

BETTY NJERI KARANJA

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

An experienced curator and research scientist specializing in cultural heritage management, socio-economic impact assessments, and stakeholder engagement. My expertise spans community outreach, project planning, and capacity building. I have successfully managed complex projects that involved working with diverse stakeholders and communities. With a solid foundation in disaster risk management and public education, I am adept at delivering actionable insights through impact assessments, local and international collaborations, fostering sustainable development, and promoting community welfare.

SIGNATURE STRENGTHS & COMPETENCIES

Cultural Heritage Research and Documentation
Project Planning and Management
Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration

Heritage Conservation
Community Outreach

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Team Leader, Ileret Footprint Project, 2023-2024- Coordinating the exhibition development team to ensure the integration of scientific research to highlight the significance of this early human 1.5M. Years Fossil Footprint at Ileret, Marsabit County. The project aims to help in the mitigation of effects of climate change in the area, identify and empower local community members with the necessary skills to manage the site effectively and derive sustainable livelihoods from the heritage resources available.
- ✓ Team member, Stakeholder Engagement & Public Participation on Entrance Fee Review for the National Museums of Kenya. Successfully coordinated and facilitated stakeholder engagement meetings and public notices and announcements, ensuring inclusive public participation in the review process for museum entrance fees, leading to informed decision-making and policy adjustments aligned with public and institutional interests.
- ✓ Facilitated stakeholder engagement meetings for an Exhibition Assessment Study at the Uganda Museum in 2023, as part of the museum's restructuring project aligned with its Conservation Management Plan 2021-2026. A Collection Care Training was conducted as one of the recommendations from the study.
- ✓ Project leader of the Tafari Museum, where we delivered an exhibition on Evolution. This is in line with the Constitution 2010 on devolution of Museums, focusing on rural heritage promotion..
- ✓ Received funding of Euros 5,000 for the Museum Futures Africa Project sponsored by Goethe South Africa. I was the team leader for Kenya and delivered a topical exhibition on Peace during election time. The exhibition was hosted at the Nairobi Gallery from January 2022 to September 2022.
- ✓ Facilitated three workshops on Disaster Risk Management in partnership with the International Committee on Museum Security (ICMS) in 2018 in Karen, at the Uganda Museum in January 2020 and a Regional Training in Nairobi in October 2025.

- ✓ Fellow of the Global Leadership Institute in Los Angeles California, with a certificate on Museum Leadership and Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

April 2024 - To Date - Research Scientist, Cultural Heritage Department, National Museums of Kenya

- ✓ Conduct in-depth research on cultural heritage sites, artefacts, and intangible cultural elements across Kenya.
- ✓ Collaborate with local communities to collect oral histories and indigenous knowledge on cultural heritage.
- ✓ Lead research on the preservation of historical monuments and sites, focusing on mitigating risks from environmental and human factors. Work with restoration teams to design methods for conserving artefacts, traditional architecture, and cultural landscapes.
- ✓ Conduct workshops and seminars for communities and heritage stakeholders on best practices for preserving cultural artefacts and traditions.
- ✓ Engage in community-driven heritage projects that empower local communities to manage and protect their own cultural resources.
- ✓ Work on joint research projects with international bodies like UNESCO, ICOM, and ICCROM, focusing on the global exchange of cultural heritage knowledge.
- ✓ Assist in the development and curation of exhibitions that highlight Kenya's cultural heritage and collaborate with curators and conservators to ensure that cultural artefacts are displayed with proper context and care.

Jan 2024 - March 2024 - Senior Curator, Nairobi National Museum, National Museums of Kenya

- ✓ Stakeholder Engagement: Coordinated and facilitated stakeholder engagement meetings on the Entrance Fee Review, ensuring inclusive public participation in the review process for museum entrance fees.
- ✓ Collaborations: Liaised with key partners for temporary exhibitions, ensuring successful collaboration with communities and stakeholders.
- ✓ Project Leadership: Coordinated cross-functional teams for the development of exhibitions and public programs, enhancing the museum's role in socio-cultural development.
- ✓ Monitoring & Evaluation: Managed museum operations with a focus on sustainability, continuously assessing impacts of museum programs on local communities.

