

Friends of George Town Heritage Training Program for Volunteers and Guides 2011

*Organized by George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI)
in collaboration with Arts-ED*

1. FINAL REPORT

1.1 PROJECT STATEMENT

Since the listing of George Town as a World Heritage Site in 2008, there is a need to increase and expand human resource assisting in the conservation as well as promotion of the site. Therefore, George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI) and Arts-ED have initiated this volunteer training program. Customized training programs were designed to train different types of volunteers.

Areas of voluntarily works for the site have been identified as below:

- Tour guides to conduct heritage trails for students.
- Project coordination, documentation, copywriting, writing and editing, IT and graphic design

The trained volunteers are expected to volunteer for the pilot years of 2011 and 2012. The program will be reviewed end of 2012 for future action.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

- To broaden understanding and perceptions of heritage terms, concepts, values and the OUVs of George Town World Heritage Site.
- To deepen participants' understanding of George Town's multicultural history, settlement patterns, tangible and intangible heritage
- To facilitate participants to device interesting thematic walks for different ages
- To provide participants with guiding and facilitation skills

1.3 PROJECT OUTCOMES

1.3.1 OUTCOMES

- A total number of **68 trained volunteers**. They will contribute their expertise in specific area of promotion and conservation of George Town's cultural heritage during the **pilot years 2011 and 2012**.
- **Seven heritage and community organisations/initiatives** were identified to receive volunteers
- Setting up of a **Friends of George Town Heritage committee** by the volunteers

1.3.2 ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES

This project has developed beyond the original scope. 3 additional outcomes were achieved as below:

- **Setting up the volunteer scheme**
- **Identify and supervise beneficiary organisation**
- **Coordination and supervision of volunteer distribution**

1.3.3 DETAILES OF OUTCOME

(A) A POOL OF TRAINED VOLUNTEERS OFFERING THEIR EXPERTISE IN SPECIFIC AREAS OF PROMOTION AND CONSERVATION OF GEORGE TOWN'S HERITAGE. THREE CATEGORIES OF VOLUNTEERS:

i) GENERAL VOLUNTEER

Total number of general volunteer trained: 32 persons

General volunteers were trained in a 2-day workshop on understanding of heritage and George Town World Heritage Site. 32 volunteers attended and have started commenced their annual 10 hours volunteer service in the area of coordination and facilitation, documentation and research, copywriting and translation, IT & Graphic and front desk reception for seven heritage organisations in George Town as identified in section (B) below.

ii) SPECIALIZED VOLUNTEER

Total number of specialized volunteer trained: 36 persons

There were 36 volunteers attended Part 1 specialised training program. 24 volunteers were successfully trained to be specialized volunteer while 15 volunteers were then selected to proceed to Part 2 training specifically on guiding skill and designing educational heritage trails for schools.

Specialized volunteer started their annual 20 hours volunteer service in the area of coordination and facilitation, documentation and research, copywriting and translation, IT & Graphic for seven heritage organisations/initiatives in George Town as identified in section (B) below.

i) VOLUNTEER GUIDE

Total number of volunteer guides trained: 12 persons

15 participants selected from Part 1 to attend this Part 2 training program. Out of the 15 participants, 2 participants withdrew and 1 participant remained as observer and specialized volunteer. As a result, a total number of 12 volunteer guides were nurtured from this training program.

This group of volunteer guides together with trainers have devised 3 new thematic discovery heritage trails specifically designed for school student of different age groups. Each volunteer guide is obliged to conduct 5 complimentary heritage trails for schools.

(B) BENEFICIARY ORGANISATION

Seven heritage and community organisations/initiatives were identified. Volunteers were briefed about specific areas where volunteers can contribute. Volunteers signed up to volunteer according to their preferences and expertise areas

- i. George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI)
- ii. ARTS-ED, Persatuan Pendidikan Seni Pulau Pinang
- iii. Penang Heritage Trust (PHT)
- iv. Cheah Kongsi
- v. Suffolk House
- vi. Sun Yat Sen Penang Base
- vii. Little Penang Street Market

(C) SETTING UP OF A COORDINATION COMMITTEE FOR FRIENDS OF GEORGE TOWN HERITAGE

i) **A committee which comprises of 8 persons was set up to coordinate the volunteer program for year 2011:**

- Main Coordinator of volunteer program and coordinator for volunteer guide: Lim Chung Wei
- Coordinator for Specialized volunteer: Nelson Yeoh
- Coordinator for General Volunteers: Chin Poh Chin
- Funds & Volunteers Affairs: Irene Chew and Amarit Singh
- Organisation representatives: Janet Pillai & Chen Yoke Pin (Arts-ED), Ho Sheau Fung (Penang Heritage Trust)

ii) **A facebook group** “Friends of Heritage George Town Penang” and mailing list group were set up for coordination purposes.

