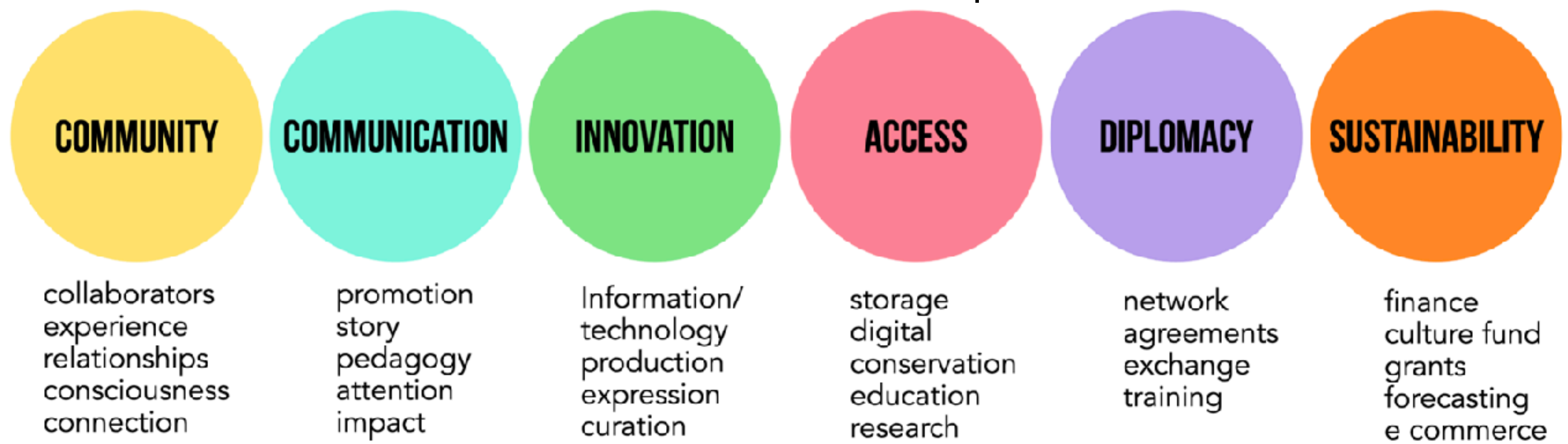


N I C H

IMPACT

framework for
MORE cultural development



Festival of Arts 2024

NICH Impact Report

published by the National Institute of Culture and History
Belmopan, Belize
February 2025



IT IS THE WHOLE COMPLEX
OF DISTINCTIVE **SPIRITUAL,**
MATERIAL, INTELLECTUAL,
AND **EMOTIONAL**
FEATURES THAT
CHARACTERIZE A SOCIETY,
FROM THE **INDIGENOUS** TO
THE **MODERN.** CULTURE IS
AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF
THE **DEVELOPMENT**
PROCESS.

Said Musa

former Prime Minister of Belize
State of the Nation, 2005



Build a
Conservation Center

Expand
Belize Culture Fund

Open the
Belize Music Museum

Create a
Children's Museum

Develop a new
Arts Education

Public Education for
Price Family Home

“ MORE IMPACT

Friends, the time has come for us to finally build a world class Conservation Centre where we can **safeguard, restore and digitize** our material culture. When we store, and care for the things that represent who we are – our art, music, dance, artefacts, books, audio and video recordings, letters, fashion, photographs, animations... - we send a strong signal of respect to our children and the rest of the world - that CULTURE MATTERS.

This Briceño government will expand and invest more in the Belize Culture Fund. We will develop an immersive and artistic Belize Music Museum. We will develop a plan for a Children's Museum focusing on exploration and creativity. We will develop a new arts program integrating it into STEAM education. We will collaborate with our entrepreneurs to grow Culture as business.

And this same spirit of joining education, culture and technology will be employed to transform the George Price Family Home, into a space of pride and honour.

Francis Fonseca
Minister of Culture | 6 December, 2024
Community presentation of USpaces
at Banquitas House of Culture, Orange Walk Town



NICH Board of Directors: (back) Kirkland Smith, Arreini Palacio Morgan, Eluide Miller, Yasser Musa (advisor to Minister of Culture and NICH BOD), (front) Carlo Habet, Jaylan Craig, Albert Vaughan

Institute of Archaeology SAFETY CAVE TECHNIQUES



In May 2024, the IA conducted a 2-week training program for 50 tour guides teaching tactical cave techniques, ensuring safety and satisfaction - balancing cultural, environmental, and conservation goals.

NICH IMPACT = 40 new ATM cave guides, ready to lead tours in one of the world's most renowned caves.

