

THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA

The Peter Mitchell Churchill Fellowship to study strategies for building sustainable partnerships between museums and culturally diverse communities

Report by
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2008 Churchill Fellow

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Signed: Kim Tao

Dated: 8 December 2008

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INTRODUCTION



I was awarded a 2008 Churchill Fellowship to study strategies for building sustainable partnerships between museums and culturally diverse communities.¹

My program of study involved travelling to the UK, Canada and USA to visit museums that have worked successfully to engage with culturally diverse communities. The duration of my Fellowship was five weeks, and allowed me to examine collaborative museum projects that have fostered community cultural development and empowerment, with a view to applying these ideas to my work at Fairfield City Museum & Gallery (FCM&G), which is located in the most culturally diverse Local Government Area in Australia.

While FCM&G is well-known in Australia for its work with the community, it can often be difficult to sustain ongoing engagement after the completion of a project. There is a tendency to engage with a particular community for short term project-based work; the challenge is sustaining the loyalty of a new audience once its interest has been captured.

Through the Churchill Fellowship, I was able to study partnership models being used by overseas institutions to successfully maintain engagement, and consider how these could be implemented in Fairfield to help FCM&G set new benchmarks for working with culturally diverse communities in Australia.

I would like to acknowledge the support of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and my sponsor Peter Mitchell for the opportunity to carry out this study. I also wish to thank my overseas colleagues who generously shared their knowledge and expertise with me. Finally a special thank you to my family for their support and encouragement to undertake the Fellowship.

¹ 'Culturally diverse' is used within this context to refer to ethnic background; however it is acknowledged that a broader definition of cultural diversity can extend beyond ethnicity to encompass religious, gender or class differences.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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I was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study strategies for building sustainable partnerships between museums and culturally diverse communities in the UK, Canada and USA. The duration of my Fellowship was five weeks and allowed me to visit museums that have successfully engaged culturally diverse communities in the development of collaborative exhibitions and other programs.

Highlights

- 19 Princelet Street – proof that simple community engagement strategies can be highly effective
- Museum of London – innovative projects that demonstrate a broad-based approach to social inclusion
- Hackney Museum – travelling to the other side of the world to find a community just like Fairfield, and a museum facing similar challenges
- Chicago’s rich network of ethnic museums and the pervasive spirit of collaboration in the city.

Major Lessons and Conclusions

- Integrated partnerships between museums, government, schools and culturally diverse communities can help to deliver sustainable outcomes for museums, individuals and communities
- Training and skills development, tangible project outcomes and follow-on projects can also contribute to sustainability.

Dissemination and Implementation

- This report will be distributed to relevant staff at Fairfield City Council and other museums, Arts NSW, Museums & Galleries NSW, Australia Council, Museums Australia and community organisations
- Findings will be presented to senior managers and cultural staff at Fairfield City Council, and detailed in articles for museum journals and publications
- The strategies that I learnt during my Fellowship will be implemented through further cross-cultural and intergenerational projects at Fairfield City Museum & Gallery; expanded partnerships with government, schools and community organisations; and by building a stronger relationship with community, migrant and refugee organisations in Western Sydney as a basis for future collaborative work.

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

London, England, UK



19 Princelet Street

Susie Symes, Chair of Trustees
Paramjit Kaur, Coordinator



Museum of London

Annette Day, Curator, Oral History & Contemporary Collecting
Lucie Fitton, Inclusion Programmes Officer



Hackney Museum

Jane Sarre, Museum Development Manager
Cheryl Bowen, Community Education Manager

New York City, New York, USA



The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc

Peg Zitko, Vice President of Public Affairs



Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island

Diana Pardue, Chief, Museum Services Division



Save Ellis Island, Inc

Claudia Ocello, Associate Director, Education & Public Programs
Darcy Hartman, Vice President, Programs & Planning



Lower East Side Tenement Museum

Prachi Patankar, Education Associate

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada



Pier 21

Joanna Veale, Manager of Museum Visitor Services
Elisabeth Tower, Manager of Education Services
Kim Reinhardt, Chief Curator
Carrie-Ann Smith, Manager of Research

Chicago, Illinois, USA



Field Museum

Rosa Cabrera, Public Involvement Manager



Chicago History Museum

Tamara Biggs, Director of Exhibitions
Lesley Martin, Research Specialist
Jill Grannan, Curator



Cambodian American Heritage Museum & Killing Fields Memorial

Charles Daas, Museum Director



Chicago Cultural Alliance Swedish American Museum Center

Rebecca Sanders, Executive Director

Los Angeles, California, USA



El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument

Marianna Gatto, Curator
Suellen Cheng, Curator



Chinese American Museum

Pauline Wong, Executive Director
Lorien Bianchi, Exhibitions Coordinator

CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP



The new museology advocates active collaboration between museums and the community. Museums Australia's Cultural Diversity Policy states that "all Australians have the right to see elements of their culture preserved and interpreted in museums" and that "over time, museums should aim to reflect a range of different cultures, perspectives and interpretations."²

To ensure relevance to Fairfield's community, Fairfield City Museum & Gallery has had to shift from being a museum showcasing the early Anglo settlement of the area to one that is inclusive of our present highly diverse community, where 60 percent of residents were born overseas in 133 different countries. This cultural variety is the most outstanding feature of Fairfield City and is reflected in the City motto 'Celebrating Diversity.' Fairfield City is acknowledged as the most culturally diverse Local Government Area (LGA) in Australia, as well as the country's fourth most populated LGA.

Innovative exhibitions such as *From Dawn to Sunset: Ramadan, Tet Nguyen Dan: Vietnamese New Year* and the award-winning *Bodgies, Westies & Homies: Growing Up in Western Sydney* have successfully repositioned FCM&G as a multipurpose cultural space that tackles social inclusion, fosters identity development and promotes social connectivity. FCM&G works closely with the different cultural groups in the community to bring one of Fairfield's unique resources – its people – to the fore.

While FCM&G is recognised for its cutting edge work with the local community, the greater challenge is sustaining ongoing engagement and continued capacity building after the completion of project-based work.

Museums in the UK, Canada and USA have taken an integrated approach to community engagement projects, using strategic partnerships between museums, government, schools and communities to deliver sustained outcomes and promote the benefits of lifelong learning.

This report is not a comprehensive account of all the institutions visited during my Fellowship, but rather profiles the best practice models, projects and partnerships that either have general relevance to the Australian context or can be directly applied at Fairfield City Museum & Gallery.

² Museums Australia, *Cultural Diversity Policy*, Museums Australia, Canberra, 2000, 3.