Dec 2021 - Dec 2023 - Senior Curator, Nairobi Gallery Museum and National Monument, National Museums of Kenya,

- ✓ Community Impact Management: Led initiatives involving over 10 community events and programs, ensuring positive socio-economic outcomes.
- ✓ Project Oversight: Supervised staff and led the development of community-focused exhibitions, aligning museum activities with the needs of diverse stakeholders.
- ✓ Stakeholder Coordination: Organized successful fund-raising and partnerships for the museum, securing both in-kind and cash donations to support education-oriented programs.

Feb 2021 – Nov 2021 - Senior Curator, Karen Blixen Museum, National Museums of Kenya.

- ✓ Community Integration: Led projects that incorporated local community needs into the museum's development, focusing on sustainable integration of cultural and educational programs.
- ✓ Fundraising for Social Impact Projects: Collaborated with international partners and local communities to raise funds for museum activities that benefited the surrounding educational institutions.

July 2016 –Jan 2021 Exhibitions Curator, Nairobi National Museum, National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi.

- ✓ Introduced and managed three annual exhibitions: Valentine's, Easter, and International Museums Day.
- ✓ Coordinated the installation of over 30 exhibitions, collaborating with clients and partners.
- ✓ Successfully fund-raised for exhibition programs, securing partners for key events.
- ✓ Maintained a comprehensive collections register for artefacts in the gallery.
- ✓ Led a team of 16 staff, including curatorial assistants and customer service personnel.
- ✓ Ensured the safety of objects and visitors by collaborating with security personnel – no major incidents reported.
- ✓ Played a pivotal role in implementing COVID-19 protocols at the museum.
- ✓ Provided support to other departments and resolved client concerns promptly.

July 2010 – June 2016 Curator, Nyeri Native Court Museum, National Museums of Kenya, Nyeri.

- ✓ Collection and cataloguing of museum objects and artefacts.
- ✓ Preparation and implementation of the station imprest.
- ✓ Undertaking research work both at archival repositories and private individuals.
- ✓ Maintain good public relations with our stakeholders within the county and membership to the Nyeri County Tourism Association. Organized the first Nyeri Cultural festival in 2014.
- ✓ Fundraising: managed to get material support for two of our art and education programs.
- ✓ Design and installation of exhibitions, two since 2013.
- ✓ Design and implementation of education programs, with over 10 sessions within two terms in 2014.
- ✓ Overseeing physical maintenance and Supervision of staff.

April 2015 – August 2016 Lecturer (Part time), Karatina University, Karatina

- ✓ Lecturing 4th years on Public Policy and Project Management for 52 hours.
- ✓ Lecturing 3rd years on Leadership and Management of community projects; Sociology of Planning and Development; Advocacy for Institutional Change, for 52 hours.
- ✓ Lecturing 2nd years on Group Techniques and Analysis for 52 hours.
- ✓ Researching for notes.
- ✓ Setting, marking and compiling of exams.
- ✓ Liaising with departmental staff on any other issues.

EDUCATION BACKGROUND

- **October 2012 –August 2014 M.A. (Project Planning & Management)**
University of Nairobi
- **October 2001 –November 2005 B.A (Anthropology)** *University of Nairobi*
(2nd Class Honors, Upper Division)

PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- ✓ Co-author, “Kenya Youth Heritage Hubs: Nurturing Youth Creativity and Innovation Through Civic Engagement and Leadership with a Focus on Entrepreneurship,” in *Youth Programs in Art Museums: An International Perspective* (Routledge, 2025).
- ✓ Foundation Year Cohort Member, Preserving Legacies Project – a global initiative focused on climate change adaptation and safeguarding endangered heritage sites (2025)
- ✓ Contributed to a Publication: Southern Museology: A Glossary Of Learning And Unlearning <https://museum-futures.com/Southern-Museology>
- ✓ Board member of the International Committee on Museum Security (ICMS) since 2024-2025
- ✓ Secretary, ICOM-Africa Regional Alliance since July 2023
- ✓ Secretary, ICOM-Kenya National Committee since February 2020.
- ✓ Board of Management member for Thamara Mixed Day Secondary School, Muranga, since 2015, currently on 2nd term appointment by the Ministry of Education, Chair of Academic Committee.
- ✓ October 2023 & October 2024, Guest lecturer at McGill University, Quebec, Canada.

HOBBIES

- ✓ Blog – Star Struck: <https://wp.me/PcDpmn-8>
- ✓ Travelling
- ✓ General reading
- ✓ Poetry

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