

## The Heritage Alliance and British Council Global Travel Grant Scheme 2018-19

This template is designed to help you write a report on your international visit. We recommend you read this template and make notes during your visit to make it easier to write a report on your return to the UK.

In addition to the report after your visit, we also require you to write one blog entry for the Heritage Alliance and British Council website during your visit, and supply one or more images to illustrate your blog entry (recommended image size 2,560px wide). We recommend that blog entries are approximately 500 words. You may also be invited to present your project at the next Heritage Alliance international event.

The blog entry, final report and images should be sent to Desi Gradinarova, the Heritage Alliance Policy and Communication Officer at [Policy@theheritagealliance.org.uk](mailto:Policy@theheritagealliance.org.uk)

### REPORT TEMPLATE

#### Part 1:

**Organisation:** Serendipity

**Name:** Pawlet Brookes

**Job title:** CEO and Artistic Director

**Country travelled to:** Jamaica

**Specific region or cities travelled to:** Kingston

**Organisation(s) visited:** National

**Dates of visit:** 7 – 14 October 2019

#### Part 2:

##### 1. Original purpose of the visit: (max. 200 words)

The original purpose of this visit was to expand Serendipity's reach and work in arts and heritage with connections in Jamaica, including the University of the West Indies, the National Library of Jamaica and L'Acadco: A United Caribbean Dance Force. Serendipity hoped this would be an opportunity to consolidate partnerships for a future international conference, carry out crucial documentation of intangible heritage and field research and establish new relationships with Edna

Manley College to engage with heritage projects from a Caribbean perspective. The visit also coincided with the Rex Nettleford Conference, The Arts: Intercultural and Cross-Cultural Exchanges, providing opportunities for future networking and collaborations.

**2. People, organisations, projects of relevance to your organisation/project that you encountered during your visit: (max. 200 words)**

The trip to Jamaica was an invaluable opportunity to build networks from across the Caribbean, and across industries that provided useful connections for research and future collaborations:

- L'Antoinette Stines – Artistic Director of L'Acadco
- Valerie Rochon – Columbia University
- Jericho Brown – Harvard University
- Amina Blackwood-Meeks – Storyteller and TV Presenter
- Michael Holgate – Jamaica Dance Umbrella
- National Library of Jamaica
- National Archives of the University of the West Indies
- National Gallery of Jamaica
- Melissa Crum - Mosaic Education
- Neila Ebanks - Edna Manley College, University of the West Indies

**3. Summary of the visit, including what went well and what was challenging: (max. 250 words)**

The trip to attend the Rex Nettleford conference aimed to research further into British – Caribbean connections around dance, performance, literature and the visual arts, both tangible and intangible. A great success was the gathering of research through film footage of performances, conversations with leading practitioners such as L'Antoinette Stines and Valerie Rochon, and the gathering of physical archival materials donated to myself, including programme notes from Jean Leon Destine, Jonkonnu Journals, publications and photographic documentation. Building a body of knowledge to add to Serendipity's digital archive.

The trip was also a successful opportunity to make key contacts that can be shared and create new partnerships with cultural institutions that also specialised in creative cultural practice alongside plug the gaps in knowledge around creativity that's history was born out of a Caribbean experience. Dance Umbrella Jamaica which takes place in March every year, which is a great fit with Let's Dance International Frontiers (the annual dance festival hosted by Serendipity). In addition to Dance Umbrella key dance and academic staff at Edna Manley who have both practical and

academic experience of working across the performing arts representing the Caribbean region. The trip established a previously unplanned connection to the National Gallery of Jamaica, which provided a new perspective and insight into Black-led visual arts and history from the Caribbean perspective, not widely represented in the UK.

The only challenge was attempting to fit everything in. A meeting with the Department of International Trade had to be cancelled due to flight delays.

**4. Experience and knowledge gained, with particular focus on how this experience and knowledge will benefit your organisation: (max. 200 words)**

The trip was a fantastic opportunity to gather research around Caribbean dance techniques, recording intangible heritage through interviews with practitioners including Jamaican choreographer L'Antoinette Stines and performances at the Rex Nettleford conference. Alongside this, meetings with the National Gallery of Jamaica, University of the West Indies - Edna Manley college, and Valerie Rochon provided physical archival material of artistic practice in Jamaica and the Caribbean. These resources will directly contribute to Serendipity's archive on Black arts and culture, and are resources not widely available (if at all) in archives in the UK. Melissa Crum, of Mosaic Education, is a specialist on colonial perspectives in museums also provided an insight into how to present archival material. Along with contributing to wider knowledge and research, the meetings have also supported with the development and curation of future projects for Serendipity; including a publication, exhibition and opening up new leads for future research.

