

ITP Final report

By Yanoa Pomalima Carrasco



Me in front of the British Museum's Great Court. I can't recall how many times I passed through it with museum inquiries travelling around my mind.

Introduction

Being part of the British Museum's International Training Program (ITP) is one of those experiences that I will cherish for life. In my case, also a little childhood dream come true. Over the years, and with more professional experience, I started looking for opportunities to explore the British Museum from the inside, learn about its collections and stories first-hand, and participate in activities that enhance the visitors' experience. For this reason, when I discovered the program on the museum's website, I knew I wanted to be part of this enriching experience.

I decided to participate at the right time. Not only have I shared experiences and created a bond with an extraordinary group of professionals from around the world, but also, I learned some lessons that will mark my professional and personal path. Those shared experiences, and the rich exchange of cultural knowledge among the participants, make this program one of the most formative opportunities the British Museum can offer.



First group photo while enjoying Stonehenge together.

ITP experience

Our programme became a memorable experience from the beginning. The ITP team created thematic sessions to explore the museum's departments, arranged encounters to increase our networking with museum professionals, and developed with us the "Object in Focus Trail Project", a collaborative proposal in which we created a thematic trail based around objects linked to food and drink, inside the British Museum's galleries. In addition, they organised a series of complementary activities to visit local museums and nearby landmark sites.

Also, our time in the United Kingdom was marked by historical moments such as the last goodbye of the longest-reigning monarch, the ascension of the king, and the changes in their Prime Ministry. Living in London then, I perceived unity, support, and trust among its citizens. Curiously I also observe those characteristics within its museums, demonstrating how our museums go hand in hand with our actions as a nation.

The overall experience has strongly affected my engagement as a museum professional. Considering that our field is oriented to society, seeking the enjoyment and promotion of local narratives through accessible and inclusive experiences, I could not pick a better program to be part of this.

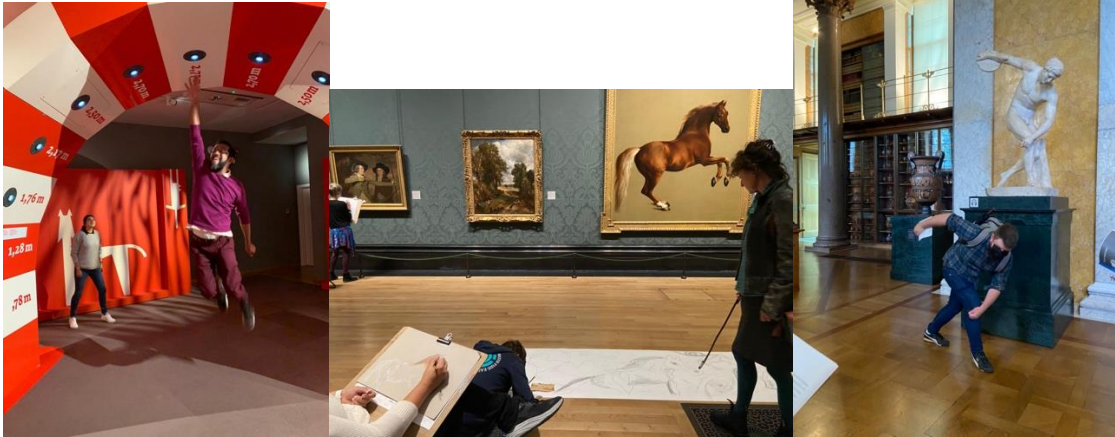
That engagement effect is the approach I will apply in my professional path in managing museums in Peru. The ideas, skills and lessons learned during the ITP will be of the utmost importance in constructing a new, inclusive and collaborative perspective in the actions I seek to apply in the various museums administrated by the Peruvian Ministry of Culture.



Exciting meeting with Irving Finkel, who not only taught me a lot about board games (one of my biggest passions) but also encouraged me to continue exploring its mechanics and its connections with current societies. Middle East Department.



The ITP global experience taught me much about my colleagues and their cultures. Being able to experience together a part of their lives was one of the most enriching parts of the program. Sarbojanin Durga Puja, Glasgow 2022.



Museum experiences are different to anyone. Experimenting with new friends' ways to enhance the museum experience helped me to develop ideas that will see the light soon. When you are in doubt, sometimes you need to remember that imagination and enjoyment are key elements to include in your projects: Horniman Museum and Garden, The National Gallery, and British Museum.