19 PRINCELET STREET

“You and I – we’re not that different” is the statement that greets visitors at the entrance to the *Leave to Remain* temporary exhibition at 19 Princelet Street in Spitalfields, in London’s East End. This theme is literally part of the building and reiterates through the displays, the front of house staff, volunteers and trustees at the Museum.

Built in 1719, 19 Princelet Street was the home of the Huguenot silk weaving Ogier family, who had escaped religious persecution in France. After the Huguenots moved on, the houses were subdivided into lodgings and workshops and occupied by Irish and later Jewish emigrants from Eastern Europe, who erected a synagogue in the garden in 1869.

In 1983 the Spitalfields Centre charity was established to preserve 19 Princelet Street and develop a permanent exhibition telling the stories of the diverse people who lived there and shaped the building, the area and the nation. The building is rarely open to the public because of its fragility; however there are about 10-15 public open days per year, and the charity hopes to repair the building and open it permanently as Britain’s first museum celebrating the country’s immigration and settlement history.

Suitcases and Sanctuary

19 Princelet Street’s permanent exhibition, *Suitcases and Sanctuary*, explores the waves of immigration that shaped Spitalfields through the eyes of today’s children. The exhibition was developed 10 years ago in collaboration with Year 5 students from six local schools, who worked with artists and poets to imagine how they would feel if they were forced to leave their homeland. It is the only exhibition developed by children for adults in a British museum, and for many of the children, it was the first time they had engaged with adults other than their parents or teachers. The collaboration was a new experience for both the children and Museum staff, thus placing them on an equal level. The project engaged the children to consider very adult concepts – yet in a deceptively simple way. The display of suitcases, artworks, diaries, photographs, letters and poems is suitable for children, with objects to touch, handle and read at their level, physically and intellectually. There is a subtle but evocative use of metaphors, and the simplicity of using children’s voices, putting them in another’s shoes and relying on the power of storytelling.

Trustees and Volunteers

Some of the children involved in developing *Suitcases and Sanctuary* 10 years ago now volunteer at the Museum, while one has even become the Museum’s youngest trustee at 18 years old, which is testament to the success of 19 Princelet Street’s engagement initiatives.

19 Princelet Street is governed by a board of trustees who represent a variety of professional backgrounds, ethnicities and ages. Sixty two percent of the Museum’s trustees are from a culturally diverse background. It is policy that

trustees participate in some front of house work to ensure they are truly engaged with the community.

The Museum's volunteers are relatively young and come from a range of cultural backgrounds, which I am told is evidence of the policy of 'practice what you preach' in regards to celebrating diversity at 19 Princelet Street. One young girl I met, Lucy, accompanied a friend to the Museum and became a volunteer on the spot. It seems the Museum's themes of inclusion, tolerance, belonging and shared lives have wide relevance. 19 Princelet Street is a welcoming site of civic engagement, encouraging visitors to discover, explore and discuss contemporary issues as equals, rather than simply listening to the authority voice of the curator.

MUSEUM OF LONDON

The Museum of London regards itself as both a national and local museum that is “committed to engaging people from the widest possible range of backgrounds” to be “representative of the social and cultural diversity of London,”³ one of the most diverse cities in the world. This is achieved through an array of projects and activities that encourage participation by London’s culturally diverse communities, as well as tailored outreach sessions for schools, families and community groups.

In 1993 the Museum of London developed the pioneering exhibition *The Peopling of London*, which explored the cultural diversity of the city and its implications for national identity. The Museum expressly aimed to attract new audiences, particularly members of London’s migrant and refugee communities. Nearly 100,000 people visited the exhibition, while the proportion of ethnic minority visitors increased fivefold during the exhibition period.⁴ The Museum of London recognises that “rather than adopting the cause of refugees, [we] are opening ourselves to be adopted by the refugee community which is part of the greater London community.”⁵ This recognition has led the Museum to develop a range of innovative projects, partnerships and programs involving London’s culturally diverse communities.

Community Access Programme

One of the Museum of London’s guiding principles is involvement, defined as maximising opportunities “to actively involve audiences in the development of galleries, exhibitions and other public programs.”⁶ Through the Community Access Programme, the Museum of London works in partnership with community and educational organisations, groups and individuals to develop projects and events. Community access moves towards “creating a sense of ownership and encouraging interaction whilst providing the platform and resources for relevant contributions.”⁷ The Museum also recognises the importance of ensuring its relationships with communities are sustainable.

Inclusion Programme

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Museum of London’s Inclusion Programme was a series of 13 projects over three years which used a wide range of art forms to engage people with their heritage. The program targeted people at risk of social exclusion, such as youth, long term unemployed, offenders and homeless people, and allowed them to develop new life skills. The projects

³ Museum of London, *Audience Development Policy 2004-2009*, Museum of London, London, 2004, 2.

⁴ Philip Marfleet, ‘Forgotten by History: Refugees, Historians and Museums in Britain,’ in, Katherine Goodnow, *Museums, the Media and Refugees: Stories of Crisis, Control and Compassion*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2008, 17.

⁵ Jack Lohman, ‘How Do We Sing Our Song in a Strange Land? *Belonging: Voices of London’s Refugees in the Museum of London*,’ in, Katherine Goodnow, *Museums, the Media and Refugees: Stories of Crisis, Control and Compassion*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2008, 11.

⁶ Museum of London, *Audience Development Policy*, 3.

⁷ Museum of London website, at

www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/Learning/Community/CommunityAccess.htm.

brought a group of individuals together for one to three months, using London as the subject matter to engage participants and engage communities. The program's premise was that museums can work with a small number of individuals to make a significant impact on society.

Inclusion Programme projects included *Mind's Eye*, in which long term offenders from Wandsworth Prison worked with artists to create artworks of places in London that were significant to them; *Now and Then*, an intergenerational oral history website which brought together Asian elders and young carers to compare and contrast their lives in London; and *Endz Meet*, where young adults with disabilities or out of work, education or training worked with a digital artist to create a film about living in London.⁸



Museum of London Inclusion Programme projects Family Guides (1), Outside Art (2), Mind's Eye (3), Now and Then (4), Endz Meet (5), Inside Images (6) and City Senses (7)⁹

⁸ Museum of London, *Inspiration London: Art Inspired by the Museum of London's Art Collection*, Museum of London, London, 2008, 39.

