



Professor Amareswar Galla Delivers the 80th Anniversary Keynote at ICOM Annual Meetings and Advances Global Dialogue on the Future of Museums

Founding Executive Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum (iiiM) contributes to ICOM's 80th Anniversary celebrations through keynote on leadership, international dialogue and strategic engagement at the UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.

24 - 25 JUNE 2026

UNESCO HEADQUARTERS, PARIS

<https://inclusivemuseums.org/>

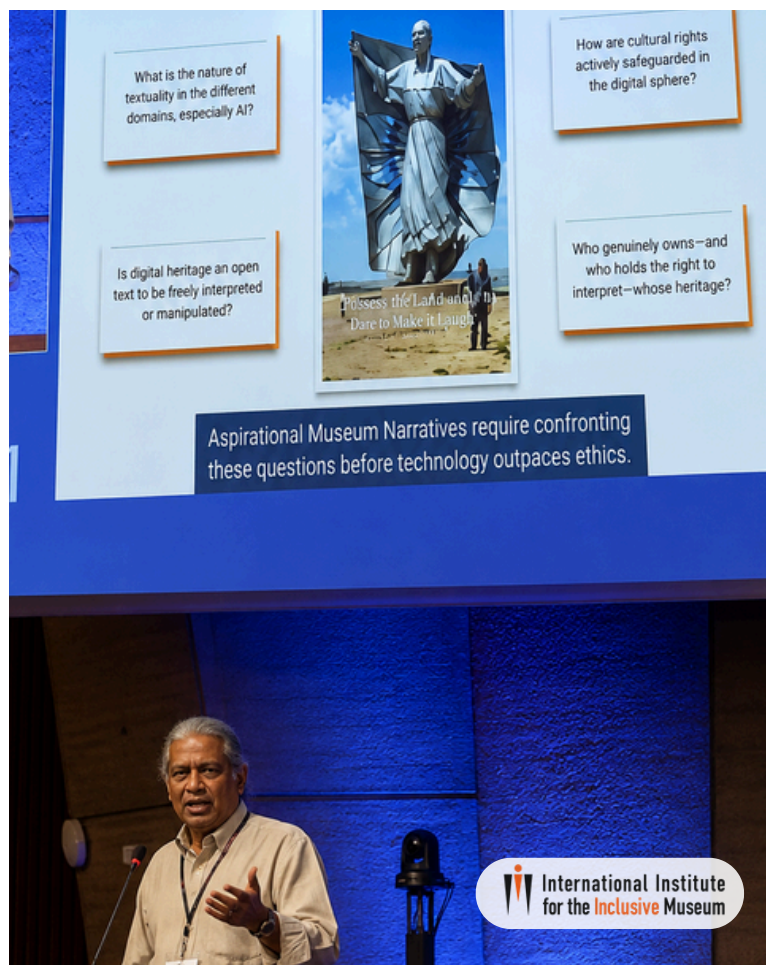
THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY KEYNOTE: FUTURE IMPERFECT: ASPIRATIONAL MUSEUM NARRATIVES

On 24 June 2026, as part of ICOM's 80th Anniversary celebrations, Professor Amareswar Galla delivered the Keynote Address to an international audience of museum professionals, cultural leaders, policymakers, and representatives from UNESCO & ICOM's International Committees and National Committees.

The keynote challenged museum professionals to rethink the future of museums in an era shaped by artificial intelligence, climate crisis, Indigenous knowledge, cultural rights and rapidly changing societal expectations.

Drawing upon more than four decades of international practice, Professor Galla argued that museums must move beyond preserving collections to becoming institutions that actively promote cultural democracy, social justice and sustainable development.

His presentation concluded with a renewed call for an inclusive museum movement grounded in ethical responsibility, community participation and respect for diverse knowledge systems.



KEY QUESTIONS FOR OUR TIME

01

Who genuinely owns, interprets and benefits from whose heritage?

02

How can cultural rights be protected within rapidly evolving digital environments?

03

What responsibilities do museums hold in an age increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence?

04

How can museums become spaces of dialogue rather than institutions of authority?

ASPIRATIONAL MUSEUM NARRATIVES REQUIRE CONFRONTING THESE QUESTIONS BEFORE TECHNOLOGY OUTPACES ETHICS.

- Professor Amareswar Galla
ICOM 80th Anniversary
Keynote Address



The keynote concluded with *The Manifesto for Inclusive Museums*- a call to action for museums to embrace participation, shared authority, cultural rights and sustainability as core responsibilities.

Global Dialogue, Indigenous Leadership, Strategic Partnerships.

Intergenerational Dialogue on Indigenous Rights and Social Inclusivity in Museums

On 25 June 2026, Professor Galla participated in the Intergenerational Dialogue on Indigenous Rights and Social Inclusivity in Museums, bringing together Indigenous leaders, young professionals, and museum practitioners from across the world.

The dialogue reaffirmed the importance of Indigenous leadership, cultural rights, and intergenerational collaboration as essential foundations for museums serving contemporary society.

Intergenerational Dialogue

ICOM DG Medea Sogor Ekner, Dr Samba Yonga (Zambia), Prof. Dr. Amareswar Galla (India/Australia), Dr Michael Mel (PNG), Dr. Bruno Brulon (Brazil/Scotland), Dr Quintero Agamez (Colombia)



Strategic Meeting with UNESCO

On 26 June 2026, Professor Amareswar Galla met with Mr. Nayef Al-Fayez, Assistant Director General for Culture of UNESCO, for a constructive discussion on the way forward for the future of museums, heritage, and culture.

Professor Galla presented his publication *World Heritage: Benefits Beyond Borders*, highlighting shared commitments to inclusive heritage governance and global cooperation in support of UNESCO's cultural objectives.