



# Ifa Lethu

healing through heritage

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## Briefing Document

### Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture

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# ABOUT IFA LETHU

## Establishment

The Ifa Lethu Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Pretoria, grew out of the efforts of two former Australian diplomats, Diane Johnstone and Bruce Haigh, who approached South Africa in 2004 with a view to donating artwork purchased during their postings in the country in the 1970's. This led to the realization by stakeholders such as the former Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr. Pallo Jordan, of the need to create a body charged with the location and repatriation of such heritage. This resulted in the formation and launch of the Ifa Lethu Foundation in November 2005. This initiated a global hunt to recover works of South African township art that flourished during the apartheid era and came to represent a unique commentary of that dark time. Unsung at home, much of the art was recognised by visitors and diplomats, bought almost clandestinely and shipped away from our shores. Targeting that group, Ifa Lethu focuses on bringing back those collections to fill the void in our cultural heritage.

Ifa Lethu was therefore formed to respond to challenges in the heritage sector in South Africa. These challenges included the location of the country's heritage such as art and art objects outside the country, the lack of available skills in this sector.

The concept that all cultural heritage present in a country or overseas belongs to its citizens, is a powerful one. Taking ownership of this heritage and leveraging it for developmental needs is a nation building exercise and one that is powerful enough for economic development. It is this recognition that informs the work of the Ifa Lethu Foundation and therefore positions it well for its holistic involvement in repatriation and entrepreneurial development work in the heritage sector.

While the first decade of our democracy correctly focused on redressing imbalances in the material welfare of citizens, it has become clear that the neglect of the RDP of the soul had resulted in fractures in our society as evidenced by levels of crime, anger and violence. Therefore by harnessing our lessons over the last two years and in order to respond to current challenges in the heritage sector, Ifa Lethu took the decision to incorporate the development aspect into our work. This was guided by our research which pointed to the lack of available and related skills in this sector and the failure to use heritage to empower communities and create a more entrepreneurial society in South Africa, thus contributing to the economic development of the country.

The Foundation's work emerges from three arms of its mandate:

1. Repatriation of Art and Art Objects from Abroad.
2. Human Rights and Advocacy growing out of the content of the art collections.
3. Creative Entrepreneurial Development addressing national impact priorities such as poverty alleviation and the Millenium Goals. This has been implemented to address developmental needs of communities.

The Foundation also stands in the post-apartheid tradition that includes the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, established to examine and forgive those who had transgressed against humanity; and the Reconstruction and Development Programme, which aimed at fast-tracking solutions to the infrastructural and economic inequities of the past. Within this tradition, the Ifa Lethu Foundation is specifically tasked with the protection and promotion of important elements of our heritage, and is a further indication of our desire to heal our souls, rejoice in the talent of our past, and acknowledge the role of arts and culture in our transition.

The work of the Foundation is guided by the recognition that it is not a repository, but a facilitator of the repatriation, community and educational outreach, skills and enterprise development training initiatives.

Although the Ifa Lethu Foundation today manages South Africa's largest repatriation effort, it does so in the absence of a legislative framework. But the Foundation does comply with national and international legislation heritage legislation. These include the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and transfer of ownership of Cultural Property of November 1970; the South African national Heritage Resources Act of 1999; SAHRA regulations and the UNESCO and UNIDROIT Conventions.

All our efforts are also aligned to cultural and intellectual rights.

## **Boards of the Ifa Lethu Foundation**

The South African Board of Directors of Ifa Lethu include prominent South African heavyweights from the education, business, legal, media and cultural sectors and these include Dr. Mamphela Ramphele (Patron and Founding Chair), Ambassador Lindiwe Mabuza (Current Chair), Dr. Narissa Ramdhani (CEO), Hugh Masekela, Michael Judin, Tom Nevin, Dr. Ivan May, Raymond Louw and Dr. Anna Mokgokong. The Global Advisory Council members include former Australian Prime Minister Mr. Malcolm Fraser, Lord Robin Renwick (UK) and Ambassador Princeton Lyman (USA), Baroness Lynda Chalker (UK), Tor Sellstrom (Sweden)

### 1.3. Vision

To be a facilitator of the creative arts as a healing medium and to raise the awareness of the centrality of culture and heritage as an intrinsic part of what it means to be a rounded society.

### 1.4. Mission

The Ifa Lethu Foundation promotes partnerships and initiatives that focus on repatriation and preservation of our heritage. It promotes skills and entrepreneurship amongst artists and communities and applies the creative arts to the fashion industry.

### 1.5. Beneficiaries of Ifa Lethu's Work

- ❖ The geographically isolated communities of South Africa.
- ❖ The economy of South Africa.
- ❖ Youth and Women including the physically and mentally disadvantaged
- ❖ South African Tourism

### 1.6. Representivity

The Foundation recognizes the diverse nature of South Africa and in so doing has allowed this to inform its projects and work. The current project for which funding is sought reflects youth representivity as per follows:

Rural Youth	60%
Rural Women	40%
African	80%
Other	20%

### 1.7. Impact Areas

- ❖ National and International

### 1.8. Funding History

The foundation was provided with seed funding of R4 million by the National Department of Arts and Culture to start up Ifa Lethu. Further start up project funding for the sum of R3 million was furnished by BHP Billiton.

