



SOUTH AFRICAN CULTURAL OBSERVATORY

Heritage Skills & DSAC Bursary

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South African Cultural Observatory Report

Heritage Skills & DSAC Bursary

December 2021

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Approach

The SA Cultural Observatory (SACO) has commissioned an impact evaluation research report based on the heritage bursaries disbursed by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) between the years 2015 - 2019. In support of SACO's function as a statistical and research project with research findings that have an influence on policy within the arts, culture and heritage (ACH) and cultural and creative industries (CCIs) in South Africa, this impact evaluation is designed to provide valuable data about the reach and impact of this bursary scheme.

There is a need for a more detailed understanding of ways in which the bursary has affected the lives and career trajectory of bursary recipients within these sectors and the report is the first attempt at gaining such insights. This report has a strong element of qualitative data, which also provides a useful approach towards gaining a deeper understanding of the true impact of the bursaries based on personal experiences as well as exposure to the kinds of skills associated with the heritage sector. This framework has enabled the emergence of more details about the capacity of the bursaries to facilitate access to industry, improve lives in a financial capacity and to support career development.

Methodology

Surveys were distributed to students from a select number of tertiary education institutions from five of the nine provinces nationally, from which two key universities were focused on: the Universities of Limpopo and the Witwatersrand. Key stakeholders within the heritage sector were identified and approached for interviews. The first batch of interviewees selected for this phase of the research were drawn from a pool of students and DSAC heritage bursaries recipients who had completed the survey. The other interviewees included heritage professionals and tertiary education professionals.

Key Findings

- Heritage education in South Africa has substantial potential for greater integration and networking with the professional sector
- The DSAC heritage Bursary scheme is the most visible in South Africa, with regards to funding support for heritage studies.
- The DSAC Heritage Bursary scheme is well placed to leverage DSAC systems and networks for greater access and professionalisation within the bursary scheme.
- There are substantial difficulties in data collection, monitoring and evaluation for this programme due to its distributed management.

- The administration of the bursaries was highly inefficient.

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is substantial need for heritage education to more distinctly integrate into professional heritage practice. In large part this is connected to the need for practical experience within education, as well as connections to the professional work environment. This is also related to a broader spectrum of complex skills aligned with future needs of the workplace, including soft skills. There is potential for the DSAC to enlist the services of some of its entities in order to support the administration process of this bursary scheme. By tapping into existing systems which already perform this service, the department could alleviate existing pressure while ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to meet the demands of administering the bursary. While the bursary scheme has successfully created a footprint nationwide and is at the forefront of funding bodies for students in this sector, there remains some room for improvement. These recommendations compiled following an analysis of data collected throughout the study can be useful for guiding the process of creating vital shifts in the role of the DSAC while ensuring that its mandates are fully met. This has emerged from the study:

Recommendations:

Responsible Party:	Education Institutions		
CHANGE NEEDED	DETAIL	PARTNERSHIPS	TIMELINE
1. Skills attentiveness within Heritage Education	There is a need for education institutions to enable practical experience within training programmes and a focus on a broader spectrum of required skills.	This could be achieved through partnerships with Independent heritage Professionals, heritage professionals employed within Arts, Culture and heritage institutions and heritage Institutions nationwide.	medium term
	Connect students to the Professional Sector	This could be achieved through a partnership with heritage Institutions nationwide, DSAC affiliated institutions could be the primary	short term

		drivers. Development organisations such as the National heritage Council, the National Arts Council and Cathsseta, could also play a role.	

Responsible Party:	DSAC		
CHANGE NEEDED	DETAIL	PARTNERSHIPS	TIMELINE
1. Develop an M&E framework for DSAC programmes to support future impact assessments	Shifts in the collection of data since the implementation of the POPI Act require DSAC to take a more proactive stance in beneficiary data management	Work with SACO to develop clearer frameworks for data gathering for DSAC and entities as part of M&E structures.	short term
2. Improve Administration of Bursary	Identify a collaborative partner for administration with sufficient capacity. Revise approach of using commercial third party organisations for the administration process.	Consider leveraging existing governmental entities such as the NHC as a partner for driving efficient and seamless administration of the bursary.	short to medium term
3. Facilitate linkages between bursary and professional sector	Enable linking to Professional Sector through internships	Consider tapping into the existing NHC frameworks to drive this facilitation of access to industry. Explore existing partnerships with tertiary education	medium term

		institutions as a way of facilitating access through Academic employment opportunities.	

2. Aim and Objective of Report

The SA Cultural Observatory (SACO) has commissioned an impact evaluation research report based on the heritage bursaries disbursed by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) between the years 2015 - 2019. A need was identified for a more detailed understanding of ways in which the DSAC heritage bursary has affected the lives and career trajectories of bursary recipients within these sectors and the report is the first attempt at gaining such insights. What this report primarily seeks to do is measure the impact of the heritage Bursary scheme provided by DSAC. It also aims to discuss underlying issues relating to the training of heritage professionals in South Africa and the potential that exists for addressing some of these through the vehicle of the heritage Bursary scheme.