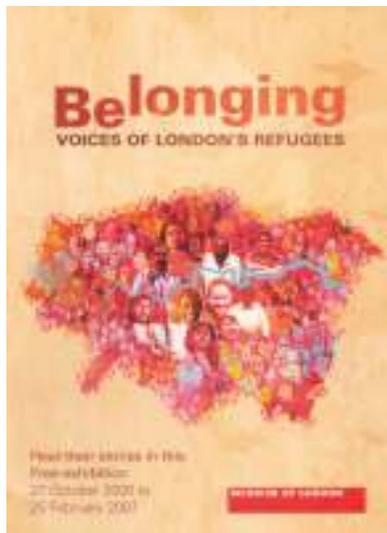
⁹ *ibid.*, 38.

Some participants in the Inclusion Programme returned to take part in other projects at the Museum of London, such as *Inspiration London*, where they worked with the Museum to create artworks inspired by pieces from the art collection. This is an example of how community relationships can be sustained through follow-on projects and partnerships. Participants can also continue to engage with the Museum of London through Late: Create, a free monthly evening workshop for people currently out of work. Working with an artist, members create artworks, sculpture, poetry and photographs in response to the Museum of London's collections.

London Museums Hub

The Museum of London is a lead partner of the London Museums Hub, a network established by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) in 2002 to deliver Renaissance in the Regions, a £150 million national program to transform England's regional museums into world class institutions fit for the 21st century. The Hub advocates collaboration and skills-sharing between museums to collectively raise standards, and is committed to developing innovative approaches in order to reach new audiences and foster social inclusion. From 2004-2008 the Hub managed the Refugee Heritage Project, a partnership between four small London museums and African, Kurdish, Somali and Afghan refugee community organisations to record and share their culture and heritage.

Belonging: Voices of London's Refugees



Belonging: Voices of London's Refugees was a groundbreaking exhibition at the Museum of London from October 2006 to February 2007, which revealed the experiences of refugees in London through their own words. The aim of *Belonging* was not to "set out a chronological history of refugees in London, but rather to bring personal narratives and perspectives to the fore; to reflect the complexity and multiplicity of experiences and opinions among refugees; to offer visitors from refugee backgrounds a source of pride and inspiration; and to help visitors from all backgrounds understand better the realities of life for refugees and the contributions they have made and continue to make to London."¹⁰

Belonging featured personal stories in listening pavillions, and objects, photographs, film and art that were collected or created as part of the London Museums Hub's Refugee Heritage Project and the Refugee Communities History Project, a partnership with more than 15 refugee community organisations.

¹⁰ Museum of London, *Inspiring London: Annual Report 2006/07*, Museum of London, London, 2007, 16.

Refugee Communities History Project

The Refugee Communities History Project was a partnership between the Evelyn Oldfield Unit,¹¹ Museum of London, London Metropolitan University and the following refugee community organisations:

- Resource Unit for Mother Tongue and Supplementary Schools
- Afghan Association of London
- African Community Health and Research Organisation, with the Lwo Cultural Group
- Bosnian Resource Information Centre Kosovar Support
- Chinese Information and Advice Centre
- Council for Assisting Refugee Academics
- Eritrean Education and Publication Trust
- Ethiopian Community in Britain
- Haringey Somali Community and Cultural Association
- Imece Turkish Speaking Women's Group
- Iraqi Community Association
- Kurdish Association
- Latin American Association
- Latin American Women's Rights Service
- Latin American Disabled People's Project
- Latin American Elderly People's Project
- Roma Support Group
- Tamil Relief Centre.

There was a conscious decision by the project's steering committee to bring different community organisations together and build a bigger project. The Refugee Communities History Project was as much about these organisations working with each other as it was about them working with the Museum of London. Community organisations had to apply to become involved in the project, ensuring there was an equal balance of power. The steering committee met regularly over two years to ensure the partnership stayed firm.

This ambitious partnership project resulted in the collection of more than 160 oral history interviews in 20 languages, providing an unrivalled insight into the experiences of refugees in London and the many challenges they have faced. The oral histories provided the lead exhibit in *Belonging* and have been archived at the Museum of London. Whilst the Museum was unable to use all 160 interviews in the exhibition – and thus conceded that managing community expectations was a key challenge – the oral histories collected will be used online and in Capital City, the redevelopment of the Museum of London's Modern London galleries scheduled to open in 2010. This supports the Museum's affirmation that sustainability of content is just as important as sustainability of relationships.

The oral history interviews were conducted over two years by 15 fieldworkers based at each refugee community organisation, who received accredited MA-level

¹¹ The Evelyn Oldfield Unit provides professional support and training to refugee community organisations; see www.evelynoldfield.org.uk.

training in life history methods at London Metropolitan University before commencing their interviews. The fieldworkers and their community organisations contributed to the *Belonging* exhibition and website, and also created their own local exhibitions and events.

Following this long period of training and armed with additional skills and experience, the fieldworkers were able to work with their community organisations on follow-on projects. This capacity building was a deliberate, tangible outcome of the Refugee Communities History Project and a key to its sustainability, whilst ensuring that community organisations were not entirely dependent on the Museum of London for future programming. Organisations developed the capacity to secure funding for other projects, so that the long term responsibility for sustainability rested on them rather than the Museum of London. The fieldworkers also received media training and acted as press spokespeople, giving them ownership and responsibility for promoting their communities.

The Refugee Communities History Project has now entered its second phase, with a focus on developing learning resources for schools and a toolkit to share advice with other community organisations. This constitutes another way of sustaining the skills and knowledge acquired through the project.

Refugee Heritage Project

The Refugee Heritage Project was an initiative of the London Museums Hub, and involved four community museums working with five refugee organisations to record and preserve the cultural heritage of refugees through films, exhibitions and 40 community events, talks and performances. The Refugee Heritage Project aimed to develop a conversation about museums as places to share diverse voices and encourage cross-cultural exchange.

The partner museums – Croydon Museum, Hackney Museum, Ragged School Museum and Redbridge Museum – developed the following projects that were displayed in *Belonging* to highlight the contribution that refugees have made to London:

- **Croydon Film Heritage Project** – filmmaking workshops to create two films: *Isonga*, which explored African marriage ceremonies and traditions; and *A Taste of Croydon*, which highlighted the links between food and identity
- **Kurdish Cultural Heritage Project** – two exhibitions, *Traditional Kurdish Culture and History* and *Kurdish Cultural Identity and Celebration of Kurdish Culture in the UK*, developed with the Kurdish-Turkish community in Hackney
- **Hidaha Iyo Dahqankayaga – Our Tradition, Our Culture** – filmmaking workshops with the Somali community to produce the film *Hidaha Iyo Dahqankayaga*
- **Afghan Heritage Project** – storytelling, weaving and craft activities with Afghan women.

