

- 2026 Call for Applications is Open!
- Asin Tibouk included in UNESCO ICH list
- 'Tururi' fibres of resistance by Renata Peters
- Repository Updates
- Made in Monserrat by Samantha Lauren
- News Bites

THE EMKP 2026 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS IS OPEN

The EMKP 2025/2026 Call for Applications is now **OPEN** and will close by midday on the **19th of January 2026**. This is a very exciting time for the programme as we hear from potential applicants and organisations worldwide and continue to learn about living material practices under risk of disappearing.

The EMKP offers two types of grants: Documentation and Legacy Digitisation. Documentation grants are intended to document living material practices. They can be small, with a duration of 12 months and a maximum award of £20,000, or large, with a duration of 24 months and a maximum award of £100,000. The Legacy Digitisation grant is intended to digitise existing archives focusing on material practices that were or are still endangered. They support one year of work with a maximum award of £20,000, and they can be combined with a Documentation grant, provided that they are related.

For this grating round, we have increased the number of **Online Q&A webinars** in response to growing interest in the programme.

For the first time, we are offering two webinars dedicated to Legacy Digitisation Grants, and we continue providing sessions in English and Spanish for our Small and Large Documentation Grants.

Applications must be submitted through our [grant management system](#). If you are interested, visit our website to learn more about our [Documentation and Digitisation grants](#). If you have any questions about the application process, you can get in touch with the programme team at emkp@britishmuseum.org. We look forward to hearing from you!



2019 EMKP Project with the Turkana people, Kenia
(Image: Samuel F. Derbyshire, 2019)

ASIN TIBOUK INCLUDED IN THE UNESCO ICH LIST

The EMKP is delighted to share that the making of asin tibuok (native salt) from Bohol, Philippines, has been officially inscribed on UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. This material practice was the focus of the 2021 EMKP project: Documenting the construction of a traditional kamalig (salt-making workshop) and the making of asin tibuok (native salt): the indigenous skills and knowledge systems of an endangered craft tradition in Alburquerque, Bohol, Philippines.



Transporting coconut husk on bamboo raft (Image: Andrea Yankowski, 2022).

The project, led by Andrea Yankowski, in collaboration with Ana Maria Theresa Labrador, local salt-makers and salt-potters, the Central Visayan Association of Museums (CVAM), the National Museum of the Philippines, and community members of Bohol, played a fundamental role in achieving this recognition by bringing local and international attention to the endangerment of this craft and carrying out extensive research on the living practice.



Salt-maker is placing bulk salt in a basket after it has partially drained/dried (Image: Andrea Yankowski, 2022).



Mr. Non Pinlac, salt-maker, during the 20th session (Image: courtesy of Andrea Yankowski, 2025).

The inclusion took place on 9 December 2025 in New Delhi, India, during the 20th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Community representatives attended, including Mr. Non Pinlac, one of the salt-makers who partnered with the EMKP project.



Community members and representatives during the 20th session (Image: courtesy of Andrea Yankowski, 2025).

This is a big milestone that brings international recognition to the resilience and significance of this practice, but especially to the people who continue to safeguard and preserve this heritage. We warmly congratulate the community of Bohol, Andrea Yankowski, Ana Maria Theresa Labrador, and everyone who contributed to this achievement and made UNESCO's recognition possible.

If you want to learn more about Andrea's EMKP project, [click here](#).

'TURURI' FIBRES OF RESISTANCE

Renata Peters

The Amazon rainforest, renowned for its biodiversity, also holds profound cultural significance for Indigenous peoples. As primary custodians of ancestral knowledge, these communities play vital roles in managing and preserving the foundations that underpin sustainable use of forest resources, cultural practices, and identities.

The project 'Weaving fibres of resistance: Tikuna tree bark and identity in the Amazon' seeks to reassert the role of the Tikuna people as stewards of cultural identity and ancestral knowledge by investigating and documenting their use of specific plants in sociocultural practices.



Mercedes Mariano Fernandes demonstrates how to spin the fibres of 'tucum' Museu Magüta (Image: Renata Peters, 2024).

The project engages directly with Tikuna knowledge holders, and it examines the processes involved in the procurement, manufacture and use of objects, particularly those made from the inner bark of trees known locally as 'tururi', related to the rite of passage: the Young Woman Festival (YWF).