#InvestInHeritage #PreservingThePast

NICH
national institute of culture and history

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE FEES

Effective January 1, 2025

Non-Resident Fees	
Archaeological Reserve	Entrance Fee* (BZD)
Actun Tunichil Mucnal	\$60.00
Caracol	\$25.00
Lamanai	\$25.00
Xurantunich	\$25.00
Actun Ha	\$20.00
Cahal Pech	\$20.00
Luzantun	\$20.00
Nim Li Punit	\$20.00
Barton Creek	\$20.00
Nohoch Ch'een	\$20.00
Cerro Maya	\$15.00
El Pilar	\$15.00
Santa Rita	\$15.00
Serpon	\$15.00

NOTICE

- Free entry for minors between ages 1-4.
- Regular price applies to visitors aged 5 and older.

iafrontdesk@nichbelze.org | NICH Administration Building, Culvert Rd., Belmopan | 822-2106/2227

#InvestInHeritage #PreservingThePast

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national institute of culture and history

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE FEE ADJUSTMENT

Effective January 1, 2025

These changes are critical to protecting Belize's rich cultural heritage. Funds will support essential projects such as:

- The **consolidation** of ancient structures and artifacts
- Facility **upgrades** for improved visitor experiences
- Ongoing **conservation** efforts to safeguard our history for future generations

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BETTER PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION:

The long-overdue amendment to the NICH Act strengthens the Institute's ability to protect and preserve Belize's cultural resources. It allows for higher entrance fees at Archaeological Reserves and stricter penalties for violations, boosting NICH's capacity to manage cultural assets and ensuring better financial sustainability and socioeconomic growth.



Institute of Archaeology **CULTURAL DIPLOMACY**

Belize-Peru Bilateral Agreement on Cultural Patrimony:
Our IA team engaged with culture experts from the highest levels of the **PERU** Government. This exchange program aims to improve the management of archaeological reserves and cultural assets. Seventeen IA staff participated, visiting Cahal Pech and Caracol Archaeological Reserves.

NICH IMPACT = development of a Management Plan for **CARACOL** and other archaeological reserves.



DIGITAL PRESERVATION OF ARTIFACTS

The Institute of Archaeology is using advanced technology to digitally preserve Belize's cultural heritage. This year, the IA team created 3D scans of artifacts and structures using photogrammetry and trained local and international institutions. These efforts ensure long-term preservation for research and education, supporting the mission to protect and share Belize's cultural resources.



Themes of **Mayan Deer Dance**
HUMAN-nature relations, colonization, and **RESISTANCE**

NICH IMPACT = Community Performances: Toledo, Cayo, Belmopan, Armenia Village, and Valley of Peace. + 24 families actively involved.

The dance, led by youth, strengthens cultural continuity and fosters peace through ritual, communal meals, and copal incense.

ISCR in partnership with the Ministry of Human Development and Belize Tourism Board (BTB)

Institute of Social and Cultural Research
DEER DANCE IN COMMUNITY



BELIZE FOODWAYS PROJECT

In October 2024, ISCR won a UNESCO grant of \$98,600 for the "Empowering Communities for the Safeguarding of Belize's Foodways" project.

NICH IMPACT: Train 150+ community members to document traditional food practices and promote sustainability, preserving Belize's food heritage for future generations. (Start: June 2025)

UNSECO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNITED NATIONS PARTNERS WITH NICH

Institute of Social and Cultural Research ISCR PUSHES MORE ACCESS

Both in-person and virtual discussions in partnership with the University of Belize and Belize Archives and Records Service. Themes included decolonisation, traditional dances, and cultural heritage, among others.

Notable CONVERSATIONS

NICH IMPACT: lectures and webinars to make cultural and historical research more accessible and collaborative

3000+ participants on our live-streamed events and content



Public Education Actions

NICH IMPACT: Opening up to the people

- “Indigenous Resistance Day Forum: The Role of Traditional Dance in Indigenous Identity and Resistance” at the University of Belize (October 2024).
- Indigenous Peoples' Resistance Day Celebration with To'one Masehualoon at Santa Rita Archaeological Reserve (October 2024).
- “Integrating the teaching of the Garifuna Language in Schools: Celebrating the Roots of the Garifuna Culture” at the University of Belize (November 2024).
- “Los Finados” with the Northern Maya Association educational cultural showcase and fair in Orange Walk Town (November 2024).

