

AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE REGIONAL YOUTH FORUM: Increasing youth involvement in the promotion and protection of African World Heritage

DATE: 28th April – 4th May 2016

VENUE: Robben Island World Heritage property, South Africa

ORGANISERS: The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), Robben Island Museum (RIM) and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre

WITH THE SUPPORT OF: South African Government and African Union



1- Background

AWHF 10th anniversary

The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) was launched on the 5 May 2006 at Sterkfontein, South Africa, with the mandate to contribute to the effective conservation and management of cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value on the African continent. The Fund was created after a series of consultations by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the African Union. Following acceptance by the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Durban, South Africa, in July 2005 and the General Assembly of States Parties to the *Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (World Heritage Convention) held at UNESCO, Paris, in October 2005, the establishment of the Fund was endorsed by the Conference of Ministers of Culture of the African Union held in Nairobi, Kenya, in December 2005, and by the 6th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in Khartoum, Sudan, in January 2006. The AWHF was granted the status of Category II Centre under the auspices of UNESCO in 2009, and an agreement was signed between UNESCO and the South African Government in January 2010.

The work of the AWHF covers all 54 African Member States to the African Union and UNESCO. The AWHF's objective is to address the challenges faced by African States Parties in the implementation of the UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention, specifically the underrepresentation of African properties on the World Heritage List and the insufficient conservation and management of African natural and cultural heritage sites.

The 5 May 2016 will mark the 10th Anniversary of the Fund's launch. The 10th anniversary provides AWHF and its stakeholders with an opportunity to reflect on its achievements and to reflect on the future strategy to achieve its objectives. To commemorate the creation of the AWHF, a series of events and activities are planned during the year.

Robben Island World Heritage property (Republic of South Africa)

Robben Island is one of South Africa's most significant and iconic heritage sites, which symbolizes for South Africans, Africans, and people from all over the world the triumph of the human spirit over enormous hardship and adversity. The 2-kilometre-long island located in Table Bay, 11 km off the

coast of Cape Town became a National Monument in 1996 and a UNESCO World Heritage property in 1999. Robben Island is a richly layered cultural landscape that was used at various times between the 17th century and the 20th century as a prison, a hospital for socially unacceptable groups, and a military base. Its buildings, and in particular those of the late 20th century maximum security prison for political prisoners, testify to the way in which democracy and freedom triumphed over oppression and racism.

African Union Agenda 2063

The African Union has created a 50 year development blueprint entitled 'The Africa We Want'. This is the common vision for all the members of the African Union, which emphasises an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena. The Agenda is expressed through seven aspirations dealing with inclusive growth and sustainable development, good governance, peace, human rights, democracy, culture and heritage, women and youth and partnership.

World Heritage Youth Forums

The UNESCO World Heritage Education Programme is one of UNESCO's most successful flagship programmes for young people, generating awareness-raising and capacity building activities that enhance the visibility of the Convention and facilitate the greater involvement of young people, including women and indigenous communities, their empowerment and inclusion to contribute to World Heritage conservation. One of the major activities is the World Heritage Youth Forum that has become an annual event, organized and held in close conjunction with the yearly session of the World Heritage Committee.

These fora provide the opportunity for young people to exchange experiences, to discuss common concerns, to discover new roles for themselves in heritage conservation and have their voices heard. Each youth forum take up specific issues linked to World Heritage and carry out hands-on activities that provides some basic skills in conservation and preservation, contributing to the promotion of World Heritage education and youth involvement.

2- African Regional Youth Forum

This forum will address young people and seek to provide a sustainable platform for youth in Africa that could increase the involvement of youth in the promotion and protection of World Heritage in Africa, and also deliver essential feedback to UNESCO, the World Heritage Committee and the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) on youth challenges, accomplishments and actions related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the region. It responds to the interest expressed by States Parties to hold a youth forum at a regional level as well as to the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Africa Region, which called for increased involvement and benefits for local communities in World Heritage.

This is the first regional youth forum on World Heritage in Africa. It will address Anglophone youth. A second forum is planned for 2017 targeting francophone youth in Africa.

3- Objectives of the forum

Goal: Through the increased participation of African youth in World Heritage protection and promotion, this activity shall promote holistic youth development and raise their sense of ownership, stewardship and accountability for heritage protection and transmission.

