



SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2025

Sustainable Futures Through Cultural Resilience

2-4 September 2025 | Javett-UP Art Centre, City of Tshwane

*Integrating cultural preservation, digital innovation, and
environmental sustainability to build resilient heritage.*

Third CIRCULAR

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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW



**SOUTH AFRICAN MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2025**

Sustainable Futures Through Cultural Resilience
2-4 September 2025 | Javett-UP Art Centre, City of Tshwane

The 89th South African Museums Association (SAMA) National Conference will be held in the City of Tshwane, Gauteng, from 2 to 4 September 2025. This year's theme, Sustainable Futures Through Cultural Resilience, highlights the urgent need to harmonise three key pillars:



Cultural Preservation



Digital Innovation



**Environmental
Sustainability**

In a time shaped by rapid technological advancements and escalating environmental challenges, cultural institutions and communities must innovate and adapt while continuing to honor their traditions and histories.

Through the integration of cutting-edge digital technologies—such as virtual archives, immersive storytelling, and AI-driven curation—alongside sustainable practices, museums and heritage sites can revitalise their relevance and accessibility. This multifaceted approach celebrates the richness of diverse traditions while fostering resilience in the face of global changes.

The conference will inspire participants to embrace sustainability and resilience as shared values and examine how these interconnected principles equip cultural institutions to thrive in the modern age.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The annual SAMA National Conference aims to:



Facilitate networking among museum colleagues



Foster the development of the museum profession



Elevate and ensure improvement of museum standards



Advocate for and uphold museum ethics.



Promote museum training and skills development



Engage in discourse on key museum-related topics, including the intersection of cultural preservation, digital innovation, and environmental sustainability.

CONFERENCE THEMES & SUB-THEMES



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The conference includes a range of interconnected themes and sub-themes:

CULTURAL PRESERVATION IN A CHANGING WORLD



THEME 1

1. Balancing traditional practices with modern demands.
2. Safeguarding intangible heritage in the digital era.
3. Collaborative efforts in cultural conservation across borders.
4. Revitalising endangered practices through community-led initiatives.
5. Decolonisation and authenticity in cultural heritage representation.

EMBRACING DIGITAL INNOVATION FOR HERITAGE



THEME 2

1. Using digital tools to preserve and share cultural knowledge.
2. Virtual and augmented reality: immersive storytelling in cultural spaces.
3. Artificial intelligence in cultural conservation and education.
4. Bridging gaps: digital access to cultural resources for global audiences.
5. Challenges of digitising heritage: ethics, ownership, and access.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN CULTURAL HERITAGE



THEME 3

1. Eco-friendly practices in museum operations and curation.
2. Resilience against climate change impacts on heritage sites.
3. Incorporating sustainable materials in preservation efforts.
4. Raising environmental awareness through cultural initiatives.
5. Promoting biodiversity through cultural and natural heritage integration.

BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH HERITAGE



THEME 4

1. Empowering local communities as heritage stewards.
2. Cultural tourism as a tool for sustainable development.
3. Strengthening identity and belonging through heritage projects.
4. Fostering inter-generational knowledge transfer in cultural resilience.
5. Heritage education for fostering a sustainable and inclusive future.



THE CONFERENCE WILL INCLUDE:



Plenary sessions featuring keynote speakers.



Thematic panels, workshops, and break-away groups.



Awards ceremonies to promote excellence within the museum profession



A showcase of exhibitions, museum publications, and research projects from South African institutions.



Networking and collaboration opportunities for participants from diverse backgrounds.

AWARDS

SAMA offers several prestigious awards to raise the standard of the conference:

- ***FitzSimons Award:*** For the best paper presented at the conference, in memory of Frederick William FitzSimons.
- ***President's Award:*** For the best paper by a first-time speaker.
- ***Novice Speaker's Award:*** For the best paper by a new recruit to the profession (less than three years in the field).
- ***Publication Design Award:*** Recognising excellence in museum publications, such as brochures, promotional material, and websites.



Awards are presented during the conference dinner, accompanied by book vouchers or gifts and framed certificates.



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CALL FOR PAPERS

The SAMA National Conference Organising Committee invites submissions addressing the conference theme and its relevance to South Africa's museum and heritage sector. Papers not covered within the listed sub-themes, but aligned to museum-related work or collaborations with other sectors are also encouraged.

DEADLINE

20
June
2025

THEMES



Cultural Preservation in a Changing World

1. Balancing traditional practices with modern demands.
2. Safeguarding intangible heritage in the digital era.
3. Collaborative efforts in cultural conservation across borders.
4. Revitalising endangered practices through community-led initiatives.
5. Decolonisation and authenticity in cultural heritage representation.



Environmental Sustainability in Cultural Heritage

1. Eco-friendly practices in museum operations and curation.
2. Resilience against climate change impacts on heritage sites.
3. Incorporating sustainable materials in preservation efforts.
4. Raising environmental awareness through cultural initiatives.
5. Promoting biodiversity through cultural and natural heritage integration.



Embracing Digital Innovation for Heritage

1. Using digital tools to preserve and share cultural knowledge.
2. Virtual and augmented reality: immersive storytelling in cultural spaces.
3. Artificial intelligence in cultural conservation and education.
4. Bridging gaps: digital access to cultural resources for global audiences.
5. Challenges of digitising heritage: ethics, ownership, and access.



Building Resilient Communities Through Heritage

1. Empowering local communities as heritage stewards.
2. Cultural tourism as a tool for sustainable development.
3. Strengthening identity and belonging through heritage projects.
4. Fostering inter-generational knowledge transfer in cultural resilience.
5. Heritage education for fostering a sustainable and inclusive future.

IMPORTANT

All presenters must register and pay for the full conference.

Accepted abstracts will be confirmed by early July.

Presentations can be delivered either virtually or in person.

Papers may be submitted post-conference for potential publication in Samantics

or via SAMAB (<https://samuseums.co.za/samab/>) following relevant formatting and peer review guidelines.



- ✓ **200 to 300 words.**
- ✓ **Include a short bio of no more than 200 words.**



Registration Period:

Opens end of April, closes 20 August 2025.

Early Bird Rates:

- SAMA Members (in person): R2,500
- Non-members (in person): R2,800 (includes 1-year individual SAMA membership for 2026)
- Online Attendance (SAMA & non-SAMA members): R800
- Closes on 13 June 2025

After Early Bird Period:

- SAMA Members (in person): R2,700
- Non-members (in person or online): R3,000 (includes 1-year SAMA membership for 2026)

SUBMIT TO:

sama2025conferencepapers@gmail.com



For queries or information, please contact SAMA North at samanationalconference2025@gmail.com.

The first 10 registrations receive a complimentary SAMA membership for 2026.



CONFERENCE OUTLINE



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NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2025

Sustainable Futures Through Cultural Resilience
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Monday, 1 Sept

18:00 – 20:00: Welcome function
hosted at Ditsong Natural History Museum
432 Paul Kruger Street, Pretoria

Tuesday, 2 Sept

09:00 – 16:00: Opening session, Keynote
address, Presentations

Wednesday, 3 Sept

09:00 – 16:00: Presentations

Thursday, 4 Sept

09:00 – 11:00: Presentations, Closing
remarks, SAMA AGM, Behind-the-scenes UP
Museums tour
18:30 – 21:30: Conference Dinner

PROGRAMME DESIGN

- **Keynote Address:** Delivered during the opening session, focusing on the conference theme.
- **Opening Speeches:** Include remarks from the SAMA President and VIPs (e.g., provincial, and local government officials).
- **Paper Presentations:** Approximately 20 minutes per paper, followed by 15 minutes for discussion.
- **Daily Schedule:** Sessions to include regular breaks and conclude by 16:00.
- **Conference Dinner:** A celebratory evening to network and present awards, hosted at Javett-UP Art Centre.

Friday, 5 Sept

Optional excursions (not included
in registration fee)

DELIVERABLES/OUTCOMES

- Strengthened professional networks.
- Recognition of excellence in museum practices through awards.
- Advancements in sustainable and innovative museum practices.
- Published conference proceedings in SAMAB journal and Samantics newsletter.

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CONFERENCE ACCOMMODATION

To support delegates travelling to Pretoria for the conference, the South African Museums Association has secured exclusive rates at partnering hotels. Delegates may choose from the following curated packages, named in honour of African historians and heritage leaders whose legacies reflect the intellectual and cultural spirit of this event.

 All packages include shuttle services to and from the conference venue.

THE DIOP PACKAGE

(Room Only – R1,015 per night)

Named after

Cheikh Anta Diop – Senegalese historian, physicist, and anthropologist who redefined African identity through scientific heritage research.

Perfect for

The self-sufficient delegate—resourceful, minimalist, independent.

Includes

Accommodation only (no meals)

THE NDLOVU PACKAGE

(Bed & Breakfast – R1,225 per night)

Named after

Professor Sifiso Ndlovu – South African historian and cultural policy expert, renowned for his work on liberation heritage and education.

Perfect for

Early-morning thinkers, paper presenters, and history-before-coffee types.

Includes

Accommodation + breakfast

THE FALOLA PACKAGE

(Room + Dinner – R1,345 per night)

Named after

Toyin Falola – Nigerian historian and global African studies leader, known for his work on postcolonial memory and decolonial critique.

Perfect for

Delegates who network into the night and reflect over supper.

Includes

Accommodation + dinner + 2 soft drinks (no breakfast)

THE MANDELA PACKAGE

(Dinner, Bed & Breakfast – R1,530 per night)

Named after

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela – the living embodiment of cultural resilience, legacy stewardship, and transformative leadership.

Perfect for

Full-board thinkers, long-haul guests, or those curating a deep conference presence.