The report provides analysis on the effectiveness of the bursary scheme. The data offer detailed insights into the current status of heritage Education in South Africa and ways in which a few relatively achievable changes can significantly leverage the current programme for greater impact, as well as alleviate some ongoing challenges through coordinated efforts with tertiary education institutions.

Research is a vital cog in the process of holistically analysing efforts made towards governmental initiatives designed to support arts, culture and heritage professionals. This report might inform the strategic alignment with mandates set to develop, preserve, protect and promote arts, culture and heritage. By channeling research resources towards gathering data specific to the ACH and CCIs in South Africa, the department is enabling informed and streamlined policymaking.

The current report is developed out of the initial brief, together with the research team at SACO, in order to address limitations with direct follow up with all former recipients of the DSAC heritage Bursary due to Protection of Personal Information regulations. The research shifted slightly from a mapping of the DSAC heritage bursary scheme to research on heritage studies, bursaries and a high level understanding of the role of the DSAC heritage bursary, its initial impact, challenges and opportunities and how this relates to industry and professional practice. This report therefore takes a more qualitative approach. Critical elements considered in the revised approach to this study included,:

- Where are students gaining access to heritage studies in South Africa?
- Where are students obtaining funding for heritage studies in South Africa?
- What types of skills are heritage students being equipped with at tertiary education institutions in South Africa?

- How are heritage students in South Africa being equipped with tools in order to gain access to industry?
- How are the DSAC heritage Bursaries enabling access to industry for heritage students?

The research aims to assess the impact of the DSAC heritage Bursary to develop strategies to ensure its ongoing effectiveness. The proposed strategies seek to create alternate modes of support systems which offer a multi-faceted approach towards providing support to students and emerging heritage professionals in South Africa.

3. Locating the Report within the UNESCO domains

This impact evaluation has been designed to align with the Framework for Cultural Domains set by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

- The data collected for this impact evaluation mainly falls under Cultural Domain A. of Cultural and Natural heritage. This domain includes Museums, Archaeological and Historical places, Cultural Landscapes and Cultural heritage. The research participants in this impact evaluation are fully vested within these parts of the heritage sector. The research data that has emerged from this study validates this and could potentially inform the strategic directions taken by DSAC in line with global standards.
- Aspects of the report also address issues concerning Education and Training. This is a key element of the impact evaluation as its basis is informed by the role of DSAC in enabling improved education training for heritage professionals.
- Intangible Cultural heritage forms part of the framework of heritage in South Africa and has the potential to form a critical part of training and ongoing preservation of cultural history. The report offers a lens through which the status quo in the South African context can be understood.
- Archiving and Preserving form an integral part of heritage management and training, so it is important to assess how this is reflected within this impact evaluation.
- Tourism has also emerged as a vital related domain within which heritage professionals may play a key role. The report gives an indication of the extent to which stakeholders are invested in this approach and thinking.

4. Rationale for producing the report in accordance with the SACO Research Agenda

In support of SACO's function as a statistical and research project with research findings that have an influence on policy within the arts, culture and heritage (ACH) and cultural and

creative industries (CCIs) in South Africa, this research is designed to provide valuable data about the reach and impact of the heritage bursary scheme as well as provide insights in to heritage sector, with the specific focus on skills training and its relation to the heritage sector..

Significance of the Report

As part of a broader ongoing research inquiry and National Research Agenda, this report offers a useful lens through which to measure the impact of the DSAC heritage Bursaries. It is hoped that the findings in this study will provide valuable data to inform policy decision-making as well as improved systems of operation. The primary findings of the report address issues such as the administration process of the bursary scheme, relevant communication channels as well as the need for an adjusted framework of the bursary's intended outputs.

The report also offers a snapshot of the current state of certain issues relating to heritage Education in South Africa and has the potential to become a pivotal mode of supporting key changes within the heritage sector.

The report is also one of several research reports to be commissioned by SACO forming an integral part of the National Research Agenda.

The thematic structure is useful for simplifying the strategic objectives of the National Research Agenda (SACO,2020) and has informed the directives of the collection of the data for this impact evaluation. While the outlined themes are highly valuable for understanding the objectives of the DSAC and how research supports these, for the purposes of this research, the following focal points became the primary drivers of the report's alignment with the Agenda:

Theme 1: Establishing a robust intellectual and academic base within the arts, cultural heritage sectors to drive research implementation

The report is a tangible form of the enablement of the facilitation of the development of increasing research collaboration. In addition to this, the research is a contributor to a growing body of work relating to the Cultural and Creative Industries. It's envisioned that this impact evaluation will provide a clear overview of how effective the DSAC heritage Bursary has been in terms of supporting the growth of heritage students and development of heritage professionals in South Africa.

