

# **Memorandum of Understanding, establishing a consortium of trustees of the VCM-project**

## *(A) Partners in this Memorandum of Understanding*

This is an agreement between 7 member museums of the ASEMUS network who wish to safeguard the sustainable future of the “Virtual Collection of Masterpieces”-project.

These are the initial partners in this Memorandum of Understanding:

- (1) National Museums of the Philippines, Manila,  
represented by Prof. Corazon **Alvina**, director general;
- (2) Seyeon Iron Museum, Eumseong-gun;  
represented by Mrs. In Kyung **Chang**, director; on behalf ICOM-ASPAC
- (3) Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden,  
represented by Dr. Steven **Engelsman**, director
- (4) Swedish Museums of World Culture, Gothenburg,  
represented by Mrs. Eva **Gesang-Karlström**, director general;
- (5) Chester Beatty Library, Dublin,  
represented by Prof. Michael **Ryan**, director;
- (6) Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam,  
represented by Mr. Lejo **Schenk**, director;
- (7) Gyeonggi provincial Museum, Yongin City;  
represented by Mr. Byoung-Woo **Yi**, acting director;

In the remainder of this memorandum the partners in this memorandum will be called: “trustees of the VCM-project” or just “trustees”.

## *(B) The Virtual Collection of Masterpieces*

The Virtual Collection of Masterpieces (“VCM” for short) consists of the website <http://masterpieces.asemus.museum> and its content management systems. The VCM displays photographs and descriptions of masterpieces chosen from the collections of a great range of contributing museums. The VCM was officially launched and its URL released to the general public on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in the Gyeonggi Provincial Museum, Yongin City, Korea.

The initiative to build the VCM was taken by the ASEMUS network, and the plan was officially announced at the Museum Hopping Conference in Singapore, March 2004. The project was carried out by a consortium<sup>1</sup> of museums from the ASEMUS network

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<sup>1</sup> The following museums have participated in the VCM-consortium: National Museum of the Philippines, Manila (prof. Corazon Alvina); Hanyang University Museum (Prof. Kidong Bae); Seyeon Iron Museum (Mrs. In Kyung Chang); Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden (dr. Steven Engelsman and mr. Jos Taekema); Musee du quai Branly, Paris (Mrs. Severine le Guevel); Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore (dr. Tan Huism); Swedish Museums of

under the leadership of Gyeonggi Provincial Museum in Yongin City, and Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden. It was financed by a range of participating museums<sup>2</sup> together with the Asia Europe Foundation ASEF<sup>3</sup>. The actual project and development work was done by external consultants<sup>4</sup>.

### (C) Purpose of this Memorandum

Now that the VCM has been officially launched and is available on the world wide web, the initial project has come to an end. However, trustees agree that the VCM-project has enormous potential to be further developed into an alliance or active community of contributing museums. So it is the wish of trustees to safeguard the future of the VCM-project. To this end, they agree to form a board of trustees for the VCM-project, which will provide the financial means to sustain the VCM-project. The board of trustees have the ultimate decision taking authority.

It is the purpose of this agreement to lay down the principles of governance of the board of trustees and to pledge sufficient funding. This agreement also commissions project leadership and administration of the project funds to Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden. The agreement will last for three years. It will come to an end on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011. It can then be renewed.

### (D) Initial trustees and new trustees.

Initially, trustees are those museums that have signed this agreement. Other museums may be invited to join the board of trustees as well. Acceptance of new trustees is a decision to be taken by the board of trustees. New trustees will sign on to this Memorandum of Understanding and also make an annual contribution of € 10.000 to the project funds.

### (E) Principles of governance

Trustees agree that they will govern the VCM-project in good faith and that they will act in the best interest of all stakeholders of the VCM-project. In particular, trustees pledge to keep all contributing museums to the VCM involved in the further development of the project and to provide adequate formats for them make their

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World Culture (dr. Karl Magnusson); Gyeonggi Provincial Museum, Yongin City (mr. Rhi Chong-Son, dr. Sang-Hoon Yang and mr. Duck-Ho Chang); Cultural Centre of Macao, Lisbon (mrs. Maria Jose Tavares).

<sup>2</sup> Financial contributions in 2006 and 2007: ASEF: € 75.000; Gyeonggi Provincial Museum: € 40.000; Museum Volkenkunde Leiden: € 32.000 plus in kind; Musee du quai Branly: € 15.000; Swedish Museums of World Culture: € 14.000; Museum für Völkerkunde, Munich: € 3000.