Objectives:

- To mobilize young people in World Heritage preservation efforts in the region and create a platform for their exchange and involvement;
- To raise youth awareness and appreciation of issues and threats facing current conservation efforts through a deeper understanding of the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the workings of the World Heritage Committee;
- To encourage youth to become or increase their role as responsible guardians of World Heritage properties and to raise their capacities to develop sustainable initiatives in their countries, which take into account the present day environmental issues and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals;
- To promote inter-generational dialogue and sharing of knowledge among youth, experts and specialists concerning the preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage;
- To facilitate an organized feedback to the World Heritage Committee and UNESCO of young people's concerns and recommendations regarding World Heritage properties in Africa; and to improve the visibility and recognition of the annual Youth Forum within the World Heritage Committee.

The forum will also stimulate youth involvement in entrepreneurship activities at World Heritage sites that could bring direct economic benefits to local communities living in or around World Heritage properties in Africa, promote the involvement of youth in conservation activities as well as in site management, disaster risk management and sustainable tourism development initiatives at Africa's natural and cultural World Heritage properties.

4- Structure of the forum

- Lectures and presentations from experts and heritage specialists will provide an introduction to the 1972 World Heritage Convention, the Action Plan for World Heritage in the Africa Region, and the challenges of conservation and development.
- Hands-on / practical activities that provide some basic skills on heritage conservation, preservation and/or promotion of African heritage.
- Group discussions and workshops.
- Guided visit to an African World Heritage site with expert input.
- Presentations by the participants on heritage related issues in their own country.
- Participation in a Youth Model of the World Heritage Committee, an educational simulation drawing attention of the young people to the issues related to heritage preservation and promotion in the Africa region and how the World Heritage Committee works.

5- Working language

The working language for the forum is English.

**A French-speaking forum is planned for 2017 in Africa (subject to the availability of funds).*

6- Participants

24 African participants will be selected for the forum matching the following profile:

- Aged from 20 - 28 years old.
- Fluent in English.

- Motivated, active and driven individuals interested in engaging in a World Heritage network of young African youth and eager to implement the outcomes of the forum in their home countries.
- Individuals passionate about heritage in their country.
- The project is open to participants from all African countries.

7- Funding

The costs for the forum will be covered by the organizers; the African World Heritage Fund and Robben Island Museum (i.e. airfare, accommodation, meals and local transport within South Africa during the forum).

8- Applying for the forum

Each applicant should submit the following **application package**:

- The completed **application form**.
- A motivation letter (maximum 1 page) detailing your motivations and experiences related to World Heritage;
- A curriculum vitae (2 pages maximum);
- A signed letter of recommendation from a university, organization or administrative authority/supervisor;
- A short video (maximum 2 minutes) showcasing how youth are or could promote and/or safeguard World Heritage sites (or a site) in your African country;
 - ✓ Your videos should be: creative, innovative, surprising, but most important of all is to have fun!
 - ✓ Your videos need to comply with the following criteria: Clip length 2 minutes maximum and format: "AVI" only.

- Selection criteria

The following items will be strongly considered during selection:

- Profile confirms with requirements;
- Completed application package (form, CV, motivation letter, recommendation letter & video);
- Diversity and complementarities of experiences among participants;
- Potential to act as multiplier;
- Gender and geographic balance;

- Conditions

The attendance during the full length of the forum is mandatory.

Participants should be committed to invest time to prepare and follow up the Youth Forum.

Disclaimer: Please note submission of applications indicates the applicant's acceptance of the organiser's right to utilise the entry for informational and promotional purposes. Intellectual property of the applicants will be acknowledged.

9- Deadline

The complete application package should be submitted **at the latest on the 31st January 2016 (9am GMT) via the following email address: awhfyouthforum@gmail.com.**

For any queries or problems during application process, please contact AWHF (Pamela Mac Quilkan: PamelaM4@awhf.net) with copy to UNESCO (Carméla Quin: c.quin@unesco.org). Please note that

applications sent to these emails will not be accepted, please send to the stipulated email address:
awhfyouthforum@gmail.com.

Applicants will be selected by a jury consisting of representatives from the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), Robben Island Museum (RIM), UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and the African Union.

Successful applicants will be informed by 26th February 2016 at the latest.