

2025 ICOM UK Conference

Join us in Liverpool for the 2025 ICOM UK Conference '*Regenerative Museums for Sustainable Futures*'

Who is speaking?

Check here the **Biographies of Speakers and Moderators**



Lucimara Letelier,
Director of
RegeneraMuseu,
Brazil

Lucimara Letelier, founder and Director of RegeneraMuseu, an organisation fostering sustainable practices within museums and Culture to champion climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience in Brazil and internationally. ICOM Sustain Vice-chair, Designer in Sustainable Development (Gaia Education/UNESCO partner), trained by AI Gore Foundation, Regenerative Economy and Regenerative Development Institute. She has been a Creative Green Researcher at Julie's Bicycle, working with consultancy and training in climate leadership for the arts & culture and a Ki Culture Coach.

25 years of experience in arts & culture organisations in Brazil, the US and the UK, including the Museum of Modern Art (Deputy Director), British Council (Deputy Director of Arts), ActionAid (Head of Fundraising), Boston Children's Museum and the Guggenheim Museum. Master's in Museum Studies - Green Museum Specialism (University of Leicester, UK) and in Arts Administration (Boston University, US).



Esme Ward,
Manchester University
Museum, UK

Esme Ward is Director of Manchester Museum, at The University of Manchester, with a commitment to lead the world's most inclusive, imaginative and caring museum. She is the first woman in Manchester Museum's 128-year history to hold the role of Museum Director. Esme has worked in museums and heritage as an educator and cultural leader for over 25 years, including at the V&A, National Trust.

She led the £15 million major transformation of Manchester Museum, which reopened in February 2023. She aims to renew the creative and civic purpose of the university museum. She is currently leading work with others to develop practice and policy on repatriation, ecological stewardship and building an ethics of care in museums.



Jenny Newell,
Australian Museum,
Australia

Dr Jenny Newell is the Curator for Climate Change at the Climate Solutions Centre, Australian Museum, Sydney. With a background in environmental history and a focus on the Pacific and Australia, Jenny has worked in curatorial roles at the British Museum, National Museum of Australia, American Museum of Natural History and, since 2016, the Australian Museum. She creates exhibitions, conversations and resources that encourage positive action for a safer future. Her publications include *Trading Nature* and edited volumes *Curating the Future* and *Living with the Anthropocene*. Her most recent exhibitions are *Spark: Australian innovations tackling climate change* (2021) and *Future Now* (2022-), a diorama-based exhibition about sustainability, touring community venues.

www.linkedin.com/in/jenny-newell-00a7633a



Richard Piacentini,
Phipps Conservatory
and Botanical Gardens,
USA

Since 1994, **Richard Piacentini** has led Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens from public to private management and is responsible for its green transformation including: the Center for Sustainable Landscapes, the only building to meet the Living Building Challenge®, LEED® Platinum, WELL® Platinum (the first), SITES™ Platinum (the first), BREEAM Outstanding for Operations and Maintenance (first in U.S.), Fitwel 3 Star and Zero-Energy certifications; and the Living Building Challenge, LEED® Platinum, and WELL® Platinum certified Exhibit Staging Center.

Piacentini led the development of the Climate Toolkit to help museums share, mentor, and learn from each other as they inspire their communities to address climate change. He is a past Board Chair and Treasurer of the International Living Future Institute (ILFI) and serves on its Advisory Board and the Advisory Committee for the Biophilic Cities Network. He is a Past President and Treasurer of the American Public Gardens Association (APGA), and received ILFI, US Green Building Council, and APGA leadership awards.



**Saadu Hashim
Rashid,**

National Museums of
Kenya, Kenya

Saadu's main responsibility is planning and coordinating technical training programmes for local youths in Fashion design and wood carving. She develops short trainings for youths so they can acquire needed skills and certification of the job market. She is also in charge of planning and implementation of heritage training programmes for both government and non-governmental organizations in Kenya. Part of Saadu's duties is to come up with temporary exhibitions to enliven their station and showcase cultural works of the local youths and community in general. Previously, Saadu was the Principal Curator, Fort Jesus World Heritage Site for three years, responsible for day-to-day management of the site.

Saadu holds a Master's degree in education management (M.Ed). Her field areas are heritage management (education, exhibition & conservation), public programmes and community participation.

Sonia Solicari,
Director of Museum of
the Home, UK

Sonia Solicari is Director of Museum of the Home in London. Between 2018 and 2021 she oversaw a major redevelopment project to double public space and introduce a vision which centres creative practice for social change. Most recently, she has led the Museum team in the complete re-display of its room sets from the 1860s to the present day.