Theme 3: Levels of Government spending and support to the sector

The data within this impact evaluation provides a better idea of the perceptions of the performance of the DSAC. One of the intended outcomes of the report has been a reconfiguring of the utilisation of DSAC entities as a way of streamlining the organisational

functioning and efficient operations in fulfilment of policy imperatives. According to SACO (2020) the amount of accurate data about the scope of government spending and support within the arts, cultural, heritage and creative industry sectors is limited, which is an issue that is partially addressed by this impact evaluation.

Theme 8: Education and Training

The data about skills presented in this study contributes towards the ongoing efforts to conduct a skills audit which would locate South Africa's standing within the broader context of the arts, heritage, creative and cultural sectors. Furthermore, data about skills development within this part of the heritage field contributes more knowledge about the potential impact of cultural and creative education in contributing to economic growth.

Theme 12: Policy Development and Implementation

This report somewhat provides further insight into the potential connections between the arts, culture, heritage and creative sector and the tourism industry.

5. Background to the Study

Research was initially commissioned by SACO to measure the impact of the heritage Bursary Scheme provided by DSAC, pertaining to bursary holders from 2015-2019.

The quantitative data initially required included the number of bursary holders that have completed and those that have not completed; the number of bursary holders employed; the number of those employed within the heritage sector as well as those employed in different sectors. The qualitative data initially required included demographics, reasons for non-completion of the programme, occupations of former bursary holders employed in the heritage sector and reasons why some former bursary holders are not employed in the heritage sector. Included in the requirement was GIS mapping of all bursary holders over the same period.

Initially, five tertiary education institutions from the Western Cape, Gauteng, Limpopo and the North-West provinces were earmarked for the study. These institutions were approached for access to bursary holders, as the DSAC does not currently hold information regarding bursary recipients.

A limitation that emerged at this stage of the research was a lack of access to contact details of heritage students and bursary recipients. Due to the recent introduction of the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act, some universities were unable to share this data in a manner conducive to research. As a result, the sample size of the research was affected. The data provided and made available for use by the Tertiary Education institutions was limited to 2020

DSAC heritage Bursary recipients. At this point, a new methodology approach was proposed, based on data-gathering methods possible within this limited scope.

6. Scope of the Study

The parameters of the study have been limited to including surveys and interviews with bursary recipients and heritage professionals. Heritage students from the University of Limpopo and the University of the Witwatersrand participated in the research by way of surveys and one-on-one interviews.

The students interviewed were either still completing their studies (through the bursary scheme) or had recently completed their studies, thus now forming part of the alumni who are former bursary holders. Survey questions have been designed to enable the gathering of data such as their employment status and the status of their completion or non-completion of their studies. The interviews have expanded on these findings by aiming to find out more about personal experiences with the bursary scheme and its direct impact on their lives.

The heritage professionals who have participated in the study have contributed the knowledge they have as vastly experienced individuals within the heritage sector and heritage Education space. The interviews have included lines of questioning that provides further insight into the kinds of key factors that heritage Education is grappling with in terms of equipping heritage students with the relevant skills and knowledge to succeed as heritage professionals in South Africa. In addition to this, the interviews have sought to gain access to data that outlines key issues that drive the skills development process and skills demanded by industry.

7. Methodology

The revised methodology for this impact evaluation has involved a more targeted approach with a smaller sample size for more qualitative data.

Desktop research has involved investigating the funding bodies providing funds for heritage education as well as the tertiary education institutions where students can get access to heritage education in South Africa.

A survey which has been designed as a tool for gathering data describing the reach of the heritage Bursaries nationally has supplemented this process. 20 surveys have been completed by heritage students from the University of Limpopo and University of the Witwatersrand. The sample size was based on the students that were willing and available to form part of the research.

In order to incorporate a broader set of research questions within the methodology, interviews have been conducted with key industry stakeholders including 20 heritage students from University of Limpopo and University of the Witwatersrand, heritage professionals and heritage Education Professionals operating both within tertiary education institutions as well as heritage practitioners. These interviews have served as valuable tools for the analysis of the impact of the bursary scheme.

These professionals were selected based on the vast amount of experience they collectively have as practitioners within the field as well as their knowledge about ongoing developments and demands of heritage Education and training. The aim of the interviews has been to gather data that could give insight into the reasoning behind certain heritage Education and training trends as well as experiences of heritage students who are current or former bursary holders. The findings from the interviews with heritage professionals serve as a form of validation and offer the necessary support to the research data.

8. Context

8.1. Context

8.1.1 Concerns around heritage Education Trends from the literature

Internationally, there have been ongoing calls for heritage Education to better prepare students for careers in or outside academia. According to (Willems, Thomas, Castillo, et al. (2018) the educational preparedness of future heritage managers, practitioners and advocates is compromised. Additionally, there must be a balance sought between research training of students and the number of transferable skills that they are equipped with. “‘Transferable’, ‘portable’, or ‘key’ skills are all terms that refer to skills taught at universities from an employability perspective, keeping in mind that universities are also employers” (Willems, Thomas, Castillo, et. al., 2018:306). What this points to is a need for a shift to be made towards including aspects of practical training in order to equip students with the necessary skills and tools to function efficiently within the heritage sector.