Project Funding has been made possible by the following:

- Andrew J. Mellon Foundation
- ABSA Foundation
- Ausaid
- Barloworld

- Department of Arts and Culture (further funding)
- Development Bank of South Africa
- Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
- IDC
- National Heritage Council
- Mozambique Department of Arts and Culture
- TATA Africa
- National Lotto
- National Arts Council
- Transnet Foundation

## 1.9. Some of our National and International Partners

### National

Tshwane University of Technology  
 University of Pretoria School of Entrepreneurship  
 Wits University  
 University of Johannesburg  
 University of Western Cape  
 Durban University of Technology  
 Constitution Hill  
 Robben Island/Mayibuye Centre  
 Durban Art Gallery  
 Iziko  
 Pretoria Art Museum  
 International Women's Forum of SA.  
 Development Bank of Southern Africa  
 BHP Billiton  
 African Fashion International  
 Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy  
 Freedom Park  
 AISA  
 South African Democracy and Education trust  
 International Marketing Council of South Africa  
 SA Tourism  
 Steve Biko Foundation

### International

University of Connecticut (USA)  
 Michigan State University (USA)  
 University of Kentucky (USA)  
 Smithsonian (USA)  
 Craft Council (India)  
 National Small and Medium Industries corporation  
 (India)  
 Africom (Kenya)  
 Department of Arts and Culture (Mozambique)

British Museum (UK)  
Kingsdale High School (UK)  
SA Tourism (UK)  
London Tourism (UK)  
Salvadore Allendre Museum (Chile)  
Department of Education (Chile)  
Arts Council (Chile)  
South African Missions Abroad  
Foreign Missions in SA.

## 2. IFA LETHU HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS

- the implementation of **26 national and international projects**.
- The successful implementation of **Ifa Lethu Internship programmes** which have resulted in Ifa Lethu trainees obtaining gainful employment. 12 interns have passed through Ifa Lethu in the last 12 months. They have now been employed.
- Ifa Lethu's involvement in the **Fossil casting projects** and the latest fossil discoveries in collaboration with the Origins Centre at Wits University.
- Launch and Implementation of **Mobile entrepreneurial and human rights schools** programmes. 2500 trainees have undergone entrepreneurial training while 5000 learners have been exposed to the human rights educational programmes.
- Opening of the ***Home and Away: A return to the South*** exhibition for the world cup in Constitution Hill. 3500 tourists from 24 countries viewed the exhibition in June 2010. This exhibition has traveled nationally since then and will open in Australia in May 2010, before proceeding to the British Museum for its opening in London in September 2011 and finally onto Washington and Santiago.
- The hosting of **academic conferences and seminars** nationally on art and human rights.
- the implementation of a **publication programme** resulting in academic contributions to SADET, International Journal of Anthropology, the launch of the publication for schools entitled *Walking Tall, Without Fear*, in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Education guide on *Art and Human Rights*
- 415 pieces of artwork, art objects and archival collections **repatriated** from 11 countries.
- Participation in the **National Arts Festival**, which has helped brand Ifa Lethu trainees and secure successful trade for those in business.
- participation in national and international **fashion weeks** with a view to demonstrating the link between art and heritage.
- Installation of **ART INCUBATORS** in Soweto and Mamelodi.

- **Products** of trainee entrepreneurs in markets such as duty free stores at airports and in shopping malls.
- **BASA** Nominations.

### **3. FORTHCOMING HIGHLIGHTS**

- Branding and gala dinner fundraising in London with private performance by Hugh Masekela for Footse 100 Ceo's: October 2011
- Joint Fundraiser with Mumbai Fashion Week: May 2011.
- Opening of International Exhibition Schedule: Australia 2011.
- Showcasing Ifa Lethu's trainees internationally (London): September 2011.
- International Craft market, India: October 2012.
- Installation of further ART INCUBATORS in KKwaZulu-Natal, Northwest Province and Limpopo.

### **4. Development Problem resulting in the Entrepreneurial Programmes of the Foundation.**

According to the 2007 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), when it comes to entrepreneurial activity, South Africa performs poorly in comparison to other emerging economies. While the South African government remains committed to supporting small enterprises as one of the drivers of levels of economic growth needed to make an impact on poverty and unemployment in the country, it is unable to successfully support such initiatives. The work of the Ifa Lethu Foundation is driven by the need to address this concern in the area of the creative industries which includes visual art, sculpture, crafts, fashion and design, and with particular reference to rural youth and women.

Ifa Lethu has thus developed a programme of skills and enterprise development workshops, in partnership with the University of Pretoria School of Entrepreneurship, as well as Incubator Programmes for rural youth and women interested in the creative industries, so they may become successful entrepreneurs. This has also been done in response to the requirements of transformation and economic growth needs. This programme is unique in that we aim to translate creative industry growth needs into meaningful capacity. The demand for South African Art, sculpture, art objects, craft and fashion by South Africans themselves, by the tourism industry and by foreign countries also guides the Ifa Lethu Foundation strategy to sector-lock its training programmes.