Includes

Accommodation + dinner + 2 soft drinks + breakfast

Please note that while the South African Museums Association (SAMA) has secured preferential rates with partner hotels for the convenience of our delegates, **all accommodation arrangements must be made and paid for directly with the selected hotel.** SAMA does not facilitate, confirm, or manage room bookings. **Delegates are responsible for contacting the hotel of their choice to secure their accommodation and ensure all personal requirements are communicated clearly.**

Package options are provided here for information and planning purposes only. Rates and availability are subject to confirmation with the hotel at the time of booking. SAMA accepts no liability for changes in rates, room types, cancellations, or any disputes arising from third-party accommodation services.



MANHATTAN HOTEL
Pretoria
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🌐 manhattanhotel.co.za



THE PARK LODGE
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CONFERENCE FACILITIES

✉ info@theparklodge.co.za
☎ +27 (0) 12 320 01 03
🌐 theparklodge.co.za



**PREMIER
HOTEL**
PRETORIA

✉ info@premierhotels.co.za
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OTHER ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS INCLUDE:

In addition to our primary hotel partners, the SAMA 2025 Organising Committee has identified several alternative accommodation venues located within close proximity to the conference site. These options cater to a variety of preferences and budgets while maintaining the comfort and convenience required for an immersive conference experience.

Each venue has provided its own tailored delegate package, which includes a range of offerings from bed-only options to full board. Details regarding rates, amenities, and booking procedures for each of these venues are listed on the following page.

Delegates are encouraged to review these alternatives and contact the venue of their choice directly to finalise their bookings.



bookings@maribelles.co.za



+27 (0) 12 361 6970



maribelles.co.za

Starting from: **R 650.00**



reservations@thepretoriahotel.com



+27 (0) 12 341 3473/4



thepretoriahotel.com

Starting from: **R 1200.00**



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sales2@casatoscana.co.za



+27 (0) 12 348 8820



casatoscana.co.za

Starting from: **R 1 440.00**



info@kwalata.co.za



+27 (0) 10 007 3749



kwalata.co.za

Starting from: **R 2 700.00**



OPTIONAL EXCURSION PACKAGES – FRIDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2025

As part of the SAMA 89th National Conference experience, delegates are invited to participate in a series of curated heritage excursions scheduled for Friday, 5 September 2025. These tours offer a unique opportunity to explore South Africa's rich cultural, historical, and political landscapes through immersive, professionally guided experiences.

All excursions are independently operated and must be booked directly with the providers listed. Space is limited, and early booking is encouraged.

GAUTENG HERITAGE JOURNEY

OPERATOR: Ernest Tours
DURATION: Full Day
COST: R5,407.30 pp

HIGHLIGHTS

- Melrose House Museum
- Pretoria Art Museum
- Paul Kruger Office Museum
- Constitution Hill
- Apartheid Museum
- Mandela House Museum
- Hector Pieterse Museum
- Lunch at Sakhumzi Restaurant, Vilakazi Street

INCLUDES

- Transport (Pretoria–Soweto–Pretoria)
- All museum entry fees
- Full-day guide
- Buffet lunch + 2 soft drinks
- VAT included

BOOKING DETAILS

✉ ernest.2009@hotmail.com
☎ 072 989 6095 / 067 783 4225



SPECIALIST TOUR OF PRETORIA

OPERATOR: Specialist Tours
DURATION: ~6 Hours
COST: R1,995 - R2,295 pp

HIGHLIGHTS

- Fort Klapperkop
- Church Square
- Raadsaal, Kruger's Office, Theodor Chambers
- Melrose House
- Voortrekker Monument

INCLUDES

- Entry fees
- Snacks & water
- Professional guide
- Optional shuttle

BOOKING DETAILS

✉ info@specialisttours.co.za
☎ +27 (0)82 050 0116
🌐 specialisttours.co.za



SPECIALIST TOURS
— SOUTHERN AFRICA —

SOWETO & APARTHEID MUSEUM TOURS

OPERATOR: Ulysses Tours & Safaris
DURATION: Half Day / Full Day
COST: R850 – R2,050 pp

HIGHLIGHTS

- Half-day Soweto Tour (Vilakazi Street, Mandela House, Hector Pieterse Museum)
- Half-day Apartheid Museum Tour
- Full-day Soweto + Museum combo available

INCLUDES

- Guided transport
- Entry fees
- Expert tour guides
- Optional lunch add-on

BOOKING DETAILS

✉ bookings@ulysses.co.za
☎ 012 653 0018 / 083 440 2130
🌐 www.ulysses.co.za



ORIGINS OF THE CITY OF GOLD

OPERATOR: Time Traveller Adventures
DURATION: Full Day
COST: R1,500 pp

HIGHLIGHTS

- Church Square & Kruger Museum (Pretoria)
- Transfer to Johannesburg
- Disused mine shaft
- 3km walk through old mining district
- Mandela & Tambo law offices
- Sisulu Square
- Lunch at Rand Club
- Return to Pretoria

INCLUDES

- Transport (Pretoria–Johannesburg)
- Full guided tour
- Museum entry fees
- Lunch at Rand Club (drinks for own account)

BOOKING DETAILS

✉ janet@timetravellerjozi.co.za
☎ 083 206 2262
🌐 specialisttours.co.za





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