The authors have also found that across Europe there is an increase in the number of students undertaking courses in heritage studies and a decrease in students that are doing traditional archaeology. They claim that the same dynamic can be observed in Australia (Willems, Thomas, Castillo, et. al., 2018:309). This points to a developing trend of an increased focus on heritage studies holistically with more well-rounded students who are able to operate in what Thomas King (2002) calls extradisciplinary, which goes beyond interdisciplinarity and includes experts that are involved with the management of cultural heritage in one way or another. Heritage students globally are required to be equipped with a multitude of skills which

enable them to operate within the field of heritage with the ability to focus on the demands of heritage practice which is informed by both theoretical approaches and practical skills.

In a 2019 report presented by The Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr) on behalf of Historic England, a distinction is made between skills gaps and skills shortages - the latter being when employers encounter difficulties with finding staff with the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience or qualifications to fill outstanding vacancies. According to the report (Historic England, 2019) the findings are a reflection of the ability of employers to find the right candidates. A vital question relates to the conditions that enable access to industry for Heritage students; in other words, what are some of the barriers to accessing employment that exist in the Heritage sector?

8.1.2 Heritage Education access in South Africa

Heritage education at basic and higher education levels remain significantly debated issues in the literature. At a basic education level, the question of compulsory history education is a key part of this discussion both at academic and public debate levels, however issues such as decolonisation, indigenous knowledge systems, and the role of heritage in citizen development among young people remain issues that slip in and out of public consciousness (Mooreng 2016, Rasool 2000, Fru et al. 2013).

At a higher education level, heritage Education is available in all nine provinces. There are, however, a limited number of tertiary education institutions offering dedicated heritage Education courses in South Africa. Most offer heritage-adjacent studies (i.e. Archaeology, Anthropology, Museology), while there are a small number of institutions offering specialist support for heritage Education.

Figure1: Table

Heritage Education Institutions providing heritage Education in South Africa

Province	Name of Institution where heritage Education is offered	Specialist Heritage Training Offerings
Gauteng	University of Pretoria University of the Witwatersrand	BSocSci degree - Heritage and Cultural Tourism - UP MSocSci Heritage and Cultural Tourism - UP MSocSci Heritage and Cultural Tourism (coursework) - UP MSocSci Heritage and Museum Studies - UP MSocSci Heritage and Museum Studies (coursework) -UP MSocSci Tangible Heritage Conservation (coursework) - UP

		Hons, MA - Heritage Studies - Wits Hons, MA - Arts, Culture and Heritage Management - Wits MSc - Archaeological Heritage Management - Wits
Western Cape	University of the Western Cape University of Cape Town Stellenbosch University The South African Institute for heritage Science and Conservation	Hons/Masters in Heritage and Public Culture - UCT M Phil in Conservation of the Built Environment Continuing Professional Development - UCT African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies - UWC Technical Conservation Studies - SA Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation MPHIL in Cultural Tourism and Heritage Studies - Stellenbosch University
Limpopo	University of Limpopo	
Northern Cape	Sol Plaatje University	Higher Certificate in Heritage Studies
KwaZulu-Natal	University of KwaZulu-Natal	BA Honours in Culture and Heritage Tourism
Eastern Cape	Rhodes University Fort Hare University	
Free State	University of the Free State	
North-West	North-West University	
Mpumalanga	University of Mpumalanga	
Nationwide	University of South Africa	Honours Bachelor of Arts in Archival Science

Desktop research indicates that specialised funding for heritage Studies is limited in South Africa. Across interviews and a broad scan of aid for heritage bursaries online, the DSAC heritage Bursaries are the most visible of the funding sources. A basic google for 'heritage studies bursary south africa', raises 8 out of 10

Funding bodies offering funding/bursaries with specific mention of heritage education in South Africa include but are not limited to:

- Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) heritage Bursaries
- National heritage Council (NHC)
- Culture, Art, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (Cathsseta)
- South African Humanities Deans' Association (SAHUDA)
- Mpumalanga Provincial Government Bursary
- National Research Foundation Postgraduate Scholarships
- Robben Island Museum Bursary
- Canon Collins Sol Plaatje Scholarship for Postgraduate study
- SA Cultural Observatory Scholarship and Bursary Programme

8.1.3 Limitations to South African heritage Education

(Dewhurst, 2017: 30) has found that “South African cultural heritage professionals under the new democratic government began using culture as tools of empowerment, healing and engagement”. Since then however, transformation and improvements to the training models used within the cultural heritage sector in South Africa have been slow.

While the new government and some institutions of higher education began to immediately address these training needs, it was clear that the needs for skill development by far outstripped the capacity of the government, higher education, or professional associations to quickly and effectively deliver services (Dewhurst, 2017:30).

