



**Seychelles National Institute  
Of Culture Heritage & The Arts**

**"Gardyen Nou Leritaz"**



**National Sports  
Council**



## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

COLLOQUIUM TO COMMEMORATE SEYCHELLES' 40<sup>TH</sup> FESTIVAL KREOL – 22 to 23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2025

### **Festivals and Fêtes as a Forum for Identity Making and Heritage Conservation**

The Seychelles National Institute for Culture, Heritage and the Arts, and the University of Seychelles invite scholars and cultural activists of the Indian Ocean Creole zone to submit abstracts for a contribution in a colloquium celebrating 40 years of the Seychelles Creole Festival. The colloquium will focus on the role played by the Seychelles 'Festival Kreol' itself, and other fêtes and festivals in the Indian Ocean region, in the process of identity making and heritage conservation. This general theme will be explored through four sub-themes representing the strong points of the Seychelles 'Festival Kreol' throughout its 40 years of existence. The first sub-theme is 'Traditional Games, as an element of the cultural practices inherited in the whole Indian Ocean region, through the propagation of slavery and the creolization process.' The discussion of this sub-theme will be led by the Seychelles National Sports Council. The second sub-theme is 'Creole music, from its origins to its evolution', and will be led by the Seychelles National Institute for Culture, Heritage and the Arts. The third sub-theme is 'Creole food and identity', and the fourth is 'Creole Literature and Creole Language Development'. Both will be led by the Creole Language and Culture Research Institute, University of Seychelles.

### **Context and Aims**

Seychelles played a key role in the recognition and valorisation of the creole culture as a positive outcome of the colonization and slavery that took place in the Indian Ocean region (and elsewhere), in spite of its

painful beginnings. The Creole Festival was one of the most successful manifestations of this valorisation, having stemmed from the first 'Semenn Kreol' (Creole Week) in 1981, and being institutionalized as an annual festival in 1985. Today, in the last year of the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Seychelles Creole Festival is still going strong, and still serves as a point of encounter for creole communities from all over the world. It is one of the most symbolic manifestations of creole identity which occurs in the Creole World every year, centring around the 28<sup>th</sup> of October, which is recognized in both the Atlantic and Indian Ocean creole zones as the International Creole Day. It is a time of celebration, but especially, a time of reflection about the creole culture, its heritage and ongoing evolution. This aligns perfectly with the Creole Festival motto, 'En Lizye lo Lepase, en Lizye lo Lavenir' (An Eye on the Past, An Eye on the Future).

The primary aim of this colloquium is to reflect on the role played by festivals and fêtes in identity making and heritage conservation in the Indian Ocean creole zone. Bearing in mind that there is insufficient focus on research and documentation on the Indian Ocean creole zone, a secondary aim of this colloquium is to bring together scholars, cultural activists and practitioners of the region, to create or strengthen networks and forums to document and analyse creole cultural practices that are insufficiently documented, or are on the verge of disappearing.



## **COLLOQUIUM SUB-THEMES**

### **1. Traditional Games as an ICH element of the Indian Ocean region, propagated through slavery, and evolved through the creolization process**

Traditional games in the Indian Ocean region is one of the cultural practices that links the history of the ex-slave, island societies of the region. This history is founded on colonization and slavery, and with time, has influenced the social, cultural, educational and political lives of Western Indian Ocean societies. What evolved as traditional games of our creolized societies in this region have significance not only for the younger generation, but also among the older generation. This includes cultural values, contributions to sports and leisure activities, health and educational values of traditional games, and how this heritage can contribute to economic expansion through cultural tourism. The primordial question is, what is the current status of traditional games in the Indian Ocean region, and how can this discipline bring a significant contribution to the socio-economic and cultural identity of people in this region in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

Participants wishing to contribute a paper under this sub-theme may centre their discussion around the following points:

1. Origins of traditional games in the Indian Ocean region and their historical trajectories;
2. Traditional games, culture and identity in the ex-slave, creole societies of the Indian Ocean;
3. Health benefits of traditional games;
4. Cultural tourism and other economic avenues for traditional games;
5. Traditional games in modern sports;
6. The conservation, standardization and classification of traditional games;
7. Traditional games and its place in the modern world.