1.4 PROGRAM PROCESS AND DURATION

- i. Survey on viability and feasibility of project
- ii. Recruitment & Promotion (please refer to PART 2 for details)
- iii. Preparation of training curriculum and materials
- iv. Audition and Interview
- v. Training Workshop for volunteers:
 - a) Part One training for specialized volunteer – Understanding of Heritage
 - b) Part Two training for volunteer guides – Research and Design of Guided Trails
 - c) 2-day Workshop for general volunteers - Understanding of Heritage (Please refer PART 3 for details)
- vi. On-site practical guiding and assessment

| No | Program | Date | Duration/ Session | Participants |
|----|---|---------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Survey on viability and feasibility of project | May | - | - |
| 2 | Recruitment & Promotion | May-June | - | 157 applications received |
| 3 | Preparation of training curriculum and materials | June | - | - |
| 4 | Audition and Interview | 11, 12, 26 June & 16 July | 4 sessions | 120 applicants attended 40 short listed were selected to attend training workshop |
| 5 | a) Part 1 Training Understanding Heritage—Training Workshop for Specialized volunteers | 31 July - 28 Aug | 10 sessions (3 hrs/session) | 36 specialized volunteers |
| | b) Part 2 Training Research and Design of guided trails— Training Workshop for volunteer guides | 3 Sep - 29 Oct, 10 Dec | 11 sessions (3 hrs/session) | 15 volunteer guides |
| | c) 2-day Workshop for general volunteers—Understanding of Heritage & volunteer job matching | 29 & 30 Oct | 2 sessions (3 hrs/session) | 30 general volunteers |
| 6 | Onsite practical guiding and assessment | 4 Oct – 17 Nov | i) 42 trips of heritage discovery trails | 12 trained volunteer guides |
| | | | ii) Assessment | |

1.5 PROJECT TEAM

COORDINATION, RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION

1. Project Coordinators
2. Recruitment Officer
3. Project Documenter
4. Project external evaluator

CURRICULUM, TRAINING, EVALUATOR

1. Education pedagogue
2. Curriculum and lesson plan and trainers
3. Invited speakers/resource person (subject matter expert)
4. Facilitators
5. Evaluator for assessment

PART 2. REPORT ON RECRUITMENT & PROMOTION

2.1 Analysis of Recruitment

- a. Methods used for recruitment and promotion are through email, press release and printed media, leafleting to active organisations related to cultural heritage, active resident association, colleges and alumni associations, churches and temples, charity organisations, cultural & arts centres and group (Local & International), active individuals.
- b. Profile of applicants. A total of 157 applications received.

| | Demographics | | No of applicant | Percentage (%) |
|------|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| i. | Gender | Male | 59 | 37.6 % |
| | | Female | 98 | 62.4 % |
| ii. | Ethnicity | Chinese | 141 | 89.8 % |
| | | Indian | 3 | 1.9 % |
| | | Indian Muslim | 3 | 1.9 % |
| | | Malay | 1 | 0.6 % |
| | | Others | 9 | 5.8 % |
| iii. | Age | 18-30 | 47 | 29.9 % |
| | | 31-40 | 45 | 28.7 % |
| | | 41-55 | 46 | 29.3 % |
| | | above 55 | 19 | 12.1 % |
| iv. | First spoken language | English | 81 | 51.6 % |
| | | Mandarin | 66 | 42.0 % |
| | | Malay | 10 | 6.4 % |

Findings:

- More than 60% applicants are female
- More than 85 % applicants are Chinese
- There is no obvious age group, but lowest respond is from the after retirement group
- 51.6% are English speaking applicants while 42% are Mandarin speaking applicants