Previous roles include Head of Guildhall Art Gallery and London's Roman Amphitheatre, and Curator of Ceramics at the V&A. Sonia is currently co-director of the Centre for Studies of Home, a partnership with Queen Mary, University of London and an international hub for research on the home, past, present and future. She is a trustee of Bethlem Gallery and a member of the Museum Association's Ethics Committee.

Naila Yousuf,
Partner at Wright &
Wright Architects, UK

Naila is a Partner at Wright & Wright Architects, who has overseen several high-profile cultural projects, including the physical transformation of Museum of the Home. A creative thinker around all aspects of cultural heritage and its relationship with people and place. She is a thoughtful driver of consultation with stakeholders and wider communities. An advocate of engagement in schools and equity in architectural practice, Naila is an external examiner at Nottingham University, mentor at the Royal College of Art, and leads a group involved with the London School of Architecture's Partnership Network. She is a regular speaker at museum conferences and published author on museum design.



Arafat Ali,
National Museum of
Science and
Technology,
Bangladesh

Md. Arafat Ali is an internationally recognized museum professional dedicated to fostering inclusive, sustainable, and technology-driven innovations in museology. Currently serving as a Gallery Assistant (Exhibition Officer) at the National Museum of Science & Technology, Bangladesh, he has been instrumental in advancing cultural representation and the role of museums in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ranked 5th among 50 global influencers in the museum sector by Bloolooop, Arafat has gained recognition for his thought leadership. He is a featured speaker at international conferences, including AVICOM-24 ("Integrating Sustainability and Inclusivity into Digital Museum Practices"), ICOM MPR-24 ("Empowering Communities through Sustainable Museum Practices"), and ICOFOM 2024 ("Future of Museums and Museology Practices in a Changing World").

A recipient of the National Integrity Award (2021), Arafat is actively shaping global discourse on museums, innovation, and community empowerment. He continues to expand his expertise through academic research and professional collaborations.



Elise Foster Vander Elst,

Head of Exhibitions & Environmental Impact Lead, Design Museum, UK

Elise Foster Vander Elst has over two decades experience of creating cultural impact through exhibitions, events and action research. Elise is currently Head of Exhibitions and Environmental Impact Lead at the Design Museum. In this role she leads a team to deliver up to ten exhibitions and displays a year at the museum in London. Most recently, her focus is on reformed museum practice for a green transition. She is a pioneer in the field of low carbon exhibition making, developing industry-leading tools for carbon measurement and evaluation. Elise currently leads the Design Museum's new Environmental Responsibility consultancy arm, supporting UK museums to reflect on their current environmental approach and update sustainability strategies across their organisations.



Victoria McMillan,
Nottingham Trent University, UK

Victoria McMillan has just completed a UKRI Midlands 4 Cities funded PhD at Nottingham Trent University. Her research explores ecomuseum practices in the UK, with a particular focus on using the ecomuseum ideal as a means to mobilise a holistic heritage approach for promoting regenerative stewardship of place and climate action.

She has an undergraduate degree in Archaeology and a MA in Museum & Heritage Development, and over 20 years' experience in socially engaged informal education and practice across all ages and including home education groups, ecology, conservation, community heritage, cultural and arts projects, and museums.

Victoria is passionate about nature, the environment, heritage, and community empowerment and believes that a holistic approach that brings these together through socially engaged practice is a powerful tool to human and nonhuman connection, wellbeing and co-flourishing.



Luiz Souza,
Conservation Science
Lab - University of Minas
Gerais, Brazil

Dr. Luiz Souza: Heritage Scientist (MSc training at KIK-IRPA, 1986-87; PhD in Chemistry – UFMG – Getty Conservation Institute, 1996). Since 1989, Luiz has taught and researched at CECOR, Brazil. Guest lecturer in Argentina, USA, France, Italy, and Portugal. In Brazil, he leads LACICOR Conservation Science Laboratory, at the UFMG - Federal University of Minas Gerais. Post-Doctoral Fellowship at the University of Perugia (2014). Resident Researcher of "The City U Macau Chair in Sustainable Heritage of the University of Évora", in Portugal, at the Hercules Laboratory (March to August, 2024). Getty Scholar Grantee 2024-2025 (Los Angeles, September to December 2024). International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works's "Forbes Prize Lecture" Awardee (September 2024, Lima, Peru), nominated by the Council of the IIC (London, UK). Former Director of CECOR, former ICCROM Council member, ICOM Brazil Council Member, and currently IIC Fellow and Council Member. Member of the ICOM WG on Sustainability. Founder and President of ANTECIPA – Brazilian Association of Research in Technology and Heritage Science. Vice President of the INCT IN2PAST.Br – National Institute of Science and Technology – Research in Natural Heritage, Arts, Sustainability and Territory (2023 – 2028)