In the development of its training programmes, Ifa Lethu undertook extensive research in this area to ascertain skills needs and market demands and to validate its strategic intent. This programme is also aligned with feedback from various stakeholders including government ministries such as Trade and Industry, Arts and Culture and Foreign Affairs, the International Marketing Council as well as those in the various municipal structures and the creative industry sector.

Ifa Lethu, through its two phases of training and the third Incubator phase offers training programmes in all provinces to enable the indirect empowerment of youth and women who are interested in the creative industries; to develop entrepreneurs so that they are market ready; to assist in identifying the markets for these entrepreneurs through the creation of an enabling environment and through the development of partnerships.

## **5. CONTEXTUALISING IFA LETHU'S CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

The Ifa Lethu Foundation is a non-profit heritage organization focusing on three major issues for the country:

- The development of cultural/creative entrepreneurs as economic drivers
- Creating global awareness for the strength of South Africa's cultural property.
- Creating awareness of Human Rights abuses.

At Ifa Lethu we see the cultural sector as being a key economic driver in the country's tourism industry. Indeed, with reference to [www.dac.gov.za](http://www.dac.gov.za):

- The Department of Trade and Industry estimates that South Africa's creative sector alone contributes about R2-billion or 0.14% to South Africa's GDP annually.
- In addition, the sector provides jobs and income for approximately 38 000 people through an estimated 7 000 small enterprises.
- The creative sector can also be used as a catalyst for rural economic development and for fostering expanded participation in the economy, especially by women and youth.
- Furthermore, as the art of designing and producing cultural products is handed down from generation to generation, members of communities have an opportunity to work together and impart knowledge and social values to each other, especially the youth.
- This contributes towards social cohesion and instills the culture of respect, discipline and Ubuntu.
- It is for these reasons that we continue to say that crafts represent both an economic activity and a cultural practice.
- Tourists are often attracted to a particular area because of its cultural and heritage significance.

## **6. COMMUNITY SETTINGS**

As its work represents the continuing development of youth and women in these areas, with a view to creating gainful employment for this sector (through the skills development training and Incubator programmes), Ifa Lethu is assured of the necessary support in all provinces. The Foundation has enjoyed a good track record in all provinces in which it has undertaken work with surrounding communities, schools in the area and parents of participants and other stakeholders such as principals and councilors. Such support will augur well for the smooth conduct of even further programmes with cooperation from stakeholders assured. Ifa Lethu's work also impacts positively on targeted and non-targeted communities who view of the work of this organisation as contributing to the social and economic upliftment of the area and on participants and families. There have therefore been no constraints to projects being implemented in all provinces.

Hence Ifa Lethu's strategic intervention, through its training programmes and use of local service providers, ultimately contributes to the process of alleviating poverty in rural areas. This intervention also helps bring rural communities into the first economy of South Africa.

## **7. CHALLENGES**

The challenges facing heritage organizations are numerous and obvious such as the lack of human capital and funding, but five require special note:

### **7.1 Funding within the context of national priorities:**

The reluctance on the part of major South African corporations to invest their resources in this area arises from how they perceive heritage and heritage institutions. The prevailing view is that heritage neither contributes to the building of a nation nor to the economic development of the country. Perhaps this perception can be attributed to the haphazard way in which certain organizations run their heritage businesses in SA today. But this is no excuse for corporate perceptions.

### **7.2. Corporate education on the value of heritage**

Those charged with Social responsibility portfolios are ignorant on the value of heritage in the nation building agenda. Failure to invest in the mind and soul of a nation is a tragedy that will have dire consequences for the consolidation of our democracy.

Ifa Lethu has demonstrated that the repatriation of art and the resulting enterprise development initiatives growing out of this major effort clearly finds application in poverty alleviation and economic development as well as in implementing the Millennium goals.

### **7.3. The Adoption of International Models**

The failure to adopt international models for commercialising and branding of South African cultural products, innovative marketing campaigns, and grant-making initiatives. This applies particularly to state agencies.

#### 7.4. The Absence of Legislation

The absence of a legislative framework on repatriation remains an obstacle as we continue to manage the processes on an ad hoc basis.

#### 7.5. The Importance of Nurturing Creativity

A case needs to be made to state agencies about the need to teach and nurture creativity in South Africa. Given the growing focus on math, science and engineering, we are already discovering that without creativity, we will fail to really develop innovative solutions to South African problems. Using the examples of Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg-both dropped out of college but they were creative people who took technology to new levels.

## 8. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

As we move through 2011, we will do so with the usual enthusiasm and determination to go after the opportunities that lie ahead. While we focus on strengthening core activities and reaching financial targets, the Foundation will devote much energy to international fundraising and branding as well as to commercializing the work of the organisation.

As we believe there is no finish line for our efforts, for the rest of the year we will be looking at ways to work smarter and creatively and raise our game in the cultural sector of SA. We aim to prove that we are the one of the ablest navigators of the heritage sector, although current funding only allows an existence until 2014.