

Empire, Slavery & Scotland's Museums
Steering Group Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, 18 May 10am-12noon

PRESENT

Sir Geoff Palmer (Chair) (GP)
 Aber Eladany (University of Aberdeen) (AE)
 Lewis Hou (Science Ceilidh and The Anti-Racist Educator) (LH)
 Parveen Ishaq (Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equalities Council) (PI)
 Churnjeet Mahn (Strathclyde University) (CM)
 Steph Scholten (The Hunterian, ICOM Ethics Committee, MGS Board Member) (SS)
 Elena Trimarchi (David Livingstone Centre) (ET)
 Lisa Williams (Edinburgh Caribbean Association) (LW)
 Zandra Yeaman (The Hunterian) (ZY)

MGS/Project Staff

Sheila Asante (Museums Galleries Scotland) (SA)
 Lucy Casot (Museums Galleries Scotland) (LC)
 Duncan Dornan (Glasgow Life) (DD)
 Miles Greenwood (Glasgow Life) (MG)
 Rosie King (Museums Galleries Scotland) (RK)
 Devon McHugh (Museums Galleries Scotland) (DM)
 Gillian Shaw (Museums Galleries Scotland) minutes

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Silence Chihuri (Fair Justice System for Scotland Group),
 Jatin Haria (Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights)

1.	Introduction and apologies	
1.1	GP welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies as above.	
2.	Formal Agreement of Minutes of previous meeting	

2.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved, and it was noted that there were outstanding matters arising.	
3.	Steering Group Member Updates	
3.1	<p>Steering Group Members gave brief updates on their work and thoughts on other work relevant to ESSM that they were involved in. CM spoke about her work into the AHRC project on EDI in Scottish Heritage (EDISH). ET, who is involved in the education sub-group spoke about her work in recontextualising the David Livingston story. AE talked about her work with the collections sub-group and reported that there was as yet no update on Aberdeen Museum and Art Gallery's reopening. ZY, Curator of Discomfort, and SS, Director, spoke about their work at the Hunterian which had been open since the beginning of May. LH summarised his work at Science Ceilidh and as an anti-racist educator. He is on the participation sub-group. MG and DD gave a brief update from Glasgow Museums and spoke about their Empire and slavery work. LW of the Edinburgh Caribbean Association noted that she is on the research subgroup.</p> <p>MGS staff introduced themselves. RK who was attending from MGS Comms gave an update on website resources for ESSM which would become live shortly, and DM spoke about her focus on the MGS' internal approach to addressing issues around racism.</p> <p>Steering Group members noted the complexities and opportunities within the landscape they were working in.</p> <p><i>PI joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>It was agreed that it was important to consider activity taking place outwith the Steering Group. GP noted his recent conversations with Dame Doreen Lawrence on the importance of considering historical perspectives in addressing current issues.</p>	
4.	Steering Group Membership	

4.1	GP noted that Foysol Choudhury who had originally sat on the Steering Group had now been elected an MSP and extended his congratulations to him on behalf of the Steering Group. PI's position (from ELREC) on the Steering Group was welcomed.	
4.2	It was agreed not to replace Catriona Davidson from Glencoe Folk Museum in the Highlands, given that the sub-groups involved approximately 70 individuals representing a wide range of areas and sectors, and that it would be complicated to introduce a new Steering Group member at this stage of the process.	
5.	Presentation on the Human Rights Based Approach to the Project	
5.1	<p>SA delivered a Powerpoint presentation on taking a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to the project and outlined the rationale for this – ie ensuring that the project aligns with pre-existing standards and Government commitments to human rights. She outlined discussions she had had with experts including the Scottish Human Rights Commission and explained that their role was to provide independent advice on how to ensure human rights remained at the centre of the ESSM project. Steering Group members asked about SHRC's potential to help with evaluation on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Steering Group members noted that adopting a HRBA did not preclude other approaches.</p> <p>It was also noted that a HRBA did not negate obligations under the Equality Act. The Steering Group agreed to the Human Rights Based Approach underpinning the project and recommendations.</p>	
6.	ESSM Subgroups	
6.1	SA summarised subgroup meetings to date, noting that these had been a positive experience. She thanked all Steering Group members for their involvement.	

	SA explained that the Museum Proposal subgroup's role was specifically focused on the Patrick Harvie amendment around a museum of slavery and was one element within the overall ESSM project's role as set out in the Terms of Reference.	
7.	Consultation External Contractor Tender: Update of tender process	
7.1	SA reported that the deadline for responses to the tender had been extended. She thanked JH and AE for their involvement in the tender process.	
8.	Museums Sector Consultation	
8.1	The Steering Group was interested to hear that a Glasgow University masters student (supervised by SA) is working on the project to broaden knowledge across the sector and extend the call for evidence. Steering Group members were also interested to learn about CM's work on EDISH (EDI and Scottish Heritage) and how this would feed into consultation with the sector. CM gave an update on her EDISH work.	
9.	ESSM Website	
9.1	SA and RK gave an update on the ESSM website. The resources section would be updated on an ongoing basis, and it would be going live shortly. It was understood that the Resources section would not be exhaustive and SA invited contributions to this section from Steering Group members.	
10.	AOB and date of next meeting	
10.1	GP thanked everyone for their contributions both at the meeting and on sub-groups.	
	Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28 July 2021, 10.00am to 12.00pm	
11.	End of meeting 11.40am	