

Culture Grows Symposium 2025

Symposium Schedule

Theme: *Heritage in the Digital Age: An Exploration of Indigenous Knowledge and Technology*

Venue: The National Museums of Kenya | Virtual

Date: 23-26 July 2025



	Arrival and Check-in of International Participants
11:00 - 01:00pm	<div>(Twitter Space: @ke_British)</div> <div>Session 1: People Behind the Platforms: How Digital Tools Connect Youth to Cultural Heritage</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Michael Murungi, Eastern Africa Government Affairs & Public Policy Lead, Google Arts & Culture (KE)Junniah Wamaitha, Project Coordinator Project Coordinator, EAMAN - Eastern African Museum of Art Nairobi (KE)Natasha Trotman, International Equalities Designer, and Creative in residence at Somerset House (Studio 48) (UK)Mercy Ndegwa, Director Public Policy, East & Horn of Africa (KE)Rahab Kimani, Acquisition Manager, Rushlake Distribution (KE)</div> <div>Moderator: Lonwabo Mavuso, Director, Andani Africa</div>
02:00 - 03:15pm	<div>(Online event – registration required for all sessions)</div> <div>Session 2: Identity and Diaspora in the Digital World</div> <div>The session examines identity-building through VR, diaspora networks, and online memory-making. It will include a case study presentations + VR demo</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Michael Makembe, Multi-instrumentalist (RW),Amy Curl, Music Industry Specialist (AUS)Kenneth Dachi Multi Cultural Affairs Advisor, (AUS & KE)</div> <div>Moderator: Lisa Oduor, singer-songwriter and producer (KE)</div>



05:00 – 09:00pm	<p>Stakeholder Cocktail reception & canapes at Ayira Neuro Soul Café, Kilimani, Nairobi</p> <p>Performance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Oduor, Kenyan singer-songwriter and producer • Michael Makembe, Rwandan musician, multi-instrumentalist, producer and beat-maker
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SYMPOSIUM EVENTS		THURSDAY 24 JULY 2025 (DAY TWO)
10:00 –10:30am	Arrival and Registration	
	(Online event)	
	Screening of Film Trailers - Santuri tapes	
11:00 –11:15am	<p>Session 3: Opening Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Kimani, linguist and cultural scholar – Director, Twaweza Communications (KE), • Ruth Mackenzie CBE, Director of Arts, British Council (UK) • PS Ummi Bashir, State Department for Culture, the Arts & Heritage; Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services in the Republic of Kenya 	
11:15 –11:40am	<p>(Online event)</p> <p>Session 4: Keynote Speech: How do digital technologies provide opportunities for preservation and sharing of cultural heritage? Which challenges do they create for communities and heritage sector?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Caroline Mose, Cultural scholar (PhD SOAS, University of London) 	



11:40 – 12:30pm	<p>(Online event)</p> <p>Session 5: AI Meets Culture: Who's controlling the story?</p> <p>How is AI changing the way we experience and protect our culture?</p> <p>How do we manage the future of digital tech from Africa?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulane Mthembu, Technologist, artist multi-hyphenate, KwaZulu Natal Society of Arts, South Africa • Gideon Ngaruiya, Graduate student, Turin University, Italy • Brian Afande, Co-founder & CEO BlackRhino VR (KE) • Preston Adie, Global Head of Data, ENGIE Energy Access (Data Scientist and Storyteller) (KE) <p>Moderator: Aremu Anuoluwapo, Computational Linguist & Cognitive Scientist</p>
12:30 – 1:00pm	<p>Jameel Virjee CEO of CityBlue Hotels and Mukami Kowino, Deputy Country Director British Council, Kenya, in conversation about Asian African Heritage Gallery</p>
12:45 – 01:00pm	<p>Informal networking</p>
01:00 – 02:00PM LUNCH	
02:00 – 3:00pm	<p>Session 6: Clicks for Culture: How Communities are Taking Over the Feed</p> <p>This panel looks at how digital tools are being used to protect, preserve, and amplify Indigenous knowledge. It will spotlight community-led initiatives, explore ethical questions, and highlight efforts to ensure local voices are visible, respected, and safeguarded in the digital age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutanu Kyanya – Programme Outreach and partnerships lead, Africa Digital Heritage (KE) • Julius Mutuku Muindi – Director at Akamba Cultural Centre (KE) • Nic Wang'onde – Director of Scriptease (VR experience of Fort Jesus) (KE) • Gilmore Qhawe Khumalo – Founder of I wear my Culture, (ZIM) <p>Moderator: Stephanie Grant, Director Cultural Protection Fund, British Council (UK)</p>