The emerging competitive niche tourism segments of heritage and Cultural Tourism in South Africa are aligned with the global trend of cultural tourism generally having a faster growth rate than most tourism segments (Viljoen, 2017). This has created the potential avenue for more linkages for a tourism approach to heritage Education. Despite this, it is necessary for researchers to first better understand the concepts of ‘heritage’ and ‘heritage tourism’. heritage education remains poorly constituted in South Africa (Zazu, 2016). Improved education in this aspect could help shape the improved training of heritage students. The literature further supports the notion of heritage educators working with a broader concept of heritage (i.e. denoting both natural and cultural heritages).

This is one of the major problems with heritage Education in South Africa. Not enough data has been produced in order to inform the decisions made by policy-making bodies. The history of heritage education in Southern Africa is not well documented (Shava & Zazu, 2012). This

presents a knowledge gap which this report is partially addressing. A heritage Education Professional interviewed during the research process has stated that South Africa does not invest in postgraduate training of professionals in the industry, which he has attributed to a lack of vision and leadership by management personnel within heritage institutions.

What has emerged from the literature aligns with the challenges expressed by heritage students in this study in terms of the quality of heritage Education they are exposed to at tertiary education institutions in South Africa.

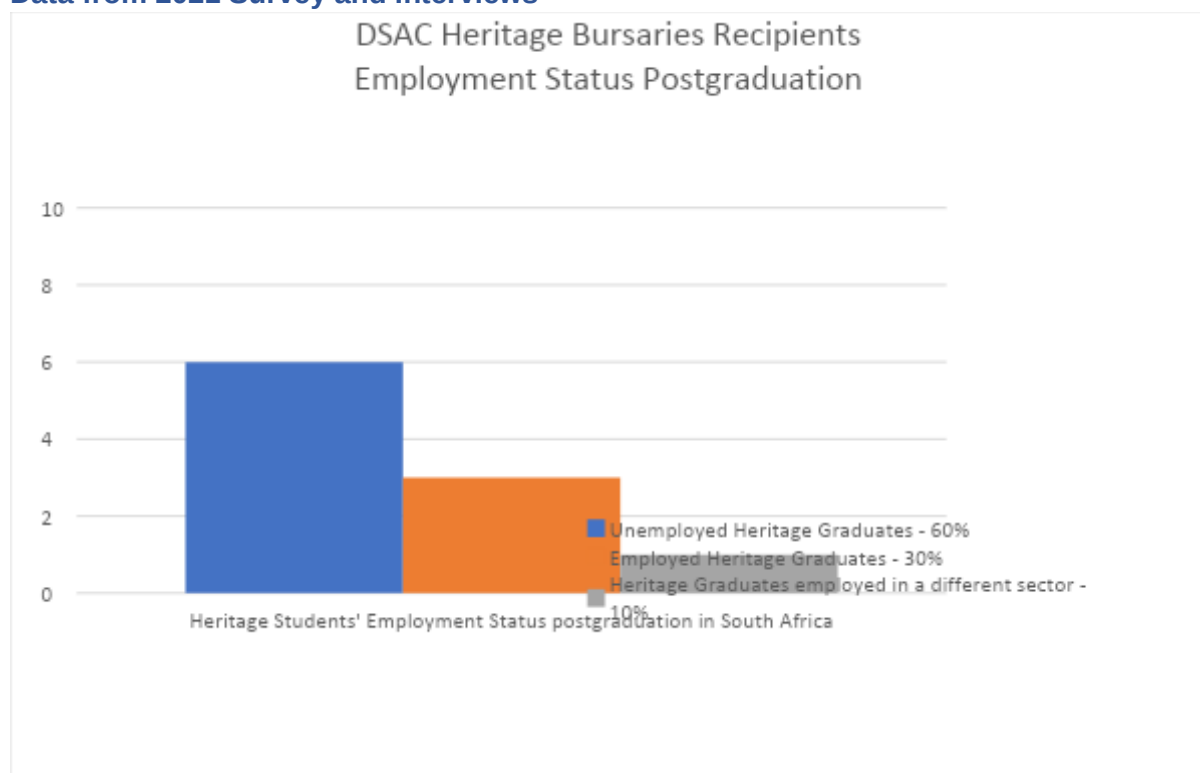
9. RESULTS

9.1 Work Experience and Practical Training

Figure 1 below indicates the work status of heritage students during and soon after completing their studies. Data gleaned from the survey responses and interviews with the bursary recipients indicates that of the respondents only thirty percent managed to gain internship, learnership employment placement or posts within academia. The number of students who remain unemployed after graduation surpasses the number of students who have managed to find gainful employment in the heritage sector. What we also see here is that a small percentage of heritage students have found employment in unrelated industries. This points to some concerns as to the effectiveness of the DSAC bursary within the heritage value chain. The bursary is intended to support access to heritage education in order to enable more highly skilled capacity within heritage institutions and across the heritage economy. There are a number of identified reasons for the low uptake of heritage professionals into heritage specific work experience that have emerged from the surveys and interviews, that correlate across heritage students and professionals already working within the industry. While a broad scale assessment of employment opportunities in the heritage sector was not part of the scope of this research, anecdotal references indicate that while availability of job opportunities is a significant issue across the board regarding South African employment statistics, there are a number of key interventions that would significantly support employability.