UK Partner Placement: Glasgow Museums

After a few intense weeks of museum discussions, skills development, and in-depth exploration of interdisciplinary components found at the British Museum, we set our way to our partner institutions. Once again, the well-curated program made by the ITP team provided me with the most significant experience I could have had in Glasgow to immerse myself in collaborative museum practices. I always think of museums as spaces for dialogue where the voice of our communities become a key element to understanding the stories of our collections within our current context. And that is precisely what Glasgow taught me: how to bring the community closer to the museum with practical and enriching practices.

Glasgow Museums is one of the most extensive museum services in the United Kingdom, oriented on creating a positive impact on individuals among the different communities in the city. Their various activities in their museums and cultural spaces show us the powerful impact of museums on our current society and how community-based programs can transform an entire sense of citizenship. Well-being, co-creation, interpretation and inclusive museum practices became very clear to me after experiencing their approach first-hand.

The Glasgow Museums Resource Center (GMRC) was our home-base. This spectacular collection's storage contains powerful stories of the world shared in different museum venues around the city and spaces such as libraries, schools, hospitals, and other community-centred areas. Their outreach team (The Open Museum) transform community ideas and necessities into enjoyable collaborative projects made by and for the community.

My experience in Glasgow marked the beginning of a series of collaborative projects with the Glasgow team. Also, their methodologies and strategies already resonate in my current initiatives inside the Ministry of Culture of my country.



My delightful experience at the Glasgow Research Center won't be forgotten. Visiting its infinite collections, you can travel the world. And this journey is much better if you do it with people who inspire and support you.

An ongoing experience

One of the primary purposes I was looking for in the ITP, besides sharing experiences with another worldwide museum professionally and analysing the British Museum management from the inside, was to observe, experience and understand the current museum movements in the cultural sector. Spending time visiting museums and exploring their ways of telling their stories was mind-opening and inspired me to broaden the museum in Peru. The experience fulfilled my expectations, helping me gain confidence, knowledge, and experience, developing an adventurous sense of thinking critically about my next steps inside the Ministry of Culture of Peru. Based on this experience, I will be developing new society-centred activities, promoting professional training for our museum workers, implementing accessibility in our cultural institutions, and building new museum paradigms within our local communities in Peru. Besides that, I am looking forward to exploring new paths of collaboration, especially between the ITP community, because if there is something that these weeks taught me, it is that despite having different traditions and customs, most of our efforts are directed towards transforming museums into a meaningful experience for the people and why not, by the people.



Museums, like books, transport you to new worlds and introduce you to wonderful people. If we want our museums to change, we must find that formula that clicks within ourselves. We are not alone in that mission; we need to learn how to listen, observe and build community relations to fulfil it. Roald Dahl Museum and Story Center.

Acknowledgement

My participation in the ITP 2022 would not have been possible without the generous support of the Aall Foundation. Thanks to the foundation for allowing me to gain experience and knowledge for further museum development in Peru.

This remarkable experience would not be the same without the dedicated and constant support of the ITP team. They nurtured such a well-curated program and gathered not only a group of professionals, a group of very close friends who will work together to improve our sector in our countries. Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to Claire Messenger, who was always very attentive to our inquiries, and with kindness and patience, was able to enhance each fellow's skills and particularities to our ITP projects. George Peckham, Anna Cottle, and Roshan Mishra, thanks for your kindness, guidance, and conversations while we were on our way to exploring and discovering new museum experiences. I know we will keep building memories together soon.

Also, I extend my thankfulness to the marvelous Glasgow team. Patricia Allan, Ed Johnson, and John MacInnes - your enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment to local communities have reminded me and affirmed the path I must follow within the museum world. Together we design a project that reflects our journeys and dreams, hoping to leave a mark on your communities.

I am also very thankful to all the British Museum staff, who shared their memories, and the knowledge gained throughout their professional career so we can build our museum paths with new perspectives.

To my now ITP family. We all arrived a little nervous about finally meeting in person. And after all our museum experiences, talks, and exploratory walks through the city, I must confess that I did not want to reach the date of our goodbyes. However, this short but intense program has created a bond that will continue to expand into new experiences that will emerge from future partnering projects, celebrating each other's achievements and encounters worldwide. Thanks to each of you for this fantastic journey.

