

DESIGN & BUILD FOR GHANA

VERNACULAR AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITY

PROJECT CONTEXT

The challenges of sustainable development continue to exist in the diverse countries of sub-Saharan Africa. In the rural economic vein, many questions keep coming to our minds: How can we blend the vernacular and contemporary traditions to generate choice for the economically underprivileged? What process and structure would work in a sustainable manner? It is in the search of answers to these questions that the arts village initiative evolved. We proceed on the premise that to improve the younger generation's prospects, it is often necessary to change the rural conditions that perpetuate economic and social marginalization.

Nka Foundation's arts village project provides opportunities in form of workspaces and incubators for vocational skill development of young adults in the underserved areas of the sub-Sahara. The long-term goal is to create a network of arts village sites in some countries in the sub-Sahara, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and South America to continue to foster cross-cultural synergy for tapping local resources for sustainable human capital development through the arts and culture industry. Each arts village will have vocational skills development program for the rural populace and cross-cultural skills enrichment programs for practitioners from around the world. All together, the arts villages form an institution, the Nka Foundation.



Nka Foundation is a non-profit organization. It is an artist initiative founded in 2005 with focus on human capital development through use of the arts at the intersections of life-long education, multidisciplinary and cross-cultural collaborations. Nka advocates cost efficient approaches, professional development training, and open source share, as possible solutions to the challenges of rural community development in the Anglophone, Lusophone and Francophone African settings.

Address

Nka Foundation, Box Up 1115, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, Ghana

www.nkafoundation.org

WHAT

Residency opportunities for learning-by-doing in vernacular African architecture.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

Open to all students and recent graduates of Structural Design, Architecture, Engineering, Construction, and others interested in sustainable architecture and rural community development projects in Africa

WHERE

Sang Arts Village, Sang, Yendi District, Northern Region, Ghana

DURATION

One month between Feb. 2012 & Feb. 2014

Sang Arts Village site

PROPOSED PROJECT

Sang is a rural township in Northern part of Ghana, 50 kilometers from Tamale. Our plan is to construct the structures that make up the Sang Arts Village by maximum use of local labor, earth and other materials from the environment. Specifically, the construction process and materials is vernacular involving cob, natural plaster, and grass thatching. It is a site-based opportunity to get hands on construction experience together with design responsibility. A typical responsibility will be to design and build a structure for community arts activities. It may be a small design-and-build task such as a hut for use as a studio/work space or a sleeping unit. You can generate field drawings, fieldnotes, process photos or video to record thoughts. You have one month to design it, build it and document it!

As an intern practitioner, you will work with local artisans to realize your design project. You will have the opportunity to solve the technical issues that come up as part of building the project. You will gain cross-cultural experience from working with local artisans of varying levels of experience and oral English. The design-and-build programme is conceived to bridge the gap between theory and practical application to make a well-rounded practitioner. For students, it is an opportunity to experience the vernacular construction process first hand and to learn to design what is build-able. For professionals, you will find the residency an inspirational break from your desk job to rediscover the rudiments of architecture and nuances that may refresh your practice.

SANG PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Cultural Orientation Through site-specific, route-specific, and house-call tours of the local resources, the visitor gains awareness and skills necessary for successful adaptation to the community.

Independent Project As an intern practitioner, you will work with local artisans (or resources persons) to realize your project etc.

Community Day Public celebration of the completed project by way of open house exhibition, public performance, etc.

Project Dissemination This entails post-project activities in or outside the country. The activities could be via real life such as a journal publication, gallery exhibition and seminal presentation; it could be by use of digital technologies.

COST

Participant is responsible for own travel costs for the proposed project. Free accommodation will be provided in an Arts Village setting or homestay for cultural immersion. We suggest that participants apply for travel grants or sponsorship in their country.

APPLICATION

To apply, e-mail detail on what your plan to accomplish during the residency, your CV, and examples of your work to info@nkafoundation.org

The application fee is \$30/€23 for students and \$50/€37 for non-students. We must receive proof of your payment to secure your spot.



The Abetenim Arts Village was developed as part of a residency opportunity