03:10 – 04:10 pm	<p>Session 7: Digital platforms and the future of cultural memory that are curated by people: How are communities digitising their heritage while making a living online?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beth Achista, Music Executive, The Orchard Music (KE) • Ruth McKenzie, Director of Arts, British Council (UK) • Barbra Babweteera, Executive Director, CCFU (UG) <p>Moderator: Dr. Njabulo, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Manchester Museum (UK)</p>
04:15 – 05:25 pm	<p>Session 8: ‘Dear Museum...Let’s talk’</p> <p>A fireside chat led by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ngaire Blankenberg, Founding Director- Institute for Creative Repair and Creative Repair Studio – ‘Flipping Museums’ (SA) • Emmaus Kimani, Kenyan poet, artist and curator (KE) • Adam Yawe, 3D artist, curator and product designer (KE)
04:10 – 05:10 pm	<p>(Online Event)</p> <p>Session 9: Hashtags & Heritage – Storytelling in the Age of Social Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social media as a medium of cultural storytelling ➤ Online communities preserving traditional practices ➤ Digital platforms for language preservation <p>From viral trends challenges rooted in tradition to online campaigns preserving endangered languages, this session highlights how youth and communities are using social platforms to keep cultural expressions alive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jim Joel, Artist Curator, (UG) • Rosemary Bell, Head of Production, Scriptease (KE) • Caroline Ngorobi, Founder, Jukwaa Arts (KE) • Eddie Hatitye, Executive Director, Music in Africa, (SA) <p>Moderator: Connie Bell, Lead - Decolonizing The Archives (UK)</p>



06:00 – 09:00 pm	(Evening Gig) Kamene Arts or Geco Café or Nakili Space (<i>guests to choose</i>) Led by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marlene Cherop, Project Manager, British Council (KE) Paul Kamaa, Project Manager, British Council (KE)
FRIDAY, 25 JULY 2025 (DAY THREE)	
10:00 – 10:30 am	Arrival and Registration
10:30 – 10:45am	Screening of short films and trailers
	Session 10: How Can Digital Culture Drive Real Change The Session will discuss how policies can be developed for digital innovation to support creative industries and cultural heritage conservation while ensuring ethical and equitable access to technology, promote restitution of cultural artefacts, decolonize historical narratives, and address impacts of climate change. Session will be aligned to the MODIACULT declaration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hugue Ngandeu Ngatta, Programme Specialist, Social and human Sciences, UNESCO (KE) Ian Thomas, Head of Insights Global, Arts, British Council (UK) Ruth Mackenzie, Director of Arts, British Council (TBC) (UK) Moderator: David Waweru, Member, EU/UNESCO Expert Facility on the Governance of Culture (KE)
10:45 – 11:45am	(Online Event) Session 11: Culture & Code – Who Owns our Stories in the digital age? As more cultural content goes digital, questions of ownership, representation, and ethical use become urgent. This session explores how communities protect their stories, knowledge, and creations online. Legal expert panel and resource sharing session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharon Wata, Assistant Executive Director- Legal & Technical Affairs at Kenya Copyright Board KECOBO, (KE) Angela Mwandanda, National Coordinator, Recording Industry of Kenya (RIKE) (KE) Liz Lenjo, Chairperson, Copyright Tribunal (KE) Moderator: Michael Burgess, Producer UK/Kenya Season at the Africa Centre (UK)

12:00 -01:00 pm	Session 12: Global Ties, Local Vibes: How Community Projects and Culture Bring Us Together The session will explore how international cooperation can support community- driven grassroots projects and contribute to the revitalization of intangible traditions and inspire new generations. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• David Tinning, Founder, Santuri (KE)• Nguyễn Đức Tăng, Director of the Centre, Community Heritage (Vietnam)• Omar Lali Bajuni Cultural Heritage Project, Shungwaya Welfare Association (KE)• Binti Gurung, Natural Roots, (Nepal)• Rebecca Lorins, Likikiri Collective (S.S) Moderator: Skinder Hundal MBE, CEO/Director of New Art Exchange (UK)
01:00– 02:00pm	LUNCH (DJ set (WiWa – Kirinyaga’s finest))
02:00– 03:00 pm	Session 13: Experience sharing on Digitizing Heritage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wanjiru Koinange, Restorer of libraries & Co-founder, The Book Bunk (KE)• Chao Maina, Founder of African Digital Heritage (KE)
03:15 - 3:45 pm	(Content screening) Session 14: Presentations on decolonising AI



03:55 – 4:55 pm	(Online Event) Session 15: Rebuilding the Past with Emerging Tech Dive into cutting-edge technologies that are transforming how we engage with heritage. From AI reconstructions of destroyed monuments to AR tours of historical sites, discover how tech is bringing the past to life. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulane M, Technologist, artist multi-hyphenate (SA) • Prof Vukosi Marivate, Computer Science, University of Pretoria (SA)
05:00 – 9:00pm	(Evening Gig) Night at the Museum (DJ Line-up and performers to be announced soon)
SATURDAY, 26 JULY 2025 (DAY FOUR)	
11:00 - 12:15pm	(Online event) Session 16: Bridging the Gap – Policies that invest in Culture and Innovation Policy experts, cultural leaders, and youth advocates discuss the regulatory frameworks needed to protect indigenous knowledge, foster digital inclusion, and support cultural heritage through tech innovation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth Alumni/Chevening Alumni • Strathmore Unive representative • Raphael Chikukwa, Director National Gallery (ZIM) Moderator: Anne Gitonga, Policy Analyst, Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) (KE)

To register for any session, please visit: [Cultural
Heritage symposium 2025 | British Council](#)