- c. When asked about how the volunteers knew about this program, out of 157 applications, 140 applicants answered. They were allowed to name 1 or more media.

| Information Channel | No of applicants | Remarks |
|---------------------------|------------------|---|
| Newspaper | 52 | |
| Friends | 47 | |
| NGO or other organisation | 25 | Penang Heritage Site, Penang Tourist Guide Asst, Arts-ED |
| Email | 20 | |
| GTWHI website | 12 | |
| Facebook | 7 | |
| Online media | 8 | news portal (Star Online, Guang Ming online), organisation website/blog (chung ling school blog, Arts-ED, Penang Heritage Trust, Taman Sri Nibong) |

Findings:

- Most people (33.1%) obtained news of this program through mainstream and conventional newspaper.
- Second highest media (29.9%) was through word of mouth or friends.

PART 3. TRAINING WORKSHOP PROGRAM

3.1 PART 1 - Understanding of Heritage, Total Lesson: 9

| LESSON/ PROGRAM | CONTENT PROGRAM | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| LESSON 1 | Introduction and Team Building | Getting to know each other |
| | | Mapping sense of place in Penang |
| | | Mapping connectivity in region |
| | | Expectation check |
| | | Logistics briefing |
| LESSON 2 | Understand Heritage, World Heritage Site & Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) | Understand what is heritage |
| | | Understand what is cultural heritage |
| | | Learn about George Town World Heritage Site and its OUVs |
| | | Reflection |
| LESSON 3 | Heritage Storytelling | Learn how to present heritage |
| | | Reflection |
| LESSON 4 | History | Learn about migration history and communal settlements of George Town |
| | | Reflection |
| LESSON 5 | Built Heritage | Learn about Built Heritage of George Town (to include public, religious shophouse buildings & spaces – architecture and use) |
| LESSON 6 | Living Heritage | Understand Dimensions of Heritage and Value Chains |
| | | Reflection |
| LESSON 7 | Documenting Living Heritage | Documentation Tools a) Interview Workshop b) Photography Workshop |
| LESSON 8 | Interacting with Community | On-site application of interaction & documentation tools |
| | | Reflection |
| LESSON 9 | Visit to NGO | Visit to NGOs |
| | | Reflection |

3.2 PART 2 - Research and Design of Discovery Heritage Trail, Total Lesson: 11

| LESSON/ PROGRAM | CONTENT | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| LESSON 1 | Understanding the Significance of Interpretation | Understanding the role of a guide. Understanding theme in guiding |
| LESSON 2 | Creating Thematic Connections | Connecting heritage (places, people, events) thematically Interpretation of a site On site to consolidation and rehearsal of tour |
| LESSON 3 | Targeting an audience | Experiencing an interactive trail for children Knowing your audience (children & teens) Conceptualizing a Thematic Trail On site research and selection of resources and content related to theme. Mapping the route |
| LESSON 4 | Conceptualization of Trails | Brainstorm of Thematic Assets on Trail Research & Conceptualize Activities in trails |
| LESSON 5 | Development of inter-activities for the Trails | |
| LESSON 6 | Testing a Trail | On-site Testing with Q & A and Problem Solving |
| LESSON 7 | Pilot Trail | Testing with Students Reflection |
| LESSON 8 | Pilot Trail | Testing with Students Reflection |
| LESSON 9 | Pilot Trail | Testing with students Reflection and Repair |
| LESSON 10 | Presentation skills | Facilitation skills and Storytelling |
| LESSON 11 | Closure and Review of Trails | |

3.3 Additional Workshop - Understanding of Heritage, Total Session: 2

| SESSION/ PROGRAM | CONTENT PROGRAM | |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Session 1 | Introduction and Team Building | Getting to know each other Mapping sense of place in Penang Mapping connectivity in region |
| Session 2 | Understand Heritage, World Heritage Site & Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) | Understand what is heritage and cultural heritage Learn about George Town World Heritage Site and its OUVs |
| | Briefing and matching of Volunteer Jobs Available | |

PART 4. EVALUATION OF TRAINING PROGRAM (BY PARTICIPANT)

