**PRINCE CLAUS SEED AWARDS**

**About Your Work**

What discipline(s) do you work in?

Design

Music

Other: Cultural education

**Tell us about your artistic/cultural practice. 150 words**

I am an educationist, musician, and cultural curator. In addition to teaching formal education in school curriculums, I also teach informal education at the grassroots. I work with local schools within underprivileged communities where children from poor families attend. Their parents are uneducated, unemployed and/or belong to a marginalized social and/or ethnic group. In collaboration with the schools and parents, I design tailor-made learning and interactive programs for the children. It combines educational, cultural and social activities, which includes using Yoruba traditional music, instruments, language, crafts, cultural history and heritage. My current project is titled “talking drums in the classroom: enhancing Yoruba language learning using an ancient tradition”. The project aims at using traditional talking drums to enhance the existent curriculum on Yoruba language subject within the Nigerian formal educational system. My educational and cultural practice thus contributes to promoting language acquisition, cultural education, ethical inclusivity, heritage and identity.

**We are interested in understanding which of these social/political themes, if any, you address through your work.**

Indigenous rights

Reexamining history

Others: Indigenous knowledge systems and Cultural heritage

**Please elaborate on how the social/political themes you address through your work are relevant to your context. 200 words**

In addressing cultural heritage and indigenous rights theme, I engaged children from underprivileged communities who belong to a marginalized social and/or ethnic group. I curate cultural activities that teach and exhibit to the native children about traditional arts and cultural (music, instruments, dances, theater, costumes, language, art, religion, etc.). Through practical-based activities, I promote the preservation of Yoruba cultural heritage and identity among the native children.

In addressing indigenous knowledge systems and reexamining history theme, I design cultural education programs that teach the Yoruba history and the various indigenous methods of education and traditional institutions through which these knowledge systems are practiced in Yoruba culture. For example, in my current project I use the traditional musical education system in which the talking drums are used in a drum language system (speech surrogacy) for language learning. The research aimed at using traditional talking drums to enhance the existent curriculum on Yoruba language subject within the Nigerian formal educational system. This project explores how talking drums, which are traditionally employed in Yoruba societies as a communal didactic tool and activity for learning the cultural heritage, can be incorporated in classrooms to achieve similar pedagogical and cultural benefits in a modern context.

**How would you invest the Prince Claus Seed Awards, and how would this investment support you in taking the next step in your career? 400 Words**

I will invest the Prince Clause Seed funds for the following initiatives:

* Cultural education projects: I will continue and further develop my existing projects with the school children within the community. The cultural education project provides teaching sessions during the school periods, extra-teaching lessons and extra-curricular activities outside the school periods. Most of the children are from poor families that cannot afford better education, the schools are poorly run due to marginalization and lack of government support, while the community is marginalized due the members belonging to low social class and minority ethnic group.

With the seed funds, I will be able to spend more teaching hours with the children, and to buy and distribute more teaching aids, materials and tool resources for the lessons free of charge. I will also be able to extend my cultural education projects to more schools, children and communities by investing in the invitation and training of new mentees in cultural and artistic practices to join me in the project.

* Community development initiatives: Through this initiative, I give free educational advice and counselling to the children, administrative guidance and support to the school staff, and employment and ethnic inclusivity knowledge to the parents.

With the seed funds, I will expand my community outreach activities to more families and communities. I will also be able to offer free services such as localized hygiene education and advice, and to buy and distribute free educational materials and items on good hygiene maintenance. My newly trained cultural artists mentees will also join me in the activities.

* Arts and culture social activities: This charity initiative provides entertainment and social bonding experience for the children. The children and community members are also given the opportunity to showcase their artistic and cultural talents during the program. The initiative activity is organized either when the school celebrate their special arts and culture week, or during a special family and community weekend, funded from my private artistic practices and from free will donations from the community members.

The seed funds will enable me to provide more educational services, arts and cultural events, social bonding activities, and invest in human capacity and community development. My project funding will benefit the Prince Clause organization through the establishment of an international relation between Nigeria and Netherlands and between Africa and Europe, thus supporting the UN tangible cultural heritage protection and the millennial development goal for Africa.

**Who is a role model who has inspired your artistic practice? (optional) 50 words**

Cobhams Asuquo: A multitalented Nigerian artist, culture producer, and community builder. Despite being visually impaired, he is a youth ambassador and mentor who has used his musical gift and cultural background to assist less-privileged children and communities in Nigeria. He has trained young musical and cultural artist into international stars.