Nerys Rudder,
Trustee, ICOM UK

Nerys Rudder, BA, MA, MSc, is Collections Services Lead for National Museums Liverpool. She is privileged to have enjoyed 25 years' experience as collections manager, curator and conservator in the UK and Caribbean, working across galleries, libraries, archives and museums.

A past chair of ICOM Barbados, Nerys is also a member of the talent and participation committee of the International Institute for Conservation. An International and AHRC Scholar she is an alumna of Cardiff University and Central Saint Martin's College. In her spare time, she has cultivated an unhealthy attachment to difficult houseplants.



Jamie Larkin,
Board Member, ICOM
SUSTAIN

Jamie Larkin is Assistant Professor of Culture, Media and Creative Industries at the University of Warwick, where he directs the MA in Arts, Enterprise and Development.

His research interests focus on museums, sustainability, and the climate crisis. Specifically, his current work explores how museums can develop forms of creative practice to help foster climate action. He is a Board Member of ICOM SUSTAIN and is currently co-editor of the journal *Museums and Social Issues*.



**Mamdouh Farouk
Mohamed,**
Imhotep Museum, Egypt

License in Egyptology Department, faculty of arts, Ain Shams university 2002. MA in Egyptology, highly excellent rank, 2012. PhD in Egyptology, highly excellent rank, 2022, Ain Shams University. Diploma in Tourist Guidance from Alexandria University. Inspector of Antiquities in Egyptian, Antiquities Documentation Centre, 2003. Inspector of Antiquities in Prehistoric Department, 2004. Head of the Western Cemetery in Giza Plateau. Head of Volunteer Programs and organizing activities at the Cultural Development Department in the Minister's Office 2016-2018. ITP Museum Scopes grant from the British Museum 2023, participating in CIPEG annual meeting, Madrid 2024. Lecturer in Many internship programs in Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. Co-supervisor of doctoral dissertations in heritage site management, and excavation. Supervisor of Imhotep museum renovation project, 2021-23.



Gleyce Kelly Heitor,
Instituto Inhotim, Brazil

Educator, researcher, and museologist with a Ph.D. in Social History of Culture (PUC-Rio), a Master's in Museology and Heritage (Unirio- MAST), and a Bachelor's degree in History (UFPE). Currently serving as Director of Education at Instituto Inhotim. Previously held key roles, including Director of Education and Research at Oficina Francisco Brennand (PE), Director of Culture and Participation at Instituto Tomie Ohtake (SP), Manager of Education and Participation at MAM Rio (RJ), Pedagogical Coordinator at Elã - Escola Livre de Artes (Galpão Bela Maré, Observatório de Favelas - RJ), Pedagogical Coordinator at Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage (RJ), and Pedagogical Advisor and Coordinator at Escola do Olhar, Museu de Arte do Rio (RJ).

International experience includes an internship at the Louvre Museum's Directorate of Mediation and Cultural Programming (2016) and a residency at the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (Mucem, 2023). Extensive expertise in designing, implementing, and evaluating education and training programs in cultural institutions, as well as in developing museological plans using participatory methodologies. Research interests focus on the relationship between contemporary art and education, intersections of museology and Brazilian social thought, the right to memory, and the connections between social struggles, musealization processes, and deheritagization dynamics.



Mohsen Ghanooni,
ICOM Resolutions
Committee Member, Iran

Mohsen is an expert art conservator with a PhD in Art Studies, specializing in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage. He has extensive experience in academia, specializing in teaching art history and conservation techniques. His expertise includes historical research, artworks authentication, and the assessment of cultural properties.

Mohsen has led significant projects in museum development and the conservation of historic buildings, ensuring the preservation of cultural heritage. He has a strong capability in sustainable development management for museum construction and heritage conservation, integrating modern strategies with cultural and historical contexts to ensure long-term preservation and accessibility. He has led significant projects in painting conservation and architectural decorations, alongside theoretical studies and advanced material analysis methods, focusing on identifying compositions and substances. His work combines technical expertise with a deep understanding of historical context to ensure both aesthetic and structural preservation.