4.1 Analysis of Participant Evaluation on Training Program – Part 1

No of participants attended training : 36

No of participants filled the feedback form : 30

1 = Lowest/Bad , 5 = Highest/Good

1 Overall, how would you rate this workshop?

47% rated 4

43% rated 5

3% rated 3

2 How would you rate the hands-on activities?

43% rated 5

43% rated 4

14% rated 3

3 How would you rate the presenters' knowledge in the subject?

47% rated 4

47% rated 5

6% rated 3

4 How would you rate the presenters' style of teaching?

57% rated 4

30% rated 5

10% rated 3

3% rated 2

5 How would you rate the pace of the workshop?

53% responded just right

43% responded too fast

6% responded sometimes fast sometimes slow

6 Was the workshop above or below your current skill level ?

63% responded just right

30% responded it was above their current skill level

3.5% responded that it was below their skill level

3.5 % did not respond

7 What did you like best or find most useful about the workshop?

Most responded that learning about heritage and history of GT was most useful followed by knowledge on heritage walk.

The third factor was hands on activities and teamwork which were equally useful.

8 What skill did you learn that may help prepare you for volunteering in the field of heritage?

Research and documentation being the most important skill followed by presentation/story telling.

A few responded ability and importance to focus on intended subjects and photography.

9 Were your personal learning goals for the workshop met?

90% responded that their personal goals were met and the balance 10% responded no.

The reasons of not meeting their goals were:

1. Not enough detail and scope of coverage
2. Not enough knowledge on heritage and architecture
3. Not enough materials on eg festivals, no overall /specific idea on areas of volunteerism

10 Any other comments?

Most commented that the schedule was too hectic and not enough time for homework.

A few responded that more and accurate information needed and instructor was critical and sarcastic.

11 I definitely was able to share ...

* Most responded that they were able to share the love and passion for heritage as well as childhood/migration history.

* Almost half said they were able to share knowledge of George Town, promotion of heritage, appreciation of arts, antiques and architecture.

* As for spirit of sharing, participants felt that general help and cooperation were most felt followed by sharing of information and knowledge

* The most areas of skill sharing were documentation and research followed by admin and organizational skill, language, leadership and teambuilding.

12 I definitely learned about ...

* More than 20 responded for architecture, value, diversity, history, George Town's culture

* 80% responded that they felt the spirit of friendship, Penang's perspective and high degree of enjoyment.

* The most important elements they learnt were how to appreciate and promote heritage.

4.2 Analysis of Participant Evaluation on Training Program – Part 2

No of participants attended training: 13

No of participants filled the feedback form: 13

1 = Lowest/Bad , 5 = Highest/Good

1 How would you rate the usefulness of the content?

46% rated 3

31% rated 4

23% rated 5

2 How would you rate the hands-on activities?

38% rated 4

31% rated 3

15% rated 5

8% rated 1

8% did not respond

3 How would you rate the presenters' knowledge in the subject?

62% rated 5

23% rated 3

15% rated 4

4 How would you rate the presenters' style of teaching?

62% rated 4

23% rated 5

15% rated 3

5 How would you rate the pace of the workshop?

77% responded too fast

15% responded just right

8% responded too slow

6 Was the workshop above or below your current skill level?

54% responded just right

46% responded it was above their current skill level

7 What did you like best or find most useful about the workshop?

The answers varied a lot but the most prominent factor was how to design a trail followed by guiding and presentation skill.

8 What major skills did you learn that prepared you for designing heritage trails?

Feedbacks quite dispersed

9 What major skills did you learn that may help prepare you for guiding student's heritage trails?

The most common answer was how to deal with different types of students.

10 Were your personal learning goals for the workshop met?

62% responded yes

23% responded no

7.5% did not respond

7.5 % responded yes and no

Two major reasons for NO were:

1) No solution to handle and present to problematic students.

2) Not enough practical session.

11 Any other comment?

Feedbacks quite dispersed but the most general feedback was too workshop too compact.

12 I learned about ...

* Most participants responded that the most important thing they learned was heritage value followed by heritage content and development.

* The most important skill the participants learned was guiding knowledge followed by teamwork and leadership and creativity.

* On teaching and learning, most responded they learned how to facilitate and plan curriculum.

* Confidence on teaching and learning was the second most learned.

13 I was able to share

* Heritage knowledge, knowledge of GT and promoting heritage were the most shared and most important among the participants.

