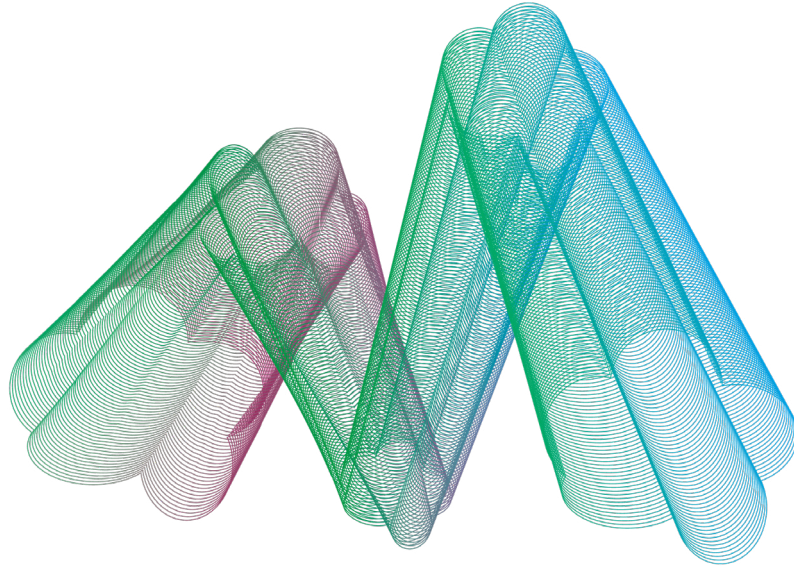




TheMuseumsLab

Call for Applications 2026

**Online and Onsite
in Africa and Europe**

***Building Futures from Memory:
Museums and Memorial Sites as Agents***

deadline for submission
2 December 2025



*„Restitution cannot be simply a return to the kingdom following exile.
It must draw on the wealth of new energies and meanings which the objects
in question have produced in the art world and will continue to produce after
their return, to emphasise that the time has come to reinvent the museum
as a realisation of networks and synergies.*

*These objects, which in the words of Amadou Mahtar M'Bow have put down new roots everywhere they
have been, now have a role to play in building bridges and thus in forging this new kind of museum
network.”*

Souleymane Bachir Diagne,
Columbia University, Director of the Institute of African Studies

TheMuseumsLab is a unique African–European joint learning programme for emerging professionals from Museums, Heritage and Art Institutions, and Cultural Spaces. Founded in 2020, it responds to the need for a new kind of cultural collaboration, one that actively addresses the legacies of colonialism and seeks to build a shared, forward-looking cultural future between the two continents. At its core, the programme is grounded in the principle of joint learning as a powerful and innovative approach to professional development, institutional transformation, and sector-wide change. Strengthening professional capacities and creating new transcontinental career paths for museum professionals on both continents is another key part of this endeavor, providing the foundation for sustainable, long-term change.

TheMuseumsLab brings together professionals from museums, heritage spaces, cultural institutions, academia, and public leadership across Africa and Europe. United by a shared commitment to rethinking the role of museums in society, they have developed and sustained a platform dedicated to the next generation of cultural leaders. It fosters exchange, critical reflection, and co-creation across disciplinary, geographic, and institutional boundaries. The programme is based on the belief that truly equitable, connected, and dynamic cultural landscapes can only emerge when knowledge, experience, and imagination are brought into sustained and open dialogue, where perspectives are shared, questioned, and developed together. TheMuseumsLab is a space for learning and unlearning, for building partnerships rooted in mutual respect, and for imagining museums as inclusive, socially engaged institutions.

In 2026 the thematic focus of the programme is **„Building Futures from Memory: Museums and Memorial Sites as Agents“**. TheMuseumsLab 2026 is jointly organised by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin (MfN) and Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy. An international Academic Committee and TheMuseumsLab Alumni Network are part of the programme's Steering Board and curatorial process. Over 55 museums and cultural institutions from 16 countries are partners of TheMuseumsLab. The Programme is financed by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media and the German Federal Foreign Office.



The Programme consists of one online and two on-site Modules as well as a Residency at either an African or European Partner Museum. The Programme is framed by a online Kick-Off and a Closing Event.

Programme Timeline 2026

Kick-Off Events (Online, Introduction and Evening Event)

6 May

Module 1 (Online)

7 May

11 May

27–28 May

2 June

Module 2 (On-site in Berlin, Germany)

Arrivals: 14 June

Programme: 15 to 20 June

Departures: 21 June

Residencies at European Partner Museums (On-site, Europe)

Arrivals: 21 June

Programme: 22 to 26 June

Departures: 27 June

- only for Fellows assigned to one European Partner Museum

Residencies at African Partner Museums (On-site, Africa)

Arrivals: 13 September

Programme: 14 to 18 September

Departures: 19 September

- only for Fellows assigned to one African Partner Museum

Module 3 (On-site in Kigali, Rwanda)

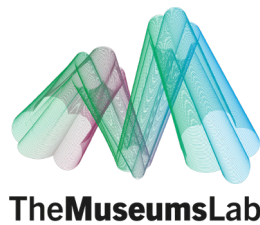
Arrivals: 20 September

Programme: 21 to 26 September

Departures: 27 September

Closing Event (Online)