Additionally, he is a member of the ICOM Resolutions Committee, responsible for drafting the final resolution for the 2025 ICOM General Conference.



Ineza Umuhoza Grace,
CEO of The Green
Protector, Co-ordinator of
the Loss and Damage
Youth Coalition,
2023 Global Citizen Prize
winner, Rwanda

Ineza is an eco-feminist impact, driven actor in the environment and climate change sector aimed at serving the global community based in Rwanda. She believes in amplifying and elevating frontline voices of youth, children, and marginalised communities, as well as their expertise in the global approach to generate concrete action for the planet and its people, where everyone is an active stakeholder. In 2017, she pioneered what is known today as The Green Protector, a youth and young experts organisation engaged in education, action and global policy in the climate and environment sector. In 2020, she was part of the team that started the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition, aiming to hold global leaders accountable for taking concrete action to address the negative impact of climate change. In addition to that, she has been engaged in the global policy process in the climate change negotiations following the "loss and damage" in its interconnectedness.



Hilary Jennings,
The Happy Museum, UK

Gaby Porter has followed Happy Museum since its inception and has been part of the project since 2016: initially as a member of the Board, latterly as an Associate working closely with Hilary to shape programmes creating the space and stimulus for people to engage in wider and deeper conversations, beyond their current circumstances and assumptions, to generate action and change.

She works independently as a facilitator, coach and mentor with people in a wide range of cultural organisations, partnerships and teams. She creates the environment for positive conversations: encouraging people to think afresh, focus on what matters most, and generate powerful actions which enable them to increase their impact, extend their reach and realise their aspirations. She is a registered Facilitator of The Thinking Environment and was formerly Co-Director of the Museum Leaders Programme.

Gaby is also an experienced yoga teacher and somatic movement exercise coach in the tradition of Thomas Hanna; and a volunteer with the Green Team, connecting young people with nature.



Gaby Porter,
The Happy Museum, UK

Hilary Jennings is a freelance cultural consultant based in London.

She has particular interest in holistic approaches to the climate crisis which build connections between culture, community and wellbeing. Since 2015 she has been **Director of the Happy Museum Project** which explores how we might re-consider the role of museums in creating a resilient and regenerative society: facing current realities whilst bringing a positive, imaginative and future facing frame.

She has extensive experience in leadership development working on programmes with Cultural Leadership Programme, Clore Leadership, Engage and the British Council. Her work also has a strong focus on network development - she is a Steering Group member for the Culture Health and Wellbeing Alliance, the Co-Creating Change Alliance and the CtrlSHIFT network and is a past Trustee of the global Transition Network.



Marit van Dijk,
Researcher,
Reinwardt Academie,
Netherlands

Marit van Dijk has a background in social geography and works as a researcher and project leader at the Reinwardt Academy for Cultural Heritage in Amsterdam. Her focus lies in the intersection of heritage and nature, promoting nature-inclusive approaches and interdisciplinary collaboration while recognising diverse ways of knowing.

For the past five years, Marit has been involved in the emotion networking method teaching and leading workshops for heritage institutions and communities in the Netherlands and internationally. Drawing from her expertise, she brings valuable insights into applying this method in sensitive and politicized contexts.



Huaiyuan (Robert) Ren,
Student and Emerging
Professionals Rep, ICOM
UK

Huaiyuan (Robert) Ren is the Student and Emerging Professionals Representative of ICOM UK and a PhD candidate in History and Philosophy of Art at the University of Kent. His research examines the social impact of twentieth-century contemporary art exhibitions in China and the UK. He holds an MA in Curating from the University of Kent and a BA in Business Administration from Tianjin University, China.

Ren has worked on curatorial projects across China and the UK, collaborating with institutions such as Arts Council England and various museums and galleries. His expertise spans exhibition-making, collections research, and cultural programming, with a strong interest in how contemporary art is curated, interpreted, and received internationally.



Freya Shi,
Student and Emerging
Professionals

Having lived across the Pacific and the Atlantic, Freya is a researcher-practitioner working across the arts, humanities, and sciences. Her research activates critical theory, cultural studies, art history, and science and technology studies which also informs my creative practice. From performances to workshops, experimental writings to tarot readings, Freya's creative work is a situationist chimera integrating theory and practice while responding to the institutional and sociopolitical space they occupy, with a focus on knowledge, power, and representation. Freya also bring these perspectives into the institutional and professional roles she performs in the cultural sector, where she is committed to supporting artistic practices, community building, and socio-political changes.