

Correcting Our Collecting: An Introduction to African-Centred Archiving

(BESPOKE PROGRAM)

Correcting Our Collecting is a short, accessible, and practical course in African heritage archiving. It is designed to introduce participants to some basic principles, skills and ideas required to approach the creation, preservation and activation of archives from an African-centered perspective. The course is necessary as the overwhelming majority of teaching and material concerning archival practice centre European perspectives on information studies. This is alienating for African heritage archivists. It also ignores the vital contribution African-centred ways of knowing and being can make, and have made, to archival science.

The program also aims to support and engage current community workers/enablers who are already established in their community work to be trained in how to preserve the work they are doing in a methodical and sustainable manner that combines their cultural competencies, intelligence and commitments.

This bespoke course is delivered over 4 sessions of two and half hours per day combining presentations, practical tasks, placements and discussions. It is an entry-level course suitable for anyone of African heritage who is interested in learning more about what archives are, how they are created and managed, and what we should consider when working with archives within our own communities.

Overview:

Day 1: What Is An Archive? An African Centered Perspective.

Introductions, Sankofa and the first Archivists,
Interdependence, Community, living archives, ritual archives,
self determination. [20/07]

Day 1 (pt 2): Dis is Who We Are: "Identifying Memory in Community"

Part 1: Who We Are: Definitions of Community

Part 2: Remember Dis? : Definitions of Memory

Part 3: Memory as binding Community

Part 4: Identifying Narratives/Expressions of Memory that binds
Community

Day 2 : Archiving Fundamentals

Context, original order, authenticity, preservation as
use?.[03/08]

Day 2 (pt 2) : Oral History - Our Families and Communities Pt.1 The
importance of Oral History for African people. Planning an
oral history interview. [10/08]

(part 3) : Oral History - Our Families and Communities Pt.2
Conducting and archiving oral histories. [24/08]

Day 3: Organising and Structuring an ethical and
sustainable approach to preservation and
cataloguing//code index, based on each individual
participant's group structure.

This session will involve participants to bring an
understanding of what it is they wish to archive
for the group they represent, they will also need
to think through why is that specific archival
material important and what legacy that material
will bring or share with the community.

Day 3

(Part 2) How can community groups implement structural
changes that prepare and involve repository
practices with and without a budget

Day 4

Session : Practical Placement Pt.1

w/ BCA, Hackney Archive, University of Edinburgh (tbc)

Session 8: Practical Placement Pt.2

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course participants will be able to:

- Articulate key principles, frameworks and ideas relating to African-centred archival practice.
- Discuss fundamental concepts of archival practice including context, original order, provenance/authenticity and the relationship between preservation and access.
- Explain why the recording, preservation and activation of oral histories are key aspects of African-centred archival practice.
- Prepare for, conduct and transcribe a short oral history interview.
- Understand the practicalities of working with archives in a Black-led institution.
- Be able to commence structuring a repository for their specific communities