



Manchester Youth Empowerment Club awarded National Lottery Heritage Fund grant to explore and preserve Yoruba heritage culture on birth and naming a child.

Manchester Youth Empowerment Club has received a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £48,893 for an exciting heritage project, called Cultural Evanesce, in Manchester. Made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, the project aim is to preserve the Yoruba Nigerian traditional cultural heritage on birth and the naming ceremony of the new baby on the 8th day. This heritage will be shared with immigrant parents and children of Nigeria-Yoruba origin, who were born and raised in the Manchester area.

Supported through The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the project will enable local, young people to explore their history and preserve it for future generations. As the culture is at a risk of disappearing, due to most young people no longer practicing it, they have realised the need to understand their culture and continue practicing the tradition.

Manchester Youth Empowerment Club (MYEC) is an organisation that aims to address the social issues affecting the teenagers from black ethnic minority communities in Manchester, especially from African migrants. The funding will support 60 young participants from across the city of Manchester to get involved in this project. Working with Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relation Centre, the project legacy materials will be archived and exhibited for present and future generations. The young people participating in the project will undertake research to learn about African countries' culture and traditional heritage contrast at the Manchester Library.

As part of the project, several jobs will be created. MYEC will hire a project manager, a professional filmmaker, an evaluator, as well as community volunteers. They will work on producing a film about the project, and this which will be screened at local schools, youth centres and churches.

The project needs to happen now, because the Nigerian community living in Manchester area considers that their culture is at risk disappearing if action isn't taken now. The elders of the community who understand the culture are falling in numbers, as some are being lost due to old age, and others are going back to Africa. However, the community observed an increase in young people in the community who are keen to understand the culture of origin.



Commenting on the award, Olatunji Durowoju said: "We are thrilled to have received this support thanks to National Lottery players and are confident the project will support young people to be active citizens and will transfer and preserve the Yoruba traditional cultural heritage."

David Renwick, Director, England, North at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, added: "Inclusive heritage is very important to us at The National Lottery Heritage Fund which is why we are proud to support Manchester Youth Empowerment Club to research and record this important element of Yoruba heritage. We're very proud to support this project, which will illuminate and acknowledge a lesser-known aspect of local heritage and broaden understanding in the wider community."