<sup>3</sup> The Asia Europe Foundation ASEF in Singapore has provided strong moral support and contributed in kind and in cash (Executive directors ambassadors Delphin Colomé and Wonil Cho, directors of Cultural Exchange Mr. Jean Anes and Mrs. Chulamane Chartuwan, project assistance by Mrs. Marie le Sourd, Mrs. Vanini Bellarmino, Mrs. Katelijn Verstraete, Mrs. Azizah Fauziah).

<sup>4</sup> The consortium has profited immensely from the expertise and advice on a pro bono basis of dr. Pitt Kuan Wah, National Archivist of Singapore. The two consultants who really got the project moving are: mr. John Perkins, Mexico who devised the basic architecture and project planning and mr. Manus Brinkman, Chiang Mai who is the editor of the VCM project and established very fine relations with all contributing museums. The company C-it in the Hague (mr. Brik de Zwart) provided hosting and software.

voices heard. Moreover, trustees will maintain direct links with the Executive Committee of ASEMUS and seek its advice and feedback whenever relevant.

Gyeonggi Provincial Museum will act as Asian lead partner in the board of trustees, Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden will act as European lead partner.

Trustees agree that they will proceed in their business along the following lines:

- Every year before November 15<sup>th</sup>, trustees will receive a draft action plan and draft annual budget for the VCM project. These plans will be drafted by the project manager.
- Trustees will approve, amend or refuse the action plan and the budget before December 15<sup>th</sup>, preferably by e-mail or fax to one of the lead partners or the project manager.
- The lead partners of the consortium will officially adopt the action plan and the budget. They will do so only after careful consideration of all objections raised and remarks made. They will only do so if at least a two-third majority of trustees supports the action plan and budget.
- Every year before May 1<sup>st</sup>, trustees will receive an annual report including the financial report of the previous year, together with a chartered accountants statement.
- Every three months, trustees will receive a newsletter informing them about the progress made in the implementation of the annual action plan and any other business that they might find interesting or relevant.
- Trustees will meet once a year for a one day board meeting, at their own expense, in order to discuss all matters at hand, including the reports of the previous year, the ongoing activities and the priorities of the coming year. The board meeting will be convened by the lead partners.
- Trustees who are unable to attend this meeting will inform the lead partners of the consortium of their opinion in matters that need a decision.

NB: In contrast with these rules of governance no action-plan and budget for the remaining months of 2007 will be submitted. They will be incorporated into the 2008 documents, and thus will be submitted to trustees for retroactive approval.

#### (F) Financial contributions and principles of accounting

Trustees will pay an annual contribution of € 10.000 into the consortium fund. The first payment will be due in December 2007; the last payment will be due in December 2009. Lead partners will make an annual donation of € 25.000, which can be part in cash and part in kind.

Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden will act as the treasury of the consortium fund. It will send out invoices for the contribution of the upcoming year to each trustee on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Consortium funds will only be spent in accordance with the annual budget as approved by trustees. Should the necessity arise to deviate from the approved budget, trustees will first be consulted and their approval requested. Should a case of urgency emerge which requires spending funds without prior approval, trustees will

be notified at once and their reactions will be shared among the entire consortium of trustees. A one-third minority of the consortium of trustees can decide to stop such spending at once.

(G) Project management

The project management of the VCM will be assigned to the IT-manager of Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden, Mr. Jos Taekema. He will have full authority to act as he deems necessary in order to achieve the targets set out in the annual action plan and spend the funds according to the annual budget as approved.

The project manager will sign annual contracts with the VCM-content editor Mr. Manus Brinkman, with the liaison and innovation officer (as of now: Mrs. Julie Trebault) and the IT-company that hosts the VCM and supplies the software platforms.

(H) Concluding remarks

This agreement will become effective as soon as it is signed by at least 7 trustees. It will last for three years, ending automatically on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011. In their 2009 board meeting trustees will indicate whether and how they want to continue the VCM-consortium after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011.

Should grave and unexpected circumstances so require, trustees can terminate their participation in this memorandum before November 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. They will inform the lead partners of the reasons why they have to take such decision and try to suggest replacements in the board of trustees.

Signed by: