

# Seven Easy Steps for Museums to Liberate the Plantations that Funded Them

As yet, programs with the aim of “decolonizing” museums or returning looted objects have had surprisingly little impact for the communities whose labor financed many of these very institutions. In seven easy steps, this Toolkit creates a framework to make good on the involuntary investment of plantation worker communities in museums and move from symbolic gestures toward wisdom and liberation.

## Step 1 – Identify the Debt

Research the museum’s funding from plantations – both historical and current.

## Step 2 – Publicize the Debt

Acknowledge publicly the contributions of plantation worker communities.

## Step 3 – Establish Contact

Reach out to the communities on the plantations.

## Step 4 – Enable Informed Agency

Inform the community on what your museum is: historically, artistically, financially.

## Step 5 – Learn from Plantation Workers

Listen to the communities’ priorities, demands, and visions.

## Step 6 – Co-design a Program

Co-design programs that allow the community to start reaping the benefits of their investment in the museum.

## Step 7 – Formalize Collaboration if Desired and Exit When Asked

Secure multi-year return funding, joint decision-making and shared ownership of outcomes.



Scan for full Toolkit

Developed by the Cercle d'Art des Travailleurs de Plantation Congolaise (CATPC) and Human Activities, this Toolkit integrates the perspectives of plantation worker communities and Western art institutions to help museums rethink their origins, responsibilities, and futures. It is especially designed for museums built with profits extracted from plantation worker communities, such as the Ludwig Museum, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Tate Britain and the Van Abbemuseum.



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