

MMCA Sri Lanka Builds Web3 Solutions at the WAC Fellowship

The Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Sri Lanka (MMCA Sri Lanka) joined eleven other cultural institutions from around the world in successfully completing the Web3 for the Arts and Culture (WAC) Fellowship, led by We Are Museums based in Paris and Berlin.

This was the second four-month innovation laboratory offered under the programme, which offered online training and mentoring that onboarded these institutions onto Web3. The participants also explored and prototyped blockchain-based projects, which were presented at an online Demo Day on 25 May 2023.

MMCA Sri Lanka staff members Ritchell Marcelline and Thinal Sajeewa, Assistant Curators (Exhibitions) teamed up to collaborate with a tech integrator and—bolstered by blockchain and UI/UX experts— dedicated the last month of the program to prototyping and developing their own blockchain application. “Our final project, ‘Museum of School,’ entailed the development of a prototype learning and training portal designed specifically for the Visitor Educators of the MMCA Sri Lanka. This platform incorporated NFT collectibles as incentives for completing various courses, including art security and handling, observation and slow-looking techniques, and effective visitor engagement techniques,” Sajeewa noted. He further added that, “While initially aimed at internal staff of the MMCA Sri Lanka, specifically the Visitor Educators, this program has the potential for broader implementation across Sri Lankan institutions, museums, schools, and even the wider South Asian region.”

Speaking of his experience at the WAC Fellowship, Sajeewa said that, “The WAC fellowship provided a valuable opportunity to explore the intricacies of Web3 technology. The program's well-structured and systematic approach enabled us to grasp the larger vision behind each weekly session held.”

Other participants in the programme include the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (Australia), Belvedere Museum (Austria), Haus der Kunst München (Germany), House of Electronic Arts (Switzerland), French Ministry of Culture (France), Institute for Sound and Music (Germany), Musée d'Orsay and Musée de

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l'Orangerie (France), National Taras Shevchenko Museum (partnering with ArtAegis and Modern Art Research Institute) (Ukraine), The Reel Store (United Kingdom), The Royal College of Art (United Kingdom), and the Wooko Makandie Foundation (The Netherlands).

The programme covered blockchain's role in the culture sector, its impact on identity, security, legal and social implications, gaming, metaverse, Web3 communications, and community building. In total, the fellows had access to 25 trainers, 50 mentors, 35 lessons, 10 practical challenges, and 15 case studies. “The WAC Fellowship stands at the forefront of a cultural metamorphosis, empowering institutions to harness the immense potential of blockchain technology,” said Diane Drubay, Founder of We Are Museums and WAC-Lab.