The trip was valuable for consolidating our current research and practice as it was also an opportunity to share our current work with academics and practitioners at the Rex Nettleford conference. The feedback was overwhelming positive, which is a source of motivation and encouragement for Serendipity's project's moving forward.

**5. Top tips for other heritage professionals working internationally, based on the learning gained during your visit: (max. 200 words)**

My top tips for other heritage professionals working internationally are:

- Plan meetings/schedule of activities in advance if possible to help provide structure to your trip, but also leave space for spontaneity. Often the most valuable experiences are the ones guided by the people and networks you make working internationally.

- Be curious – I only gained access to some of the archival materials and exhibitions by asking questions and exploring.
- Make time for review/reflection – I made sure that I made time scheduled in to reflect and review the research undertaken to ensure that I could seek out the information that I needed moving forward, the questions to ask. Having a good base also provided me with opportunities to recharge so I did not feel burnt out with such a hectic schedule.

**6. What are the next steps you are going to take following the visit, and what resources/support might you need in order to successfully realise your ideas?: (max. 250 words)**

The next steps following the visit are to schedule a series of planning meetings around the development of Serendipity's archive, the deposit of archival material and research sessions planning and curating a forthcoming exhibition and publication. There were several leads that also offer opportunities for future research, along with highlighting gaps. For example, highlighting missing archival materials. The trip was also valuable for the opportunity to see work presented from a Caribbean perspective - adding to research around interpretation of archival materials and objects, and how narratives can be informed by 'gaze'. Moving forward I would find it valuable to be connected to likeminded practitioners, both in the UK and internationally, to strengthen networks around the preservation and documentation of Caribbean arts and cultural practice. Additionally, we would look to secure further funding to establish an infrastructure.

The trip also supported an opportunity to strengthen and build partnerships with L'Acadco and Jamaica Dance Umbrella, with the opportunity of exploring exchanges, crossovers and collaborations for future programming strands.

**7. In one sentence, please summarise the impact the visit has had on your organisation and the organisation(s) you visited:**

Heritage Alliance and British Council, through the funding of this trip to attend the Rex Nettleford conference in Jamaica, have provided a unique opportunity to connect the dots around arts and culture on an international scale, providing consolidation and affirmation for us as an organisation and the work that we do.

**8. In one sentence, please summarise the impact the visit has had on you personally:**

The visit to the Rex Nettleford conference in Jamaica has provided a point of reference and reassurance for my work with Serendipity, the connections I have made and the research undertaken have genuinely opened doors.

**9. Quote from your Director / Trustee / senior staff member on the benefit and impact of your international visit on your organisation:**

With thanks to the Heritage Alliance and British Council, the international visit to attend the Rex Nettleford conference in Jamaica has been an invaluable experience both for the professional connections and research links and for the recognition that Serendipity's current work is now receiving at an international level. This is something that we are only just beginning to comprehend, but has opened doors to enable us to further research, document and share the contribution of the Caribbean to the dance ecology on an international scale.

**10. Following this international experience, how likely is it that your organisation will fund another international visit in the next 12 months from 1 to 5 (1 = very unlikely, 5 = very likely)? 5**

**11. Will there be any follow up to this visit (e.g. jointly paper writing, online community building, future project applications, formal partnership formed, etc.)? (max. 150 words)**

There are three key practical outcomes from this project that are the direct result of this trip:

- An exhibition to be hosted in the UK by Serendipity with Valerie Rochon featuring archival material of Jean Leon Destine and Katherine Dunham, both who focus on a foundation in the Caribbean.
- A publication featuring Serendipity as co-authors to sit alongside the exhibition, which will also include links to British Caribbean practitioners, growing the research nationally and internationally.
- Donation of archival materials for Serendipity's archive.
- Future programming collaborations with Jamaican Dance Umbrella and L'Acadco: A United Caribbean Dance Force.

**Images**

Please supply at least three images from the visit. Please send high resolution images as jpeg files (recommended size: 300 dpi, min. 21 cm wide).

- Image 1 L'Antech Technique taught by L'Antoinette Stines.
- Image 2 University of the West Indies – Mona Campus
- Image 3 Pawlet Brookes and L'Antoinette Stines
- Image 4 Pawlet Brookes outside of the School of Dance, Edna Manley
- Image 5 National Gallery of Jamaica
- Image 6 Emancipation Park
- Image 7 National Gallery of Jamaica

DR