* On skills shared most responded teamwork and leadership followed by interactive and creativity skills.

PART 5. EXTERNAL EVALUATOR REPORT

Evaluated and prepared by Mark Vossen, 8 December 2011

Program Development:

- Before recruitment begins, goals for the program must be clearly defined, i.e. what specific roles will be available to volunteers, and at what organizations. By setting these objectives first will steer how the training will be conducted, what topics will be covered, how much time is needed, etc. Training is not the goal; it is only the means to a goal.
- In addition, the team must decide how the program will be run at the completion of the training. Will the volunteers function as an independent group? Or rely on the guidance of GTWHI and other heritage related organizations? This decision will help with the direction of the training.

Recruitment:

- Recruitment was successful in that 150 people applied. However, the majority of applicants were Chinese, which does not represent the diversity of George Town's communities. In order for Friends of George Town Heritage to prosper by reaching out to all communities, the base of volunteers needs to have at least a minimal representation from each group.
- Data from applications should be recorded and summarized for future recruitment efforts. Specifically, how each applicant heard about the program, so any future advertising expenses can be effectively utilized.
- During the application review session and interviews with candidates, special attention should be given to work schedules. Even the highest qualified candidates may not be ideal choices if their schedules will prevent them from fully participating in the training program and in volunteer roles. Also, each candidate should be asked what their specific goals are for joining Friends of George Town Heritage. Only candidates interested in volunteer work should be selected. Candidates merely interested in attending lectures to gain a better understanding of George Town's history will more than likely not take an active role in volunteering once training is complete.

Structure of Training Program

- The structure of the training program needs to be simplified. Instead of designating a general volunteer group and a specialized volunteer group, these two groups should be combined and provided with a basic heritage training course (one or two weekends). Then immediately be placed in active volunteer roles in George Town.
 - Ongoing required and elective trainings can be offered once a month to give volunteers the opportunity to continue to gain additional knowledge. Since the volunteers would have already been active in their volunteer roles in George Town, they will have a better understanding of what is being discussed during trainings, and they will be able to provide better input on what they would like to learn in future sessions.
- Only candidates selected for guide training should undergo an intensive training course.

Curriculum Design & Lesson Plan

- Ongoing training sessions for general volunteers:
 - Workshop-based sessions are effective like the interview role playing workshop and photography skills workshop from Part 1 training. These types of sessions not only help the volunteers with the core skills they will need in their volunteer roles, but they are also fun, which keeps the volunteers enthusiastic about Friends of George Town Heritage, and committed to the program.

- Invite more guest speakers to lead sessions, so volunteers are exposed to a wide base of knowledge on George Town.
- Have more 'behind the scenes' sessions like the Cheong Fatt Tze tour. These are very informative, and also give the volunteers feel a strong sense of being a part of the George Town heritage movement.
- Have periodic review sessions to reinforce important topics.
- Guide training for student walks:
 - Guides need to be given sufficient time to complete design of trails, i.e. at least a weekend off to prepare, and meet with their group. If pressured to complete tasks in an unreasonable amount of time, they will become disgruntled and lose enthusiasm for the training, and possibly even quit.
 - Because of teamwork issues in the Part 2 guide training, special attention needs to be given on how to select trail groups. For example, by work schedules, age, language ability, etc.
 - One or two sessions should be dedicated entirely on how to interact with children, and how to lead them on a tour. This can include the trainer(s) taking a small group of children on a heritage trail, to show the guides specific examples on how to appropriately lead a student walk.

Reception and Learning Impact to Participants

- Participants were pleased with the extensive knowledge of George Town they gained during the training.
- The participants were all enthusiastic at the beginning of the training since they were excited about joining the heritage movement in George Town. Sustaining this enthusiasm is therefore the key to a successful training, and ultimately a successful volunteer group.
 - Participants need more positive feedback and recognition from trainers during every session. Volunteers should be appreciated for the time they commit.
 - Critical feedback is important from the trainers, but not to the extent of feeling disrespected.
 - Consistent messages from the trainers throughout the training are crucial for the participants to be able to remain focused on their goals.
 - Participants should be encouraged to provide more input on what they are interested in learning.

Trainer/resource person/tour guide quality

- It is important to brief every tour guide/resource person, so they are clear on the objectives of the training.

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