The London Museums Hub has undertaken extensive evaluation of the Refugee Heritage Project and the social impact of its efforts to record refugee heritage,

summarising the benefits to individual participants, museums and the wider community.

The Museum of London is clearly a leader in working collaboratively with communities to maximise opportunities for their involvement in exhibitions and public programs. The Museum makes an effort to ensure participants are involved in decision making at every stage of a project and this is reflected in the strong sense of shared ownership and empowerment amongst London's culturally diverse communities.

HACKNEY MUSEUM

Hackney Museum is a Council-run community museum founded in 1986 to interpret Hackney's long history of immigration and settlement. Hackney, in east London, is home to one of the most diverse populations in the UK, with over 300 languages spoken in the borough. The area is currently undergoing a period of rapid change and development, as it will be host to almost 30 percent of the Olympic Park for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Hackney Museum opened in its new facilities in the Technology and Learning Centre in 2002, with a permanent exhibition exploring immigration to Hackney over the past 1,000 years that was funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Museum is a lively place due to its co-location with Hackney Central Library and the Learning Trust (the local education authority); when I arrive a group of toddlers are taking part in a music class, and people drop into the Museum constantly throughout the day as they regard it as a safe space. Hackney Museum maintains active engagement with the local community through partnerships with local groups and individuals.



Hackney Museum

Refugee Heritage Project

As part of the London Museums Hub's Refugee Heritage Project, Hackney Museum worked with four local Kurdish community organisations to develop two Platform exhibitions promoting Kurdish culture in Hackney.¹² The exhibitions were facilitated by a project worker from the Kurdish community, who acted as a go-between for the Museum and community.

¹² The Platform space is a small changing display area for community exhibitions.

Following on from the exhibitions, Hackney Museum worked with community members to identify significant objects that could be acquired by the Museum to form an educational handling box for schools. Three community consultation days were held for the community to bring objects into the Museum. The focus of this phase was how to preserve the objects and develop the handling box into a resource that could be used by teachers to create awareness of Kurdish culture in schools. The Museum also employed three community artists to work with the contents of the box, collect the memories and stories of the Kurdish people and bring the objects to life. The Kurdish community is a prominent group in Hackney, so the box is a valuable resource for school children who can see their heritage reflected in its contents, and can engage in dialogue about their culture at school.

Hackney Museum approaches the issue of sustainability by building the concept of legacy into its project planning. The legacy of the Refugee Heritage Project for the Museum includes:

- Two exhibitions that are available to travel to community centres
- A website with links to other relevant organisations
- A handling box of community objects
- Educational resources for schools
- The Learning Trust hired a Kurdish-Turkish enrichment coordinator to organise a Kurdish-Turkish Week in Hackney
- The Mayor's office hosts a Kurdish-Turkish New Year celebration at City Hall.

Mapping the Change

Mapping the Change is Hackney's contribution to the Cultural Olympiad, the four-year festival of arts and culture that commenced in September 2008 and will engage communities across the UK in the lead up to London 2012. *Mapping the Change* is a partnership between Hackney Museum and Archives and the diverse communities of Hackney to record the impact of the Olympic Games on the lives of local people.

The Museum will work with community groups and local artists to produce photographic, digital, written and oral records, capturing the many voices of Hackney in a permanent social archive and educational resource. The Museum will host a series of public events every year until 2012 to encourage communities to develop cross-cultural and intergenerational projects and share their experiences of change with other local people. These projects will culminate in a major exhibition at Hackney Museum in the Olympic year. It is anticipated *Mapping the Change* will be "the most comprehensive community record of social history in East London during the biggest regeneration project in Europe."¹³

¹³ Hackney Museum, *Mapping the Change: Hackney: To 2012 and Beyond*, Hackney Museum, Hackney, 2007.

I Love Hackney



I Love Hackney was a 2005 exhibition designed to celebrate Hackney and the people who live or work there, through interviews with locals about the borough's character, heritage and culture. The exhibition was a response to the negative attitudes towards Hackney in the British and international media, and was an attempt to dispel myths about the borough by celebrating the positive aspects of life in

Hackney. Exhibition participants either selected an object from the Museum's collection or donated an object that reflected why they loved living or working in Hackney.

Exhibition visitors were able to contribute comments to the exhibition on specially designed *I Love Hackney* postcards, while *I Love Hackney* badges were given away to visitors. Hackney Council adopted the project and launched a range of *I Love Hackney*-themed competitions, t-shirts and events. *I Love Hackney* is an example of a successful community engagement project which benefited multiple stakeholders: it provided the local community with a weapon to defend the area from negative comments; it gave Hackney Council a platform on which to build civic pride; and it allowed Hackney Museum to work in partnership with the local community and also contribute to ongoing collection development.¹⁴

Hackney Council

Hackney Council has a strong agenda to develop capacity and leadership in the local community, and understands that cultural development can help to deliver on social issues. Consequently Hackney Museum has built a strong reputation for being a community-focused museum that responds to the cultural diversity in the area. The Museum is seen to deliver results, demonstrating its trustworthiness. The community can see that staff are approachable, responsive and listening to their needs, which builds further trust, support and the opportunity for sustainable relationships and ongoing partnerships.

¹⁴ Hackney Museum, *Hackney Museum Development Plan*, Hackney Museum, Hackney, 2008, 40.

THE STATUE OF LIBERTY-ELLIS ISLAND FOUNDATION, INC

The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation (SLEIF) is a not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to restore and preserve the Statue of Liberty National Monument, which includes the Statue of Liberty itself, Ellis Island and the Ellis Island Immigration Museum; maintain custody of records and relics related to the Statue of Liberty and the millions of migrants who entered the United States via Ellis Island; and to foster public interest in the history of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.¹⁵ The Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island are managed by the National Park Service (NPS), a unit of the United States Department of the Interior.

Some 12 million immigrants were processed at the Ellis Island immigration depot between 1892 and 1954. Their stories are told in the Ellis Island Immigration Museum, through records held at the American Family Immigration History Center on Ellis Island and accessible on the internet, and on the American Immigrant Wall of Honor in New York Harbour.

Ellis Island Immigration Museum

The Ellis Island Immigration Museum opened in 1990, following a large scale restoration project that was begun in 1984 by the SLEIF and NPS. The Museum has had 25 million visitors since opening and is one of New York's most popular tourist attractions. The Museum is housed in Ellis Island's Main Immigration Building, restored to its 1918-1924 appearance, with exhibits that document Ellis Island's role during the 'golden age' of immigration to America.



