A maximum of five projects will be selected and financed by UNESCO and the UNESCO National Commission in the country of residence of the selected proposal’s project leader, even if the proposal’s geographic reach covers more than one country.

For more information on the Open Competition please visit: [UNESCO Nairobi](#)

² Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda