

# 20 | ICOM Australia Award for 11 | International Relations

## Vinod Daniel testimony

Vinod Daniel, for International Relations award, by ICOM Australia, 2011.

Vinod has initiated and completed several projects in India including:

- negotiating a memorandum of understanding between Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and AusHeritage (Australia's international heritage industry network) with regards to cooperation on cultural heritage initiatives
- development of an INTACH charter for conservation of heritage buildings in India
- between 1995 and 2010, leading over 20 senior level Australian delegations to India to further people-to-people and institution-to-institution linkages between Australia and India. This has led to many follow-up initiatives
- facilitation of an indigenous Australian art exhibition in Jaipur and New Delhi (2008) called *On the edge*
- repatriation of 31 culturally significant objects from the Australian Museum to the Government Museum, Chennai
- development of an international exhibition gallery at the Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai
- delivery of cultural heritage capacity building initiatives in many parts of India including New Delhi, Kolkata, Lucknow, Assam, Kochi and Chennai. This included training over 300 heritage professionals in India.

Vinod interacts regularly with cultural heritage students in India studying in museum / museology programs and over the last decade has had a positive influence on many young museology and conservation professionals. He also works closely with most major cultural heritage organisations in India including major museums, INTACH, the National Research Laboratory for Conservation (Lucknow), IGNCA and the Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum. He is currently developing initiatives with the Tagore Museum (Shantiniketan), J.C. Bose Museum (Kolkata) and the Nehru Memorial Museum.

Vinod very regularly interacts with political leaders and bureaucrats from India and Australia, and often uses these relationships to further cultural heritage preservation and management in India.

He is currently the Chairman of the Board for Australia's International Heritage Industry Network *AusHeritage*. This key role provides leadership to a network of thirty Australian heritage institutions in developing significant cultural heritage initiatives in the Asia Pacific region. The member institutions cover all aspects of cultural heritage and include collecting institutions, heritage architectural and planning practices, universities and government heritage departments. In his role



as Chariman, he has been instrumental in developing a very close relationship between AusHeritage and India.

In recognition of his commitment to India, in 2005, he was appointed by the Australian Governor General to be one of the eight board members of the Australia-India Council. This Council operates as part of Australia's Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade. It was established by the Australian Government to broaden and deepen Australia-India relations. He was also awarded the 2009 Indo-Australian Award for Meritorious Service by the Indo Australian Association and is also one of the sixty invited members of Tourism Australia's *Friend of Australia* program.