Ellis Island Immigration Museum

¹⁵ The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc, *Annual Report*, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc, New York, 2007, 3.

The Peopling of America Center

In 2007 the SLEIF initiated a fundraising campaign for the Peopling of America Center (PAC), which will expand upon the Ellis Island years to include the entire panorama of the American immigrant experience. With the strong tradition of philanthropy in the United States, the entire community has been engaged in funding the PAC's development, through donations from individuals, corporations and even school children. The PAC will "follow the arc of the American experience: from immigration, to assimilation, to citizenship, played out in every generation, past, present and future. It will thematically and programmatically expand the Ellis Island Immigration Museum by educating visitors (physically at Ellis Island, and through the internet) on immigration and citizenship that make up the American experience."¹⁶

Although the SLEIF had been interested in telling the broader story of Ellis Island and immigration since the 1980s, the initial NPS goal to interpret the site meant that historians had to focus on the Ellis Island years. After the Ellis Island Immigration Museum opened it was clear that the Museum had to become more relevant to wider audiences and Americans today. As such the PAC will tell the overall story of the 'peopling' of America through conquest, colonisation, forced migration and immigration.



Ellis Island Immigration Museum

The PAC will be housed in existing buildings on Ellis Island. The current baggage display that greets visitors in the foyer of the Museum will be reconfigured around a five-foot globe to conceptually tell a more global story. Major themes for the PAC, to be completed in 2011, include Leaving, Making the Trip, Arrival, Struggle and Survival, and Building a Nation. Oral history interviews will be collected from contemporary migrants and their experiences will be compared and contrasted to

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 4.

the Ellis Island era. Community members will be able to contribute their stories through the PAC's website. The Museum's temporary exhibition program will also be expanded to allow engagement with a broader range of community groups.



Concept drawings for the Peopling of America Center¹⁷

¹⁷ The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc, *The Peopling of America Center at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum*, The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc, New York, 2007.

Save Ellis Island Inc

The role of Save Ellis Island is to raise funds to restore and adaptively reuse the currently deteriorated and unused buildings of Ellis Island (primarily on the south side). Over the next 10-12 years these rehabilitated buildings will form the Ellis Island Institute and Conference Center, an educational centre dedicated to telling stories of immigration and health. It will also offer exhibitions, festivals, performances, hands-on activities, and school and family programs in an active learning environment, helping to sustain the community's engagement with Ellis Island into the future.

Community engagement at Ellis Island is an obvious challenge, considering the 'community' in question is not well-defined; it is much more diverse than a particular ethnic group or geographical boundary, making it difficult for the Museum to serve its varied constituencies. Further limitations exist in the mandate to interpret a defined historical site within a defined historical period. In an effort to expand its civic engagement focus and interpretive potential, Save Ellis Island has initiated a number of community programs – including a self-guided tour and dialogue tour – in partnership with other New York museums and organisations.

Follow in Their Footsteps: A Journey of Discovery

Save Ellis Island and the NPS have partnered with the Lower East Side Tenement Museum and the Museum at Eldridge Street to produce Follow in Their Footsteps, a self-guided tour program that links these sites together in a broader interpretation of immigration history. Visitors commence the tour at the Ellis Island Ferry Building, tracing the path travelled by millions of immigrants to Manhattan's Lower East Side.

Dialogue Tour

Ellis Island now offers a new guided tour that allows visitors to engage in dialogue with a park ranger, rather than simply listening to narration. Dialogue sessions are run by a trained facilitator and are available for the general public or intact community groups. The tour is a response to increased public interest in the experiences of contemporary migrants, and allows participants to compare and contrast immigration policies throughout history, thereby extending the discussion beyond the Ellis Island years – the major challenge now facing the SLEIF and Ellis Island Immigration Museum.

LOWER EAST SIDE TENEMENT MUSEUM

The Lower East Side Tenement Museum (LESTM) is located in a historic tenement building at 97 Orchard Street on Manhattan's Lower East Side. The tenement, a designated National Historic Site, was home to an estimated 7,000 people from more than 20 nations between 1863 and 1935. The LESTM reconstructs the stories of immigrants who lived at 97 Orchard Street through guided tours of the restored apartments, object, archive and photographic collections, school education programs and new digital arts initiatives. The LESTM is the first site in the United States to document the experiences of urban working class immigrants. Its mission is to "promote tolerance and historical perspective through the presentation and interpretation of the variety of immigrant and migrant experiences on Manhattan's Lower East Side, a gateway to America."¹⁸

One of the Museum's challenges is balancing historical interpretation with contemporary perspective. However while the LESTM interprets the period 1863-1935, its mission to promote tolerance and historical perspective also allows it to use the past as a lens to explore contemporary issues. The LESTM develops projects which draw comparisons between the past and present, challenge misconceptions and present multiple perspectives. The Museum sustains the impact of its work by inspiring positive change in the community.

Agents for Change

Agents for Change is a LESTM initiative to highlight stories of ordinary individuals taking action to make a difference in their local community. The Museum encourages everyone to 'Be an Agent for Change' by volunteering at community organisations, using their skills and networks to provide resources for those in need and advocating for dialogue on community issues. The LESTM invites people to contribute their stories to the Agents for Change website and share their inspiration with the wider community.

Lower East Side Community Preservation Project

The LESTM developed the Lower East Side Community Preservation Project (LESCPP) to use historic preservation as a means of uniting diverse communities. The LESCPP brings community leaders together to identify, restore and interpret local historic places as centres for dialogue on shared community concerns. Previous projects include working with the African American congregation of St Augustine's Church to preserve and interpret the Church's 1828 slave galleries and establish an African American historic site on the Lower East Side; and *Place Matters*, a project to create place markers for important sites in the local area.

Lower East Side Stories

The LESTM collaborated with local residents to create a walking tour that looks at sites in the neighbourhood in both historical and contemporary contexts.

¹⁸ Lower East Side Tenement Museum website, at www.tenement.org/about.html.



Lower East Side Tenement Museum, with a view of the Tenement Windows

The Tenement Windows

Tenement Windows exhibitions are visible from Orchard Street and are produced in collaboration with contemporary artists and recent immigrants. In *Cuisine du Jour*, for instance, artist Tattfoo Tan collaborated with an English Speakers of Other Languages class to create an installation exploring how immigrants have contributed to American cuisine. The LESTM ensures the long term sustainability of this project by partnering with English-teaching organisations in New York.

