



KALINAWA ART FOUNDATION

Question: Are you concerned that “modest commercialization of the visual arts” may not be a suitable social goal?

Answer: No, because we are aware that The Kalinawa Foundation will need to continuously renew and refine our “social license to operate” through consultation and building sustainable relationships with the Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines.

We have engaged in a wide consultation with many different individuals and agencies about this goal, and almost all have been supportive of the concept. Having said this, we are very aware that this project has been designed for Indigenous People, not with them. But, in its design, after a few exploratory shows in regional areas, we begin with preliminary consultations with communities about the intent of the project and their needs in order to participate, prior to any other activity. In this process, which we expect to take two to three years, we will adapt and modify the program, as well as generate more participants in the process. At that point the Foundation will be able to state: “We are working with the Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines”.

Participation is based on choice, which is understood to involve the principle of Free and Informed Prior Consent. In the Philippines, this is defined as meaning “the consensus of all members of the ICCs/IPs to be determined in accordance with their respective customary laws and practices, free from any external manipulation, interference, or coercion, and obtained after fully disclosing the intent and scope of the activity, in a language and process understandable to the community”. (from Chapter II, Section 3g, page 3, REPUBLIC ACT NO. 837: The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997) We are also mindful of the principle derived from ILO Convention 169 which states: “The peoples concerned shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development as it affects their lives, beliefs, institutions and spiritual well-being and the lands they occupy or otherwise use, and to exercise control, to the extent possible, over their own economic, social and cultural development.” (from Article 7, section 1, Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, International Labor Organization)

This is accepted international practice. A study by UNESCO found that “Cultural industries have the potential to contribute significantly to the economies of developing countries. In some developing economies, the cultural industries already occupy an important place: in 2000, these industries accounted for 3.2% of Brazil's GDP, whilst in 1998 they contributed 1.5% to Bolivia's GDP.” However, “Despite the wealth of talent and rich cultural heritage that is recognized to exist in the developing world across the whole range of cultural activities, developing countries remain largely marginal players in the cultural industries sector, often occupying the lower ends of the value chain.” (Yarri Kamara, Keys to Successful Cultural Enterprise Development in Developing Countries).