WRITERS celebrated | more BOOKS published

NICH IMPACT: Advancing intellectual value



UBAD Conversations by Dr. Aondofe Joe Iyo, (17 March 2024)



“Primer on the People Called Garifuna” was updated by author I. Myrtle Palacio and featured at the Wabaruagoun Symposium. (June 2024)



“The Tides: The Socio-Economic Development of Mid-South Communities” by Oscar Gutierrez (September 2024)



“The Battle of Orange Walk” by Dr. Angel Cal (November 2024)



(left to right front) **Dr. Thisbe Lucas-Usher** Dean of the Faculty of Education and Arts, University of Belize, **Darius Avila** President, Battle of the Drums Secretariat, **Sheena Zuniga** President, National Garifuna Council (middle) **Delmer Tzib** Director, Inter-Cultural and Language Institute, University of Belize, **Dr. Dylan Vernon** Director of BELPRI-UB, **Emily Martinez-Palacio** Director, Helping Hands Resource and Intervention Center (Back) **April Martinez** Living Heritage Officer, ISCR, **Rolando Cocom** Director, ISCR, **Alberita-Enriquez** founder of Lan Barangu Luban Garifunaduau (Barranco House of Culture)

Museum of Belize and Houses of Culture + MOBA 1ST STEP MOBA - NEXT CONTEMPORARY ART

MUSEUM OF
BELIZEAN
ART



The **Museum of Belizean Art (MOBA)**, the first of its kind in our country, opened April 2024.

This groundbreaking initiative focuses on promoting Belizean artists and showcasing our rich cultural identity through diverse art forms. The museum's carefully curated 1st exhibit from the National Art Collection highlights selected elements in virtual and gallery exhibit form.

NICH IMPACT = Bridging past traditions with emerging creativity



Maya Creating Civilization exhibit is an attempt to provide a respectful and dignified illustration, of the connection between the ancient and living Maya. It was an all out coming together of all four NICH institutions. The complex curation, demonstrates teamwork and shared cultural goals. The exhibit showcases traditional and contemporary Maya artistry, including contributions from renowned individuals and groups as **Emelio Perera, Maya Bags, Jorge Caan**, and the **San Antonio Women's Group** in ceramics, textile and pottery.

Museum of Belize and Houses of Culture + MOBA ADVANCING PUBLIC EDUCATION



Marooners Kriol Kolcha Camp



Birds of Belize Ornithology Camp



Meg Craig's Entomology Summer Program

HUBS FOR COMMUNITY CONNECTION

NICH **IMPACT** = Toward more decentralisation



The **SISE House of Culture** is a vital space for community connections - **Youth for Justice**, **MORA Town Vibes**, **Si Se Puede Girls** and the **INTERACT Club of SISE** - a safe empowering space.



The **Benque House of Culture** has supported traditional marimba music through its **Marimba Academy**, bringing music to life for a new generation.



The **Corozal House of Culture** has fostered local pride by curating exhibits that highlight the region's unique history and heritage.



Welcome back! Dangriga House of Culture at **Gulisi Garifuna Museum** MOU signed



The **Banquitas House of Culture** has strengthened its connection to the Orange Walk community through cultural events and exhibitions.



Night at the Museum Events: Fun and interactive and alternative space for audiences of all ages.

Institute of Creative Arts **BROKMAKACHISTA**

Launched in November as a new focal point for dance in Belize, Brok Makachista Dance Festival emphasizes dance education, youth innovation, and cultural heritage. The two-day showcase brought together participating dance groups from across the country in a dazzling presentation of 26 performances of both traditional and modern dance forms and created a unique opportunity for the dance community to unify.



170 PAN PLAYERS

14th September, the grounds of the Belize City House of Culture

All steel bands and youth programs in music education and industry development.
2100 attendees - newcomers St. Catherine's Academy and Belize Scouts Association

Institute of Creative Arts 2,300 YOUTHS ACROSS BELIZE



The Festival of Arts is a national platform for youth talent, engaging hundreds of preschool, primary, and secondary students across various artistic disciplines countrywide. The festival promotes creative and cultural expression and fosters community engagement. The revival of the National Visual Art Exhibit and Literary Arts Publication, increasing youth participation and inclusivity is critical.

GROWING EBO TOWN

Ebo Town Festival - A vibrant Emancipation Day event celebrating Afro-Belizean culture and Brokdong music. Expanded under ICA leadership to include food, music, crafts, heritage activities, and a youth emancipation day football tournament.