Digital Artist in Residence Program

Through the Digital Artist in Residence Program (DARP), the LESTM awards virtual residencies to artists to create websites and web-based artworks exploring contemporary immigration. DARP was launched in 2001 with *Banana*, an interactive look at a present day Chinese American family. Other projects include *Folk Songs for the Five Points*, which allows users to create their own folk songs by mixing and overlaying a range of sounds from the Lower East Side, and *Hard Place*, which documented the experiences of people being held in immigration detention centres.

Point of View Film Program

The LESTM has partnered with television network PBS to show immigrant films from the network's archives every month at the Museum.

Kitchen Conversations

Access to the LESTM's historic tenement building is only through guided tour. Following selected tours, visitors can participate in Kitchen Conversations, an open forum in which to voice opinions, explore common experiences and discuss contemporary issues raised on the tour. Dialogues are led by a trained facilitator in the informal space of the Museum's kitchen. The dialogues are another way of engaging the community and drawing out diverse perspectives. The LESTM dialogue model has been adopted by a number of museums across the United States that are trying to engage diverse audiences. The dialogue theme is extended and sustained by the International Coalition of Historic Site Museums of Conscience, a network established by the LESTM to develop historic sites around the world as forums for civic dialogue and action.

PIER 21

Pier 21 is Canada's Immigration Museum, located in the country's last surviving ocean immigration shed in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Pier 21 was opened in 1999 to celebrate and communicate a deeper understanding of the Canadian immigration experience by telling the stories of the 1.5 million immigrants, refugees, military personnel and war brides who passed through its doors between 1928 and 1971. However the Museum recognises that Pier 21-era migrants and war veterans are ageing and that it must find ways to connect with contemporary audiences to ensure its future sustainability. Consequently Pier 21 is expanding its focus to tell the broader story of Canadian immigration to the present day and thus officially become a national museum celebrating Canada's rich cultural diversity.



Pier 21

Community Presents Program

Community Presents is a partnership program that encourages cultural groups to create their own exhibitions for Pier 21, showcasing themes of immigration, cultural diversity, cultural heritage and identity. Exhibitions are held for three to six weeks, are free of charge and accompanied by weekend public programs. Previous exhibitions include *Greeks of Halifax* with the Greek community and Saint Mary's University, and *Global Chinese New Year*, which was developed in partnership with Mu Lan Chinese Cultural Centre to celebrate the Year of the Rat in 2008. The Community Presents Program has significantly expanded Pier 21's community outreach to groups that haven't been affiliated with the Museum, and also adds a contemporary voice which is missing from the Museum's permanent exhibitions.

Scotiabank Research Centre

Pier 21 collects photographs, books, ship memorabilia, documents, film, oral history interviews and immigrant stories for its Scotiabank Research Centre.

First hand accounts of immigrants are held in the Story Collection, which provides a source for future museum exhibitions. The Research Centre has collected 1,800 stories about Pier 21-era immigration, but is now seeking to expand its collection to reflect pre-1928 and post-1971 immigration to Canada.

Our Canadian Stories

In the Our Canadian Stories project, school students learn oral history techniques, and then go out into the community to conduct interviews and write heritage stories. Each community's stories comprise a chapter in the online Pier 21 Virtual Story Book, which can be accessed by students and researchers across Canada. The project is sustained through a partnership with school teachers and Pier 21 educators. It is designed to engage students with literacy, heritage, storytelling, history and multiculturalism, while also developing their skills and capacity to record stories and share them with the community.

Welcome Home to Canada

The Welcome Home to Canada (WHTC) program is a partnership between Pier 21, government agencies, migrant organisations and private sponsors to offer new migrants a six-month period of work experience at Pier 21. Participants also have the chance to build networks, learn communication and job search skills, and find external work placement opportunities, which benefits both the individual participant and their community. Since 2004, WHTC has provided professional training to 86 newcomers from 40 countries, 70 percent of whom have gone on to meaningful employment or further education. WHTC is also a means of keeping skilled migrants in Halifax, which recognises that the future of the municipality and Canada in general depends on migrants.

FIELD MUSEUM

The Field Museum is a museum of natural history and sciences located in Chicago's lakefront Museum Campus, which is also home to the Shedd Aquarium and Adler Planetarium. The Museum is an international leader in the fields of anthropology, archaeology, biology and palaeontology and manages a collection comprising more than 20 million specimens.



Field Museum

With a collection originating in the colonial era, two of the main challenges facing the Field Museum are its contested relationship with the cultural groups represented in Museum exhibitions and collections, and the limited relevance of its collection to contemporary audiences. Fifteen years ago, the Field Museum began to reconsider how it could better engage and instigate meaningful relationships with the diverse local community. In 1993 it established the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) as a bridge between the public and its collections and research activities.

The Center for Cultural Understanding and Change

The CCUC uses anthropological research to reveal the power of cultural difference amongst Chicago's communities and its role in transforming social life. The CCUC's work is guided by the anthropological framework of Common Concerns, Different Responses – the idea that all people face the same challenges but have different ways of responding to them. In 1998 the CCUC developed Cultural Connections, a landmark program in which Chicago museums collaborate to present comparative cross-cultural educational events celebrating the city's cultural diversity.

Cultural Connections

Cultural Connections is the Field Museum's flagship community partnership program and evolved out of a series of discussions about race, identity and culture at the CCUC's Nuveen Forum in 1995. The Cultural Connections pilot program was launched after institutions expressed interest in extending the forum's discussions on cultural diversity. The partnership now consists of over 25 Chicago-area ethnic museums, cultural centres and historical societies, who present events in the form of structured conversations between two partners. The partners work together to:

- Foster cultural understanding and recognise the value of cultural differences
- Expand public awareness of museums and cultural centres as education resources
- Increase public understanding of contemporary issues facing diverse communities
- Target educators and parents as key disseminators
- Develop relationships with higher education institutions
- Build capacity through the sharing of resources.¹⁹

Cultural Connections events are organised around an annual theme, with six to eight events taking place during a program year (September to June). The theme for this year's program is Bodies in Motion, and events include an exploration of bowling among the African American and Filipino communities, and a study of long distance running at the American Indian Center and Swahili Institute of Chicago. Events are held at the partner museums rather than the Field Museum, in order to introduce new audiences to these smaller museums and to acknowledge that community museums are first voice experts. The projects explain the commonalities and differences between cultures, while also highlighting the underlying meanings and values that are shared across cultures.

To further the educational impact of Cultural Connections and to sustain the program's objectives, a professional development course is available for teachers twice a year. Field Museum staff guide teachers through discussions about cultural anthropology and Chicago's cultural resources, and present a practical framework for implementing cultural understanding in the classroom. Teachers practice self-awareness and reflect on their own culture, becoming ambassadors for cultural diversity and better equipped to deal with a multicultural classroom. This program deepens the Museum's impact and presence in Chicago's diverse schools and communities.

