



SUDAN NATIONAL

MUSEM

ALTAIEB ABDELSALAM

ABDALLA ALI

What did being on the Programme mean to you personally?

I would like first of all to thank the organizers of the International Training Programme, Claire, Anna and George and also an extended thank you to Senior Fellow Roshan Mishra, for a warm welcome and facilitation of the programme. I am grateful to the UK partners at The Collection – Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire – and would like to thank Dawn Heywood and Andrea Martin and also Claire Pickersgill at Nottingham University Museum. I wanted to thank The Barakat Trust and the Aall Foundation so much for sponsoring me on my journey on the ITP. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity as well as thankful for their kind contributions.

The ITP gave me the opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds and different cultures. Working together and supporting each other also gave me a greater understanding of my responsibilities and the knowledge and new skills I need to perform the work essential to museums such as documentation, archives, exhibitions, storage and conservation.

Finally, thank you to the ITP programme for helping me to express my creative side and come out of my shell - you have given me a confidence that is priceless.

The programme was divided into two parts which were e-Learning and onsite. The e-Learning was between 22 August and 9 September 2022 and it included recorded sessions and modules which were available from anywhere and at anytime for access and gave me a better understanding of the programme and the British Museum before the onsite visit to the UK between 17 September and 16 October 2022. The on-site part included a number of sessions and workshops as well as visits to various British Museum departments and additional day trips, alongside an Object in focus trail project.



Did the ITP give you new skills?

At the British Museum in London, I learnt from the Community Partnerships team how we engage local people, audiences, families, schools and organizations and how they can be encouraged to visit museums including those who don't usually visit, making the museum a more inclusive and engaging space and building relationships with the community.

Thank you to Jennifer Turner and Loretta Kilroe for their time and guidance during my time in the Egypt and Sudan Department at the British Museum.



With Jennifer, I acquired knowledge about storage methods and how the organic and non-organic collection can be stored and also about which materials are most climate-sensitive, or at risk from pests and weather conditions. This experience also inspired me to create a database for objects in storage which must be catalogued, organized and categorized in order to facilitate access to them and that information must be stored in a professional and organized manner. From this, I also got the idea to store large and small pieces inside cupboards, racks, shelves and boxes and learnt how a collection can be placed in storage safely and be protected against being crushed.

Working with Duygu Camurcuoglu who guided us in the Conservation department, I gained knowledge about the conservation of murals and how to clean and fill the missing areas with chemical materials.



I also learnt how we can conserve organic material such as a coffin using an exoskeleton made of wood to facilitate movement during restoration, photography and research, as well as how to clean and conserve pottery and textiles, and bronze and silver coins.

It was amazing to see the work of the Shattered Glass of Beirut project with Zeina Klink-Hoppe and Duygu - on the evening of August 4, 2020, an enormous supply of ammonium nitrate exploded at the port of Beirut and a museum showcase containing 74 glass vessels were destroyed with just two remaining in good condition. Staff from the archaeological museum have worked with British Museum conservators for three months to restore some of the glass vessels, now displayed at the British Museum.



Museum project day gave me the opportunity to use my experience on the e-Learning and from onsite BM sessions such as the ones with Stuart Frost on interpretation and William Westwood in his session about museum accessibility for audiences.



Thank you to the British Museum for showing us the new exhibition on Hieroglyphs which is one of the oldest forms of writing in the world, including many that are secret in Egyptian civilizations. Thank you to Ilona Regulski and Kelly Accetta Crowe, curators of the exhibition who gave us the tour. I learnt how hieroglyphs were discovered, by whom and how they discovered the language.

I was very lucky to meet Marcel Maree again - I have met him before in Sudan and at many online workshops. Thank you for his presentation on Heritage Crime and Provenance Research where he told us stories about theft and illegal trafficking of antiquities and cultural objects and talked about how we can stop the plundering and theft of powerful historic relics from around the world. We looked at proof of ownership and recovery of looted collections - it was an amazing training session and I learnt a lot from it.



The Object in focus trail project showed me how to imagine a story about an object chosen from a gallery or storage which related to an agreed theme of food and drink, and how to write a description explaining what the object is and what the link is, as well as seeking

references and sources related to the story. We each made a five minute video presentation which gave me confidence and skills of speaking in public which are useful and necessary for me to become a tour guide.

UK Partner

Professionally and personally, my interests matched the Partner Programme at Lincolnshire with Andrea and Dawn who hosted us and showed us the main attractions in Lincoln city alongside explaining the collections, departments and archives.

I gained knowledge on how huge stones were preserved and how we can store collections based on sensitive and non-sensitive material which should be decided before the objects enter the museum.

We took a tour around the Lincolnshire archives in addition to manuscript and paper restoration and various sections of the library. I learnt about environmental conditioning and how to protect objects from the ten agents of deterioration using pest traps and freezing or anoxic treatment which should be clearly labeled and carried out by creating a monthly schedule. One thing that fascinated me at Lincolnshire was a museum robot at The Collection which was working as a tour guide.





Laura Garner lead a discussion at The Collection on informal learning programmes such as those during Covid-19 and children's education programmes. Examples of projects were newspapers for children under age five and for adults, they could learn about archaeological excavations and how to draw. We were also shown an old Roman castle gate, five metres underground and I am thankful for the session on how can we record and document archaeological sites using geographic information systems.



University of Nottingham

Thank you to Clare Pickersgill who showed us the Museum of Archaeology at the University of Nottingham as well as storage, where I learnt how to document a collection. We were lucky enough to get into the manuscripts and special collections digital gallery, including the biggest archive that I have ever seen in my life with old books, manuscripts and maps of the UK and overseas from different countries around the world and I found many books about my country. I also learnt about animal and human bones in the labs and saw the plant study department. We had an important session at the computer science department about the role of computers in museums and how they can help a museum to become a successful.



Things that I would like to use in my organization

Firstly, I would like to apply the children's education knowledge that I learnt in the BM and Lincolnshire to create an activity programme with children and young people and I gained inspiration for ideas such as hanging children's drawings on the museum walls.

I would like to apply the accessibility knowledge that I acquired during the e-Learning and onsite programme such as map guides for visitors and QR codes, online collections and museum app-based audio guides which really clearly explain the collection and are useful for audiences.

Sudan National Museum is closed for upgrades and renovations and so the museum collections will be moving into new storage and the sessions and workshops I have learned from will be very helpful and useful for me during this project.

I would like to create a space for local communities to be represented and for all regions to be represented through the museum exhibitions.

The barriers to effectively implementing these changes include fundraising problems and professionals and experts are required to successfully carry out the process.

How will you continue to play a part in the ITP 'global network'?

I am so pleased to have joined the ITP global network and I look forward to continuing my role within this by keeping in touch via social media and through online sessions and onsite if possible. I will be keeping in touch with the other fellows and know I can get in touch with colleagues in the UK if I need any help in the museum area.

Thank you very much to Hartwig Fischer, Director, British Museum for inviting us to have lunch with him during the programme.