Figure 1

Bar Chart: DSAC heritage Bursaries Recipients Employment Status Postgraduation.
Data from 2021 Survey and Interviews



One of the main challenges is that the kind of heritage education students are gaining from tertiary education institutions in South Africa is that presently it does not meet the requirements of the heritage industry. Current heritage education methods used by tertiary education institutions in South Africa are perceived to be skewed towards mainly theoretical forms of education. This is supported by the findings from the surveys and interviews. The findings indicate that 70 percent of students in the study reported having a desire for more forms of experiential learning embedded within their studies. For instance, one respondent from the University of Limpopo stated “I would like to get more practical experience – to be more exposed to reality”. Similarly, a respondent from the University of the Witwatersrand expressed a desire for more fieldwork. Echoing the students’ sentiments, a heritage Education professional from a leading Northern Cape-based tertiary education institution has stated that there is a need for more experiential forms of training for heritage students, underscored by a strong emphasis on fieldwork. The respondent’s insights are based on experience as a practitioner within the field, with a vested interest in Heritage Education in South Africa and its standing in a global context. The professional has emphasised this particular institution’s leadership capabilities as one that has a focus on practical components as a foundation of the curriculum.

While the theoretical understanding of heritage is vital, it eclipses the potential that practical forms of learning has to offer.

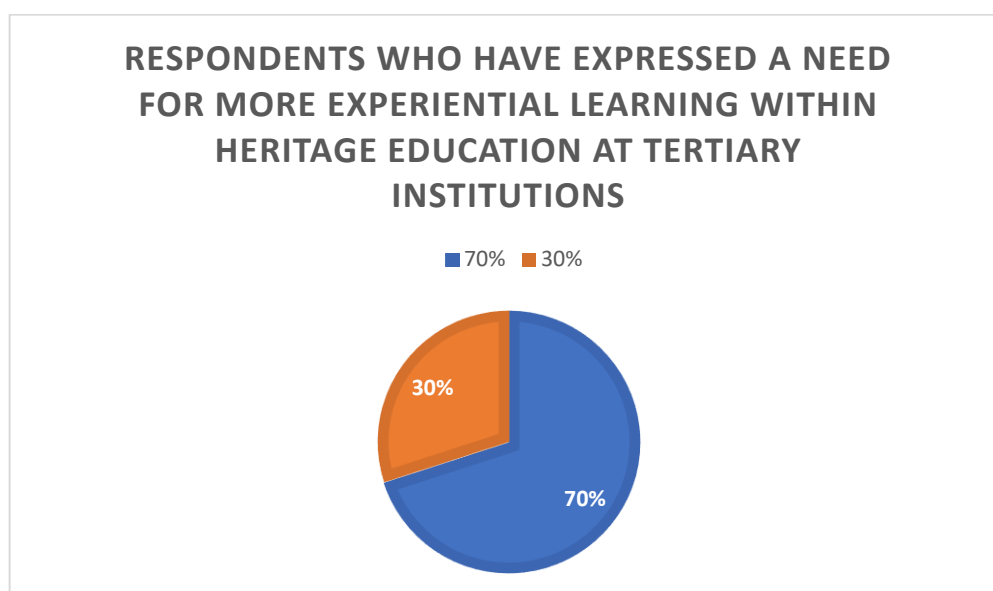
Figure 2 below indicates the findings from the study relating to the need for experiential learning for heritage students at tertiary education institutions. Seventy percent of respondents indicated that they would like a greater focus on gaining more practical experience during their studies.

The emergence of this need for more practical experience within heritage education is not unique to South Africa and is a present challenge globally. At a 2018 working conference held in Tampere, Finland, based on discussions of the course curriculum of Archaeological heritage Management (AHM), debates were extended to discussing contemporary aspects and needs of heritage and its management (Willems, Thomas, Castillo, et. al., 2018). One of the resolutions from this conference was that there is a demand from heritage management for qualified graduates with research skills that are able to bring an elevated quality of work to the available employment market. It can be deduced from ongoing debates such as this one that there is a mismatch between the skills output of tertiary education institutions and the demands of the heritage sector.

Figure 2:

Pie Chart

Respondents who have expressed a need for more experiential learning within heritage Education at tertiary institutions. Data from 2021 interviews.



