



WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS

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# WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS-2023

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## ROUND TABLE TITLE:

## RETHINKING MUSEUM ANTHROPOLOGY: CRITICAL FUTURES

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### ABSTRACT

It is a well-accepted fact that heritage has a universal global value even in the formulation of cultural policy in any nation state or even community. But its significance for local communities or tradition bearers is increasingly acknowledged across the political boundaries of the nation state. Since 2015, with the publication of an innovative document by UNESCO, the role of museums, especially museum of living culture or anthropological museums, reinforced huge responsibility for preservation or safeguarding ICH or related knowledge domain and it's transmission by initiating dialogue for the inclusive understanding of civilisation journey and cultural growth of human societies. Scholars like, Jorijn N. & Tamara N. Đ., rightly mentioned that by introducing the notion and values of ICH in the ICOM museum definition in 2007, museums not only enriched their core functions such as acquiring, conserving, researching, communicating, and exhibiting objects with a human-oriented perspective on objects, but also with knowledge, skills, beliefs, and world views. ICH has of course been part of museum practice for much longer.

Taking examples of actual practices in India and beyond, this Round Table (RT) tries to discuss various issues to build up a critical discourse and assessment reflecting institutional mechanisms and policy frames, such as, what role communities can play in linking museums for safeguarding ICH? Do existing documentations and museum exhibitions help in bringing communities at the centre stage or how community identities or their shared histories are represented in ethnographic or anthropological museums? What forms of collaborations between and across the museums and even between museums and communities will be useful for nurturing and safeguarding ICH as well as transmission of sustainable knowledge systems for the future of humanity? What may be the innovation practices or skill developmental practices which institutions and communities can think about for translating such dialogue or lessons of sustainability practitioners in to action at the ground level by which anthropological museums or ethnographic museums may play a critical role for the future of humanity.

**Keywords:** museum anthropology, ethnographic museum, heritage, ICH, identity, shared history, sustainability, dialogue, critical futures.

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