¹⁹ Cultural Connections website, at www.fieldmuseum.org/research_collections/ccuc/ccuc_sites/culturalconnections/introduction_collaboration.asp.

CHICAGO CULTURAL ALLIANCE

As the Field Museum's Cultural Connections partnership grew over the years, so too did the administrative pressures on Center for Cultural Understanding and Change staff. Program partners explored the idea of forming a consortium to sustain the cross-cultural relationships developed through Cultural Connections, but also to address the broader needs of Chicago's community museums.

Mission

Following a three-year planning phase driven by Chicago's ethnic communities, the Chicago Cultural Alliance (CCA) was launched in 2007 to increase the capacity of the partnerships formed through Cultural Connections collaborations. The CCA is "a consortium of Chicago-area ethnic museums and cultural centres whose mission is to effect social change and public understanding of cultural diversity through first voice perspectives. The Alliance increases the visibility and impact of Chicago's ethnic assets by leveraging partnerships between member organisations and major institutions. The Alliance assures the long term efficacy of its public education, marketing, preservation and social service programs by providing organisational development assistance to its core members."²⁰



Cambodian American Heritage Museum & Killing Fields Memorial

²⁰ Chicago Cultural Alliance website, at www.chicagoculturalalliance.org/about/mission.aspx.

Members

Chicago has a unique group of ethnic-specific community museums at various stages of development; some have paid staff, some are entirely volunteer run and others are yet to secure a physical space. The museums are similar in that they provide social as well as cultural services for their communities; many of them started out as social service agencies and expanded to incorporate a cultural component as they met their initial goals. CCA members are drawn from a diverse range of museums such as the Arab American Action Network, Cambodian American Heritage Museum, Chicago Japanese American Historical Society, Polish Museum of America and Swedish American Museum Center. The CCA is comprised of Core Members which are community-based ethnic museums and cultural centres; Partner Institutions which are large organisations with a cultural interest, for instance the Chicago History Museum; and Associates, non-member organisations and individuals who participate in a specific CCA project. The CCA is driven by a board, a third of which is composed of core members.



Swedish American Museum Center

The framework of the CCA provides a sustainable vehicle for forming and maintaining collaborative partnerships between members and other institutions. The CCA is as much about building capacity within individual members (through training, leveraging resources, and joint marketing and administrative services) as it is about creating opportunities for sustainable and reciprocal partnerships between members.

The ability of the CCA to channel information and resources became evident during my time in Chicago, when a fire destroyed most of the Chinese American Museum of Chicago. The CCA mobilised members to work together, pool

volunteers, donate funds and participate in the emergency response. The CCA is now organising training in disaster response planning for its members and coordinating fundraising to rebuild and reopen the Chinese American Museum of Chicago in 2009.

However the CCA does not only benefit its members, but all of Chicago, by encouraging the city to embrace and celebrate its cultural diversity. The CCA has recently partnered with Chicago 2016 to develop a cross-cultural program to enrich the city's Olympic Games bid.

The strength of the CCA is that impetus for its development came from the community – the core members have ownership in its formation and are committed to its development. This is the key to its long term sustainability and growth. Current priorities include expanding upon the Cultural Connections program between core members and the Field Museum; capacity building and professional standards training; establishing cross-cultural creative opportunities for youth; and developing the Digitizing Cultural Project, a digital repository of photographs and objects held by CCA partners.

CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

The Chicago History Museum (CHM) is a privately-funded institution that presents the rich multicultural history of Chicago and Illinois. The title of the Museum's permanent exhibition, *Chicago: Crossroads of America*, aptly conveys the diverse nature of Chicago's neighbourhoods and cultural scene.

The CHM recognises that the best strategy for reaching out to culturally diverse audiences is to target families. As part of its audience engagement initiatives the Museum is currently developing programs for families and young people to complement its new Children's Gallery and Community Gallery.

Catholic Chicago

Catholic Chicago is the first in a series of exhibitions documenting the evolving nature of religion by exploring how religious communities have shaped the city of Chicago. The exhibition highlights the influence of Catholicism on the city's urban landscape and how the experience of being Catholic in Chicago has changed over time. *Catholic Chicago* was developed with extensive community input, and will be followed by exhibitions on the Jewish and Muslim communities in Chicago.

Teen Chicago

Teen Chicago was a three-year program of oral histories, events and outreach programs for Chicago teenagers, which culminated in a major exhibition at the CHM in 2004 and an accompanying website. The project's development was guided by a Teen Council of 15 teenagers from diverse ethnic, religious and class backgrounds. The Council members were selected from hundreds of applicants, and were given seven weeks of formal training in oral history techniques and Chicago history.

The Teen Council worked with historians, filmmakers, artists, storytellers, photographers and teachers from various partner organisations, including the Chicago Humanities Festival, Albany Park Theater Project, Native American Center, Old Town School of Folk Music, and Chicago schools and libraries. One hundred oral history interviews were collected about growing up in Chicago in the 20th century, forming the cornerstone of the exhibition. The interviews have been transcribed and are archived at the CHM, constituting a significant social history resource documenting the history of teenage life in Chicago. The interviews provide a source for future museum programs, ensuring the material gathered through the project has an enduring lifespan.

Teen Chicago had a major impact on the participants, building their skills and capacity, transforming their perception of the Museum and highlighting the relevance of history and culture to their lives.

EL PUEBLO DE LOS ANGELES HISTORICAL MONUMENT

El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument (El Pueblo) is located near the site where 44 settlers from northern Mexico established a town, or pueblo, in 1781. The 'monument' comprises 27 historic buildings, 11 of which are open to the public as museums or businesses. Together they form a 'living museum' in the birthplace of Los Angeles, reflecting the diverse Native American, African American, Spanish, Anglo, Mexican, Chinese, Italian and French heritage of the city.

El Pueblo is managed by the City of Los Angeles, which develops exhibitions, educational programs and community events to interpret the site within the broader context of the city's multicultural history. Current projects include the development of an Italian museum and the conservation of the David Siqueiros mural *Tropical America* on the south wall of the Italian Hall, in partnership with the Getty Conservation Institute. The City of Los Angeles' management costs are met through income from parking revenue at the site, and also from Olvera Street, a traditional Mexican marketplace selling authentic souvenirs and cuisine.



Olvera Street

Chinese American Museum

The Chinese American Museum (CAM) is part of El Pueblo and is housed within the oldest surviving Chinese building in Southern California. CAM opened in 2003 and is jointly operated by the Friends of the Chinese American Museum and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument.



