

‘Speaking without Voice’ Volunteer Researchers

Following receipt of a National Lottery grant through the Heritage Lottery Fund, IROKO is about to start an exciting, innovative project which will run for the next eighteen months. The research project will focus on a variety of Nigerian precolonial nonverbal communication systems (Aroko, Nsibidi, Uli and the Talking Drums), some of which were banned by the British colonial administration in Nigeria.

IROKO is seeking to engage the services of five Volunteer Researchers to assist the Heritage Development Director in the smooth running of the project. Duties include carrying out research to unearth the British-Nigerian historical context of the nonverbal communication systems, their modern usage, similarities to contemporary/other nonverbal communication means, and especially, how young British-Nigerians are using the heritage to underpin their cultural identity.

The opportunity will suit someone who is looking to build on their research skills or develop a career in the heritage sector. Previous experience in this type of role is desirable but not essential. Good knowledge of Microsoft systems essential.

Based in Stratford, East London, the voluntary opportunity is flexible and can be carried out remotely but with regular consultations and periodic meetings with the Heritage Development Director. It is anticipated that a minimum of 20 volunteer hours will be committed to the project per Research Volunteer, over the period, January to end March/April 2019. Immediate start.

Opportunities this role could offer you:

- Deeper understanding of the little-known heritage of the four Nigerian nonverbal communication systems (Aroko, Nsibidi, Uli and the Talking Drums).
- Chance to build on existing research skills.
- Develop a range of heritage skills and better understanding of the heritage sector.
- Engage in activities that help to promote intercultural understanding and appreciation of other cultures.
- Opportunity to receive reference/recommendations towards further education, volunteering or job opportunities

‘Speaking without Voice’ Volunteer Researcher (cont’d)

Personal characteristics required

- Curiosity and enthusiasm
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively
- Good communication and presentation skills
- Ability to work in a team
- Flexibility and organisational skills

IROKO can contribute towards reasonable travel expenses.

Please send covering email saying why you would like this volunteering position, and quoting reference: **SwV/vr/WS** to infos@irokothatre.org.uk or by post to:

**IROKO Theatre Company
1, Mark Street
Stratford
London E15 4GY**

‘Speaking without Voice’ Volunteer Researcher

Job Description

Five Volunteer Researchers will research, identify, record and present information on four Nigerian precolonial nonverbal communication systems (Aroko, Nsibidi, Uli and the families of the Talking Drums).

They researchers will:

1. Explore the historical, political and socio-cultural functions of the communication systems and investigate their unidentified presence in Nigerian arts and heritage in the UK.
2. Explore the similarities of the systems to contemporary nonverbal communication means e.g. the Morse Code, emogis, Bugle Calls, etc.
3. Research the communication systems and document how they are being used in a contemporary context here, in the UK. For example, on textiles and clothing, in the theatre, body adornment, etc.
4. Explore how young British-Nigerians are using the rhythms and sounds of the Talking Drums and modern Talking Drum Beatboxing to underpin their connection with the Nigerian culture and heritage and how this form of music is being used by young people to comment on everyday social issues that impact on them, such as knife crime.
5. Submit their research findings in a clear and precise format that will aid the production of the project resource materials, workshops, performances, exhibitions, talks, etc. to be shared with mixed audiences at The British Museum, Redbridge Central Library, Barking Learning Centre, Stratford Library, Botswell Library, Hayes, and in five schools in London.
6. Talk with a broad range of heritage agencies, community organisations and knowledgeable people about the heritage. Use the channels to form relationships with the organisations in a way that will allow IROKO to explore and learn more about the heritage.
7. Aim to make learning and understanding of the Nigerian precolonial communication systems easier by presenting the research findings in a format that will make the heritage more accessible to all and in particular to young people from different cultural backgrounds and abilities