Further evidence of this has emerged in this report in the form of incongruence between skills provided within education environments and those required by heritage professionals in order

to operate effectively and efficiently. The below table (figure 3) points to some, but not total alignment, across key role players as regards required skills in the sector, including a range of 'soft skills'. Importantly, soft skills such as problem solving, teamwork and creativity are perceived to be key future oriented skills. Many of the key skills perceived to be important by the World Economic Forum are soft skills, or the interpersonal skills that almost all jobs require (WEF 2020). A heritage professional from the University of the Witwatersrand has highlighted an obligation (from a heritage Management and Cultural Policy perspective) to equip heritage students with skills relating to a better understanding of Institutional Structures and Governance Issues. This obligation arises in part through evident mismanagement issues across a number of institutions (Mafole 2020, Masweneng 2021). This has only been more recently introduced into the curriculum. This professional has also explained that some of their ideas about the kind of skills required by the heritage sector are sourced from job adverts, calls for proposals etc. In so doing they are able to keep abreast of the needs of the sector, however, not all the skills needed are always well placed within the curriculum. This indicates a lack of coalescence between tertiary education education and heritage professional requirements.

Figure 3

Table: Skills Identified as important for heritage Professionals. Data from 2021 Interviews.

heritage Education Professionals	heritage Professionals	heritage Bursaries Recipients
Project management Conservation Curation Archiving Public Relations Marketing Fieldwork Governance	Conservation skills Curatorial skills Production management training heritage management Project management Business management Sponsorship and marketing skills Proposal and grant writing Contract Negotiation Digital skills Administration Technical skills Resourcefulness	Project management Arts administration Marketing Fundraising Leadership Innovation Analytical skills Fieldwork Ethics processes Writing skills for Ethnographic Processes Ethnographic observation Preservation Teamwork Communication Research Practical skills Management skills

An interview with a professional in the heritage Sector has revealed statements aligned with the need for more practical skills training. The interviewee has recommended ongoing

partnerships between Tertiary Education Institutions with heritage institutions as a way of removing barriers to entry into the industry. Heritage students have expressed similar interests, as a potential strategy for greater access and nuanced engagement with the professional sector. There is an opportunity here for the DSAC heritage bursary programme to facilitate methods of addressing this need within heritage Education by offering extended support for bursary recipients in partnership with institutions. Exposure to various heritage sites and organisations at tertiary education level can be a viable way of addressing this issue. This has been one of the main proposed solutions that has emerged from the interviews.

9.2 Developing Networks

In line with the above proposal regarding enabling access and nuanced engagement with the professional sector, one of the emerging trends from the data collection process is an expressed sense of isolation during the heritage education process, which has necessitated the need for networks and peer groups. Some respondents have reported an existing network or support structure within the University as their initial source of information about the DSAC heritage Bursaries and support to ensure they applied. These networks, and inherent mentorship in certain cases, have been vital for interviewees' experiences. Forming such networks empowers students with a form of access to industry through information and advice. Due to restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and limited in-person classes, many departments have had to adapt to alternate modes of communication. On the one hand, students often felt even more isolated and unable to connect with peers and colleagues in the sector as well as in their classes. However, more digital communications has also created additional channels for students to access information about existing work opportunities within the industry and the necessary skills required to access them.

Figure 5

Student responses regarding the use of existing networks. Data from 2021 interviews.



Figure 5 indicates some of the experiences of heritage Students from the two universities included in this impact evaluation. For those who gained access to guest lecturers and a broader look into the sector, this was seen to be deeply valuable. Communities of practice through whatsapp groups etc also enabled networks and access to information. However, many of these were self organised among students and did not intersect with the professional sector for those whose curriculum did not afford this. Some of the identified concerns within the heritage Education field, such as a lack of adequate practical training aligns with the above experiences and a lack of support in the form of effective networks.

One of the proposed measures that has emerged from the data as a way of improving the link between heritage graduates and the demands of industry is the establishment of a DSAC Heritage Bursaries alumni network. It is envisioned by the proponents of this network that it will support existing networks created within Tertiary Education Institutions and heritage studies-specific departments. The potential that exists with the establishment of an alumni network lies in its ability to create an accessible and reliable pool of skilled professionals. DSAC could benefit from this network in the following ways:

- Having access to these professionals who can also act as ambassadors of the department's far-reaching impact within the heritage sector.
- Having a way of tracking the exact number of bursary recipients, the impact of the bursary and their career trajectories.

- Having access to simpler ways of measuring data related to the DSAC Heritage Bursaries.
- Having a way to create a streamlined approach or model for marketing DSAC programmes, internships, learnerships and funding opportunities.

9.3 Bursary Administration

The study contains some insights that can be drawn from the students' personal experiences with the bursary scheme and its administration process.

For instance, the students have collectively reported on the delayed payout of bursary funding, which has emerged as a leading cause of frustration. Factors such as ineffective communication and administrative errors have contributed towards ongoing difficulties. Some students have reported on negative interactions they have had with DSAC personnel which has not improved on relations. Furthermore a perception of financial impropriety based on high profile issues (Makinana, 2021) has exacerbated the sense of inequitable access on the part of DSAC.

Many respondent expressed gratitude for the financial relief provided by the bursary, which enabled them to focus on their studies, but also explained that the process was marred by anxiety. Some of the main reported challenges that have emerged include:

Poor communication

- The issue of communication channels between bursary administrators and students have been reported to be poorly managed. Students have reported experiencing challenges relating to a lack of response from bursary administrators.

Non-payment of fees due to administrative errors caused by tertiary institutions or third party administrators

- This has a direct impact on employment options as students are limited by this non-payment of fees and are then unable to progress further as planned with their careers by accessing employment opportunities. A combination of late processing of bursary funds, repetitive administrative errors, a lack of capacity and poor communication between bursary administrators and Tertiary Education Institutions has led to some bursary recipients unable to graduate timeously.

Late payment of funds for fees, accommodation and stipends

- The late payment of bursary funds has caused a range of stressful conditions and problems for the students. This has been corroborated by the survey and interview

responses. Some students reported not having accommodation as planned for the duration of their studies due to delayed payment of funding.

One of the key issues that the DSAC heritage Bursary directly addresses in the South African heritage Education context is that of access to funding for further education. While this is highly commendable, there are potential points of improvement which could fast-track the access students have to the industry. By ensuring that the administration of the bursary process is seamless, there is a lower chance that students will remain unable to graduate on time and apply for employment opportunities directly within the heritage sector.

Some proposed solutions that have emerged from the interview process regarding the administration process include:

- **Establishing a single point of communication exclusively for addressing matters relating to the DSAC heritage Bursary.** It is proposed that this will assist with the administration process of the bursary scheme and that it may improve relations between the bursary administrator and students.
- **Revising the current bursary administration process in order to ensure the efficient functioning of the system in place.** This should ensure that study fees are paid on time and that access to other bursary funding is not delayed.

By undertaking to integrate these proposed solutions into the revised model devised for the DSAC Heritage Bursary, there could be vast improvements made.

Conclusions

The data from the research supports the current status of the the DSAC heritage Bursary as the most visible tertiary education funding opportunity in South Africa for heritage students. The bursary scheme is a necessity, especially in the context of higher education and training within the South African context where lack of affordability is often a potential threat for the development of students through further education. Within the small bursary pool available for heritage studies, this bursary scheme is the most well-recognised. Overall, the DSAC heritage Bursaries has enabled the further education of numerous students across various provinces nationwide. The financial benefits provided by the bursary scheme are well-acknowledged, however, there are opportunities to expand its impact in ways that enhance the growth, development and sustainability of the heritage sector in South Africa. By working closely with Tertiary Education institutions and nurturing existing partnerships, the impact of the bursary could also be expanded further.

DSAC has great potential to leverage its existing infrastructures and systems in order to maximise the impact of the bursary scheme offering. Not only will this increase the capacity of the department, but it will contribute towards forging further collaborations which will benefit the professional advancement of individuals within the heritage sector. Existing DSAC entities may be able to provide additional support in the form of capacity to administer the bursaries. In this way, the impact of the bursary scheme is strengthened and expanded.

A few key issues need to be addressed in order to make the bursary more impactful. The negative experiences associated with the bursary scheme are a poor reflection of the efforts made by the DSAC to establish a reputation of playing a premier role in serving the needs of the South African Arts, Culture and heritage sector and the Cultural and Creative Industries. This is a risk to the legacy of the DSAC. It would serve the department well to find ways of addressing this challenge urgently.

Recommendations

Responsible Party:	Education Institutions		
CHANGE NEEDED	DETAIL	PARTNERSHIPS	TIMELINE
1. heritage Training Shifts	There is a need for education institutions to enable practical experience within training programmes.	This could be achieved through partnerships with Independent heritage Professionals, heritage professionals employed within Arts, Culture and heritage institutions and heritage Institutions nationwide.	medium term
	Connect students to the Professional Sector	This could be achieved through a partnership with heritage Institutions nationwide, DSAC affiliated institutions could be the primary drivers. Development organisations such as the National heritage Council, the	short term

		National Arts Council and Cathsseta, could also play a role.	

Responsible Party:	DSAC		
CHANGE NEEDED	DETAIL	PARTNERSHIPS	TIMELINE
9. Develop an M&E framework for DSAC programmes to support future impact assessments	Shifts in the collection of data since the implementation of the POPI Act require DSAC to take a more proactive stance in beneficiary data management	Work with SACO to develop clearer frameworks for data gathering for DSAC and entities as part of M&E structures.	short term
10. Improve Administration of Bursary	Identify a collaborative partner for administration with sufficient capacity. Revise approach of using commercial third party organisations for the administration process.	Consider leveraging existing governmental entities such as the NHC as a partner for driving efficient and seamless administration of the bursary.	short to medium term
11. Facilitate linkages between bursary and professional sector	Enable linking to Professional Sector through internships	Consider tapping into the existing NHC frameworks to drive this facilitation of access to industry. Explore existing partnerships with tertiary education institutions as a way of facilitating access through Academic	medium term

		employment opportunities.	

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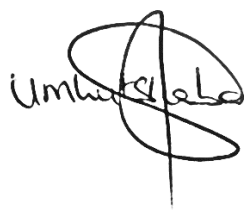
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APPROVALS FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN CULTURAL OBSERVATORY – Heritage Skills & DSAC Bursary – December 2021

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