Chinese American Museum

CAM's mission is "to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of America's diverse heritage by researching, preserving and sharing the history, rich cultural legacy and continuing contributions of Chinese Americans."²¹

CAM is supported by donations from the community, who consequently have a vested interest in the Museum's programming. CAM also relies on interns recruited through the Getty's Multicultural Undergraduate Internship program. Through this program, Los Angeles-area museums can apply for grants to fund 10-week summer internship positions for students from ethnic minority groups. The program is designed to support local organisations and increase diversity in the museum and visual arts professions.

CAM is expanding its outreach work by developing community partnerships and collaborations to ensure its programs reflect the entire community of Los Angeles. The Museum recently partnered with San Gabriel High School and Venice Arts on *Picture This: My Life, Your Life, Our Lives*, a photography workshop exploring the cultural diversity and changing demographics of the San Gabriel Valley community. CAM is currently developing a National Student Art Contest themed Democracy and Diversity in collaboration with the Chinese American Citizens Alliance and the Nissan Foundation, to encourage students of all ages to interpret themes important to the Chinese American community through art.

²¹ Chinese American Museum, *Expanding the Dream*, Chinese American Museum, Los Angeles, 2008, 2.

Italian American Museum

Located at the northern end of El Pueblo, the Historic Italian Hall was built in 1907-1908 and served as the cultural and social centre for Los Angeles' Italian community up to the 1930s. In 1990 the Italian community mobilised to preserve the building and raise funds to develop the Italian American Museum (IAM), scheduled to open in 2010. The IAM is jointly managed by the Historic Italian Hall Foundation and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, and aims "to foster a greater understanding of Southern California's diverse heritage through research, historic preservation, exhibits and educational programs that examine the history and continuing contributions of Italian Americans in multi-ethnic Los Angeles."²²



Sunshine and Struggle: The Italian Experience in Los Angeles 1827-1927

The obvious challenge at El Pueblo is how to manage, interpret and develop programming for a site that is so diverse and significant to a range of stakeholders. However this is also one of El Pueblo's greatest strengths and drawcards, as it already possesses a 'captive audience' of interested communities. By fostering ongoing partnerships with community groups, government, businesses and education providers, and expanding cross-cultural interaction and interpretation, El Pueblo will strengthen community engagement in the historic heart of Los Angeles.

²² El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument website, at www.lacity.org/elp/elpsm1.htm.

CONCLUSION

A survey of museums in the UK, Canada and USA shows that collaborative programming has been pivotal in engaging and empowering culturally diverse communities. Furthermore these museums have demonstrated how an integrated approach to community engagement – manifested through strategic partnerships with government, schools and communities – ensures that relationships and results can be sustained in the long term.

Partnership projects can benefit museums, individuals and communities. Partnerships with community groups allow museums to access new networks, develop collaborative skills and raise the profile of the museum in the community. Individuals develop communication and project management skills, which increases their confidence and enhances their employability. The training or ‘skilling up’ of individuals can also function as a catalyst for new projects and opportunities which can become self-sustaining. Successful community engagement projects illustrate a commitment to education, capacity building and the concept of lifelong learning. Building community leadership can also inspire positive social change, improving the quality of life of the individual and the community.

When engaging in project-based work, it is necessary to think in terms of legacies and how a project can live on beyond the exhibition period or launch date. Community engagement projects with a tangible outcome, such as artwork, film or oral history, can be acquired for the museum collection, made accessible on a website or reused in future projects, creating another form of sustainability. Ongoing research projects capitalising on such material or developed from an initial project can also contribute to sustainability.

This Churchill Fellowship examined how overseas museums have used innovative partnerships to engage with culturally diverse communities, be more inclusive and facilitate cross-cultural exchange. From a political perspective, these museums have also revealed their capacity to become instruments for social change by building cohesive communities and contributing to policies of social inclusion. These concepts are particularly central to Local Government policy and certainly worth exploring further in Australia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That museums in Australia build and maintain long term relationships with culturally diverse communities to create a sustainable framework for collaboration.
2. That museums in Australia commit more funding to implement and sustain long term partnerships, as opposed to short term project funding.
3. That museums in Australia increase diversity of their staff, board, advisory committees and volunteers, and draw upon their knowledge and networks to better reflect the communities they serve.
4. That museums in Australia consider employing dedicated community access officers or community-based fieldworkers with language skills and understanding of cultural protocols to collaborate with community groups, extend outreach and build ongoing partnerships.
5. That FCM&G expands its range of partnerships by pursuing collaborative opportunities with government agencies, community organisations, artists, schools, universities, businesses and other cultural institutions. FCM&G should also develop stronger networks within Fairfield City Council to take advantage of specialty staff knowledge and expertise.
6. That FCM&G projects provide the opportunity for participants to learn new skills, access training and build leadership capacity – which can be applied independently of the Museum – thereby contributing to a self-sustaining community cultural development model.
7. That FCM&G develops more thematic projects promoting cross-cultural intersections and collaboration to facilitate connections within and between communities. The aim is to empower communities to share their own stories but also to form cultural bridges to other groups, thereby building community capacity and fostering positive interactions between communities.
8. That FCM&G develops intergenerational projects with culturally diverse youth, using forms such as art, filmmaking and digital media to build skills and contribute to community cohesion.
9. That FCM&G forms partnerships with schools to work on curriculum-based projects that contribute to lifelong learning.
10. That FCM&G pilots a dialogue program and invites community organisations to take part in discussions about migration, identity and community in Fairfield.
11. That FCM&G commits resources to enhancing the Museum website and developing it as a sustainable forum for interaction and dialogue with the community.

12. That FCM&G undertakes both quantitative and qualitative evaluation of its work to measure the effectiveness of its community engagement strategies and to inform future approaches and planning.
13. That FCM&G measures the social impact of its work with culturally diverse communities and its role in contributing to social change, with a view to expanding its social inclusion work.
14. That FCM&G investigates the feasibility of developing a consortium of museums, community organisations, government agencies and universities – modelled on the Chicago Cultural Alliance – to work collaboratively with culturally diverse communities, facilitate cross-cultural partnerships and increase public understanding of cultural diversity. This could be initiated as a pilot program in Western Sydney, in partnership with Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and the University of Western Sydney and with the support of Arts NSW. The program would build a stronger relationship with disparate community, migrant and refugee organisations, and provide training and leadership opportunities that would empower communities to showcase their own cultures and participate in a cross-cultural exchange program as per Cultural Connections at the Field Museum.

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