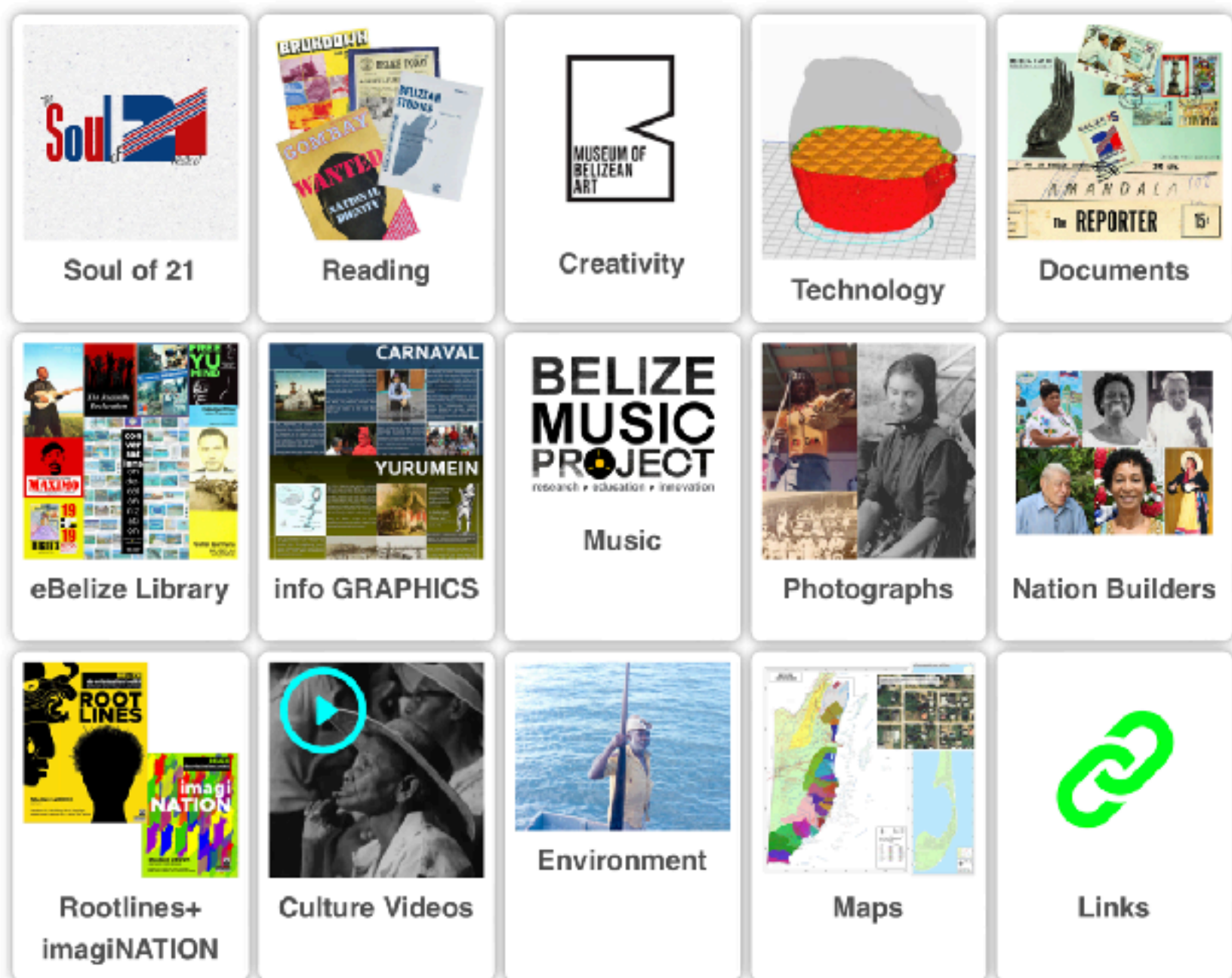
UNTIL FOREVER

Wilson Grinage 2024 Winner - National Song Competition is a key music industry development program, fostering cultural pride and promotion of Belizean music. It grew in both audience engagement, artist participation and airway play. The Bliss Theatre was hyped and 20,000+ viewers on livestream. Artists Hubee's "Explore Belize" captured 2nd place and Echo Middleton rounding out the top 3 with "Rememba Dem Days".



EDU + SCI + TECH = CULTURE

501academy.edu.bz /Access501



FUTURE



EXCITEMENT



HONORED



LEADERSHIP



PARTNERSHIPS



ARCHIVE



LIVE



IMMERSIVE



“He framed the most complex matters in ways easy to understand, always offering clear guidance and direction. His thoughts were minimalist, but always profound - clarity of vision unmatched. He had an economy of words ahead of his time, long before social media.”

Johnny Briceño

Prime Minister of Belize

George Price Day, # 3 Pickstock Street, Belize City
15 January 2025

NICH IN NUMBERS

collaborations, partnerships, opportunities, outreach with

artists, musicians, writers, poets, film makers, illustrators, researchers, cultural organisations, archaeologists, anthropologists, dance groups, music bands, community festivals, lecturers, podcasts, crafts people, content creators, bloggers, graphic designers, and web design

65,000



followers on Facebook 23% growth since December 2023

76



community cultural engagements and collaborations Since January 2024

\$1.6 MILLION



in grants, donations, in kind support, waivers and sponsorships

\$275,000



NICH support via The Bliss Center for the Performing Arts waiver and discounts for use of theatre in past 4 years

1.8 MILLION



visitors to 14 managed archaeological parks, cultural events, concerts, openings, museums, houses of culture, lectures, symposiums, community meetings

63



partnerships, co-managements, Collaborations with international Institutions, universities, organisations



national institute of culture and history



2024 - 2025