The Tikuna are the largest indigenous nation in Brazil, with a population of 74,061 individuals (IBGE 2025). Many of their gatherings have social and economic importance, but the YWF is probably the most important of them all (Matarezio 2021). It is triggered by the beginning of the first menstrual cycle. Concomitantly, the local Tikuna community starts the preparations for the rites. Guests are carefully selected to produce musical instruments, masks, and other ceremonial objects made out of 'tururi' and other materials sourced from the forest.



Mercedes Mariano Fernandes demonstrates how to spin the fibres of 'tucum' Museu Magüta (Image: Renata Peters, 2024).

In addition to ethnographic research, the project promotes dynamic and more equitable knowledge exchange amongst all participants, including capacity-building initiatives that share the museological expertise of project organizers, ultimately enhancing everyone's ability to use material culture to promote traditional knowledge.



Tikuna mask accession number 1990.47.8 during installation at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University (Image: Renata Peters, 2024).

To share information with the Tikuna community about the global presence of their ancestors' productions, the project team is reaching out to museums that house these collections.

In summary, our project strives to maximize impact by creating diverse opportunities for knowledge exchange, communication, and capacity building.

To read her full piece in our blog [click here](#).

*Renata is the Principal Investigator for this project.

*All the references are available on the longer blog post.

REPOSITORY UPDATES

This month we are celebrating that the EMKP repository has reached 2,1 million views and 500K downloads! This would not be possible without the contributions from all the projects and community members worldwide. Congratulations to the EMKP community for this huge achievement! Bellow, we list some of the most recent collections released.

The Earthen and Organic Materials Technologies of Banda, Ghana

(Ann B Stahl, 2020)

The production of earthen and organic technologies in the Banda area of Ghana is in a constant decline since the introduction of modern materials and the construction of a hydroelectric dam. This project collaborated with local communities to document the remaining knowledge of practices such as basketry fish traps, woven raffia mats, crafted doors, earthen-walled and thatch houses –all made from local fibre, wood, and clay resources.

Documenting the knowledge, skills and practices of the last remaining sign-painters in Ho Chi Minh City

(Rachel Though, 2022)

The loss of traditional material practices is not confined to rural areas. Rapid urban transformation can also endanger local traditions. One example is the craft of hand-painted advertising signs in Vietnam. This project collaborated with professional artists to document every stage of the process— from the initial commission to the creation of the sign and its installation at the customer's business premises.

Indigenous women's hand spinning wool in the Ecuadorian Highlands

(Lorena Isabel Toro- Mayorga, 2022)

In the Ecuadorian highlands, traditional practices rooted in pre-Hispanic cultural heritage still survive. This project focused on the hand-spinning of wool yarn. Beyond its technical aspects, this practice weaves together processes that cross boundaries of work, family, and affection, reflecting deep cultural and social connections.



On the way to the clay source in Yang Tao village 2 (Image: Cécile de Francquen, 2023).

Recording the knowledge of traditional potters from Vietnam: A historical perspective

(Cécile de Francquen, 2020)

Domestic pottery production in Vietnam has been significantly impacted by the introduction of an open marked economy. This project collaborated with potters of six ethnic groups: Kinh, Mngong Rlam, Bahnar, Koho, Bih and Katu, to create a comprehensive record of the entire manufacturing process through films and photography.

Burning the Bones of the Earth –Documenting the traditional Lime Kilns Technology Across the Albanian - Greek Border

(Ioanna Ntoutsis, 2021)

The traditional craftsmanship of wood-fired, flare-type lime kilns has been largely replaced by industrial products since the 1960's. This project traced and documented this traditional practice on both sides of the Albanian-Greek border. The team worked closely with local craftsmen through the entire production process.

Documentation the Palmyrene wool and leather products of Awassi sheep in the countries of the diaspora

(Hasan Ali, 2023)

The city of Palmyra was abandoned in 2015 due to local intensification of combat during the Syrian Civil War, displacing tens of thousands internally and across West Asia. Despite this, the Palmyra diaspora in southwest Turkey, has maintained a deep connection with the Awassi sheep and the material practices associated with this breed. This project focuses on documenting these inherited traditions.