## **2. Creole music, from its origins to its evolution**

Music is one of the most powerful manifestations of cultural identity in any culture, and is also an effective means of cultural and heritage conservation. Having originated from various disparate sources under conditions of domination, resistance and resilience, creole music might be seen as the soul of creole culture in that it expresses both the state of traditional forms of music and their evolution in each particular community. The Seychelles Creole Festival has manifested this over the years through both traditional and modern music shows and forums, of which the most popular are the *Bal Asosye* and the *Lakadans* show. How can creole music in the Indian Ocean be brought to another level in the quest to celebrate and conserve this region's creole heritage?

Participants wishing to contribute a paper under this sub-theme may centre their discussion around the following points:

1. The characteristics of creole music in the Indian Ocean creole zone
2. Creole music and identity
3. Creole music and heritage
4. Inherited and modern resistance in creole music
5. Creole music as a cultural industry
6. The role of creole music in cultural tourism
7. The place of creole music in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond the creole borders

## **3. Creole food and identity**

Like music, creole food is also a powerful expression of cultural identity and creativity, and is one of the most common ways that outsiders can experience the creole culture. It also brings together people from the same communities as an expression of shared identity. Creole food is a mirror of the different cultures that have been woven together and adapted to their surrounding environments, to come out with something that is similar, but different to dishes and eating habits in their original communities. In such multicultural or melting pot societies like Seychelles and its neighbouring countries, what role can food play in the valorisation of the creole identity, and how can this contribute to the community's social and economic prosperity, whilst responding to current issues such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, food security, etc?

Participants wishing to contribute a paper under this sub-theme may centre their discussion around the following points:

1. Creole food and identity
2. Links in culinary practices in the Western Indian Ocean
3. Creole food in the tourism industry
4. Creole food and authenticity: considering assimilation, adaptation and evolution
5. Traditional culinary practices and its loss
6. Does creole cuisine and its practices have a role to play in climate change adaptation and mitigation?

7. How can indigenous knowledge systems in creole communities contribute towards ensuring food security?

#### 4. Creole Literature and Creole Language Development

The Creole Festival emerged as a colloquium resolution in the early 1980s, as a result of creolists from both the Atlantic and Indian Ocean creole zones meeting together in colloquiums and seminars to discuss avenues of promotion and development for the creole language and culture. Whilst creole linguistics has since become a discipline of study in its own right, creole literature has lagged behind, especially in the Indian Ocean zone. The causes of this may be insufficient structures for creole publications in most creole communities, external and internal biases against creole as a language, and the limited markets due to small sized populations such as in the case of Seychelles. Yet, literature is one of the most powerful tools of language development and conservation. At the same time, literature is a vivid window to the social lives and culture of communities. Towards the end of the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is perhaps time to take stock of the role of literature in supporting language development and its current status in Seychelles and other creole communities.

Participants wishing to contribute a paper under this sub-theme may centre their discussion around the following points:

1. The role of creole literature in creole language development
2. Avenues of development for creole literature
3. Creole literature as an art form
4. Impediments in creole literature development
5. Forms of creole literature (poetry, novels, theatre, oral literature...)



#### Guidelines for participation

Those interested in participating in this colloquium should submit an abstract of approximately 200 words to the relevant members of the organizing committee by **15<sup>th</sup> September 2025**. Please send all abstracts to Dr. Penda Choppy on the following address: [Penda.Choppy@unisey.ac.sc](mailto:Penda.Choppy@unisey.ac.sc) and copy to Ms. Cecile Kalebi, Permanent Secretary to the Seychelles National Institute for Culture, Heritage and the Arts, on the following address: [cecile.kalebi@gov.sc](mailto:cecile.kalebi@gov.sc) .

As we can only accommodate a limited number of participants, abstracts will be scrutinized by a scientific committee and the outcome communicated to the authors no later than **20<sup>th</sup> September, 2025**.

Please, head your abstracts with the colloquium title, or main theme, followed by your full name and affiliation, then your abstract, and a short list of 5 to 6 key words. Contributors whose abstracts are selected will have the possibility of publishing a full paper in the Seychelles Research Journal.

### **Conditions of participation**

Due to limited funding, international participants will be required to cater for their air-fares and subsistence. However, accommodation and lunch will be provided for the three days of the colloquium, as well as your airport transfer, and any other transportations in connection with the Creole Festival.