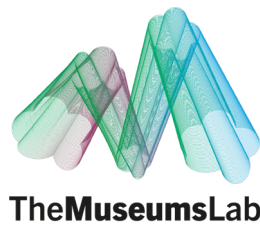
2 December



What we offer

- **Three Modules** (online and on-site) with multidisciplinary perspectives on current museum and heritage discourses, focussing on „Building Futures from Memory: Museums and Memorial Sites as Agents“
- **Innovative** formats of learning and workshops for practical skills
- **One Residency** in a tandem (one Fellow from Africa, one Fellow from Europe) at a renowned African or European Partner Museum
- **Networking opportunities** amongst Fellows and with international experts
- **Certificate**, issued by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Museum für Naturkunde Berlin – Leibniz Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity Science and Rwanda Cultural Heritage Academy
- **Access** to TheMuseumsLab Alumni Network
- **Partial cost coverage for the on-site Modules** in Berlin (Module 2), Kigali (Module 3) and the Residency at an African or European Partner Museum according to DAAD regulations and German Travel Expenses Act.
Please read carefully what is comprised in the cost coverage and contact us if you have further questions before submitting your application.
 - **International and national transport** to arrive to and depart from programme locations (lowest possible economy class airfare and 2nd class train tickets)
Please note: transports between the place of residence and departure/arrival airport (home address/town <-> local airport) and travels for visa processes are not included in the cost coverage
 - **Ticket for local public transport** (Module 2, Module 3 and the Residencies, if applicable)
 - **Airport transfers** (Module 3, Residencies in Africa, if applicable)
 - **Reimbursement** for visa fees (only necessary visa processes at official entities) and up to € 40 for travel health insurance (on-site phases, if applicable).
Please note: Valid health insurances are mandatory for all on-site phases.
 - **Mandatory vaccinations** (for entry to countries with programme locations, if applicable)
 - **Accommodation** during the on-site Modules and Residency locations (from official programme arrival date to official programme departure date)
Please note: All programme related travels and accommodations will be arranged and booked by the DAAD and its supporting service provider.
 - **Programme relevant entrance fees**
 - **Daily allowance** during the on-site Modules and Residencies (limited compensation for meals not provided in the programme)
Please note: the above-mentioned regulations state fixed amounts for daily allowances for each country/city. The allowances are newly calculated each year. The respective amounts have to be reduced according to the meals being provided in the programme.

Please note that we do not cover any other costs.



What we expect

- **Professional competencies and experiences**

Practical experience of at least 2 years in a museum, heritage site or art space, relating to themes such as Archaeology, Architecture, Art, Cultural History, Natural Sciences and Technology and relation to the overarching theme „Building Futures from Memory: Museums and Memorial Sites as Agents.“

Please note: Short term internships (up to two months) will not be considered.

- **Commitment to the programme**

A prerequisite for the selection of a candidate is the binding commitment to participate in all parts of TheMuseumsLab programme. Active participation in all programme components is essential. Candidates must demonstrate strong motivation and commit to full attendance, including exchange with the other fellows, speakers, and lecturers. Upon selection, a letter of consent and approved training leave from the employer might be requested

- **Personal Skills**

Engagement in peer exchange, workshops, and evaluation processes, Demonstration of interpersonal and leadership skills such as creativity, resilience, self-reflection, collaborative communication, adaptability, and a drive for ethical transformational roles in museums.

- **Mandatory participation in evaluation formats**

TheMuseumsLab understands itself as a continuously learning programme.

The Fellows' contributions are crucial to that process of constant evolution of the programme.

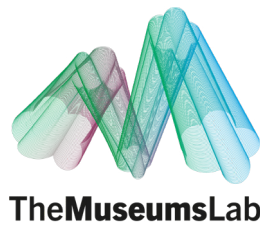
Therefore, all Fellows commit to actively participate in comprehensive evaluations formats throughout the programme and its conclusion.

- **Language skills**

Adequate language proficiency in English (written and spoken) is essential in order to participate actively in the programme.

For more information on the past TheMuseumsLab editions kindly visit:

[TheMuseumsLab Website](#)



Application Procedure

The application **must** include the following documents:

- completed standard DAAD application form (document to be found on the DAAD Portal)
- completed TheMuseumsLab application form (document to be found in the DAAD scholarship database)
- short CV (in English, max 2 pages)
- letter of recommendation (in English)
- the documents name should contain your name, country of residence and the type of document (e.g. Last Name_first Name_Ethiopia_CV)

Completeness of the application will affect the applicant's eligibility as a participant.

Please make sure you have read all application documents carefully before submitting your application.

Please submit your application via the DAAD portal the latest by 2 December 2025.
For more information and submission of applications kindly follow this link to the DAAD scholarship database.

If you have technical difficulties uploading your application, please document these with screenshots and reach out to the technical support directly: portal@daad.de

For any other questions regarding the application please contact the DAAD TheMuseumsLab Team: mlab.berlin@daad.de

After the review by the official selection committee, the selected applicants will be notified by beginning of March 2026.

Please note the following:

- Make sure you have read all information and documents regarding the Call for Applications carefully before submitting your application
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted
- Applications sent via email will not be accepted
- In case of selection, you have seven days to confirm your place in the programme.
If you reject the place in the programme or do not respond, it will be given to another applicant
- The assignments to Residency Museums will only be done after the selected applicants have confirmed their place in the programme
- Highly qualified applicants, even if they are not selected, may be approached to contribute to the programme as speakers
- The implementation of the programme is subject to the allocation of sufficient funding

TheMuseumsLab is dedicated to providing a welcoming experience for every person involved.

We value and promote diversity, inclusivity, fairness and openness and reject any form of discrimination, harassment, racism and disrespect.



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
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