MADE IN MONSERRAT: PRESERVING OUR MAKERS CULTURE THROUGH THE EMKP

Samantha Lauren

This Winter Issue introduces a new section of the EMKP newsletter, focusing on the intersections between EMKP projects and collections worldwide. Grantees often trace links between the living endangered practices they document and existing museum collections. These efforts bridge the gap between the communities they work with and their heritage, and between the tangible collections and the intangible knowledge around them. To inaugurate this section, we feature a piece from Samantha Lauren, first EMKP legacy digitisation grantee, who is working with the National Museum of Monserrat.



National Museum of Monserrat (Image: Samantha Lauren, 2024).

Montserrat is a nation of makers. Our island's remote Caribbean location, slow economy, and lack of manufacturing have long inspired locals to find clever ways to craft, rather than buy, material objects, ranging from tools and furniture to costumes and musical instruments. However, the end of the twentieth century brought disaster and displacement.

In 1989, Hugo, a Category 5 hurricane, damaged more than 90% of the island's buildings. In 1995, the Soufrière Hills Volcano suddenly began erupting. Two-thirds of the island was designated an 'Exclusion Zone', and approximately 8,000 people emigrated. During the volcano eruption, community members and Montserrat National Trust (MNT) staff salvaged as many portable objects and documents as possible.



Museum storage before starting project (Image: Samantha Lauren, 2024).

These items were moved between locations over several years until the government built a new museum in Little Bay in 2012. Multiple relocations with minimal record-keeping led to the loss of much of the collection's documentation. Our EMKP Legacy Digitisation Project has proven to be a valuable opportunity. Its focus on material knowledge at risk allowed us to specifically choose only handcrafted items, such as musical instruments, costumes, utensils, and so on.



Three Masquerade masks (Image: Samantha Lauren, 2024).

With clearer records, an accession register, improved storage, and hundreds of newly digitised objects, we now have a much better understanding of our collection and how to care for it.

To read Samantha's full piece, [click here](#).

*Samantha Lauren is the Principal Investigator for this project.

NEWS BITES

EMKP news

This year marks an important transition for the programme, as **Dr Lissant Bolton** steps down from her role as panel member and Director of the EMKP, a position she has held since the programme's inception in 2018, alongside her role as Keeper of the British Museum Africa, Oceania, and Americas Department from which she stepped down in December 2024. The EMKP team – including both current and former members – is deeply grateful to Lissant for her leadership and vision, but especially, for her dedication to the programme, which she will continue to support informally. From 1 January, Lissant will be a Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Anthropology at the London School of Economics. She will also continue her long involvement in the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VKS), supporting and developing initiatives to document and revive women's knowledge and practice.



Dr. Lissant Bolton (Image: Benedict Johnson).

Publications

Prof. John Cooper, former EMKP grantee, has recently published an article on the construction of a chhot boat – a inshore shell-built fishing vessel. The article was based on the EMKP project, The Chhot builders of West Bengal, India, the vanishing craft-knowledge of a unique boat-building tradition. To read this article, [click here](#).

If you want to know more about this project, [click here](#).

Exhibitions

Patrick Maundu is working on an exhibition about the knowledge around Baobab Trees in collaboration with the National Museums of Kenya. The exhibition relates to Patrick's EMKP project, Documenting Endangered Foodway Heritage of the Baobab Tree Among the Mijikenda of Coastal Kenya. Baobab trees have a great cultural and ecological significance, and they can be used for consumption and for domestic purposes, including the making of utensils and rat traps. The exhibition will open next year at the Rabai Museum, Kenya. For this project's EMKP website, [click here](#).

Conferences

The team of the **EMKP 2025 project, From Earth to Inhabited Space: Life Cycle of Mud Plastering in the Tribal Agricultural landscape of Jharkhand**, participated at Samvaad conclave, held from 15th to 19th November 2025 in the city of Jamshedpur in Jharkhand, India. Samvaad celebrates tribal identity and facilitates constructive dialogue on real tribal issues; it recognises people and their aspirations and fosters an international peer group. In this year's event, representatives of the EMKP team joined online to talk about the programme.

For this project's EMKP website, [click here](#).



Santhali dance at one of the cultural celebrations at Samvaad 2025 (Courtesy of Jayashree Bardhan, 2025)

Contributions and suggestions for future issues should be sent to: emkp@britishmuseum.org