

Ensemble Manchester: Connecting to our Cameroonian Roots



Connecting to our Cameroonian Roots: Local charity Ensemble Manchester receives over £117,000 of funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The funding will support first-generation Cameroonian British children to make strong connections with older generations. Its aim is to ensure that the valuable heritage of their elders is passed on to children before they completely lose touch with their roots.

CAMFEST – 23 May 2026

The Ensemble Manchester team will be at the Manchester Communication Academy on Saturday, 23 May (from 10am to 2pm) as part of the annual Cameroonian Festival, CAMFEST 26 to Launch their new exhibition *Threads of Identity: Ndop & Toghu – Cameroon's Sustainable Fashion Legacy*

This exhibition explores the rich intersection of heritage, identity, and sustainability through two of Cameroon's most iconic textiles: Ndop and Toghu. Originating from the Grassfields regions, these fabrics are far more than decorative materials—they are powerful cultural symbols that carry history, spirituality, and social meaning. Ndop, known for its deep indigo tones and geometric patterns, reflects ancestral knowledge, symbolism, and a sense of harmony. Toghu, with its intricate and vibrant embroidery, has long been associated with royalty, prestige, and celebration. Together, they tell a story of identity that has been preserved and passed down through generations.

The festival is a celebration of Cameroonian roots and gives a taste of the heritage and culture brought to the UK by French-speaking and English-speaking Cameroonians. It will also be a moment when our plan can start to become reality.

Everyone is welcome to join us and we encourage our local community, of any age or background, to engage in the exploration of heritage themes such as food, art, music, song, stories, literature, dress, and clothing, which can be both exciting and rewarding.

About Ensemble Manchester

Based at 342 Oldham Road in Miles Platting, Ensemble Manchester (*Charity 1165797*) has been sharing and celebrating Cameroonian heritage and culture in schools and within the community through the French Supplementary School since 2008. It has previously received National Lottery Heritage Fund grants, for a project that explored Cameroonian heritage through the lens of football.

Sustainability is a key part of the charity and much consideration will be given to reusing, borrowing, and upcycling during the art, dress and clothing, rituals and ceremonial sub-projects. Paper use will be minimized, with records stored digitally wherever possible, and communication will be conducted electronically.

About the Republic of Cameroon

The Republic of Cameroon lies at the junction of Western and Central Africa. It was under British and French rule from World War I until its independence in 1960. Violent civil unrest before and after independence prompted significant migration to Britain and France, followed by secondary migration from France to Britain. Several hundred migrants settled in Greater Manchester.

With most original migrants now aged 70 and older, we risk losing this generation without them bequeathing a strong legacy of Cameroonian heritage and culture to future generations.

Speaking about this funding, Charity Lead Melanie Ngangen commented:

"This funding gives us the means to make sure our Cameroonian heritage and culture isn't forgotten and continues to thrive in Manchester. We would like to thank Edwards Hurst, Engagement Officer at the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the team at Sported for their continued support on our project and all Lottery players for making this prestigious funding possible."

"To learn more about our project and how to get involved, visit [www.ensemblemanchester.org.uk]."

[Contact Information]

Melanie Ngangen

Charity Lead

07424941770