

Cradle Ambassadors Retreat

Next Retreat: 22–24 October 2018



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” ~ Nelson Mandela

Who is a Cradle Ambassador? YOU. An Ambassador is not a tour guide but represents the Cradle of Humankind community with pride, sharing what they know in order to nurture understanding in others. More than a course, the Cradle Ambassadors programme encourages a way of living that respects us as individuals, our heritage, our environment, and one another. The Cradle Ambassadors are a support network, which means that by enrolling in our retreat, you are investing not only in yourselves but also in your community and its future. Tap into the strength of the Cradle of Humankind community: We’re stronger together.

Our Mission: The National Geographic “Umsuka” Public Palaeoanthropology Project (Nat Geo “Umsuka”), a public outreach programme of the African Digital Education Trust (ADET), is committed to the **mission** of increasing the accessibility of our common fossil hominin heritage for South Africans of diverse backgrounds in order to engage them with the past in ways that unite us in the present and help us to work towards a better shared future.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Everyone is welcome! The Cradle Ambassadors programme is aimed at tourism industry service-workers living and working within and around the Cradle of Humankind but would be a benefit to ANYONE living and/or working in South Africa!

This is the ideal course for individuals that can benefit from increased knowledge of their physical and historical surroundings: that means EVERYONE. Familiarity with the palaeontological discoveries that draw tourists and scientists alike to the Cradle of Humankind can lead to more opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs to expand marketing and increase profits.

ADMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

There is no minimum admission requirement, though learners with an English literacy proficiency of at least NQF 3 will find the scientific vocabulary easier to comprehend. An outgoing personality and willingness to engage visitors would also be a benefit.

CERTIFICATION

Learners who successfully complete the course are awarded a National Geographic “Umsuka” Certificate of Achievement and an insignia lapel pin designating them as a Cradle Ambassador. We regret that this offering is not currently eligible for skills development levy (SDL) claims.

BENEFITS/COURSE OUTCOMES

- Improve knowledge of scientific thinking and how it relates to everyday life.
- Understand how the geological past relates to the present landforms and even plants and animals within the Cradle today.
- Uncover the exciting scientific discoveries that have led to the recognition of the Cradle of Humankind as a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Learn how all people alive today belong only to the ONE human race and share a common fossil heritage.
- Understand that we all have a role to play in protecting and preserving our Cradle community.
- Improve work and personal relationships through a deeper understanding of individual motivations and effective communication.
- Become a “multiplier” as you learn to network efficiently and grow your support structure.
- Discover how to find the information you need to be your best self at work and at home.
- Build and support YOUR Cradle community.

DURATION AND TIMES

The course is presented as a 3-day overnight retreat at Maropeng’s Hominin House educational facility. Attendance is required from 09h00 on the first class day through 16h00 on the last day. We feel that this intimate, immersive setting allows us to focus on building a stronger connection to the material and to one another and is a key aspect of forming a cohesive and egalitarian Cradle community.

Upcoming 2019 Dates:

- 11-13 February, 25-27 March, 2-4 September, and 21-23 October

VENUE

The retreat takes place at Maropeng's Hominin House, which provides comfortable dormitory accommodation (sleeping up to 120 people, separated by gender), a beautiful classroom with projector facilities, enclosed dining area/all-purpose hall, and an amphitheatre fire pit that is perfect for night-time star-gazing or outdoor lectures on warm days.

Upgrades to Hominin House were done using sustainable and green building concepts, including the use of green materials, as well as implementing steps to reduce energy and waste. Exhibition elements highlighting sustainability issues are placed throughout the facility, allowing for Hominin House to be more than just an accommodation venue but an educational site as well.

TRANSPORTATION

Employers are responsible for arranging transport for their employees to the Hominin House on the first class day by 08h30 and for pick up by 16h15 from Sterkfontein Caves on the last day. Group transportation will be provided for the final full-day outing.

COURSE FEE

R700.00*

*Valued at over R5000.00/per person but offered for a LIMITED TIME at a HIGHLY subsidised rate through a generous donation by the National Geographic Society and local partners such as Timothy Nash, Maropeng a' Afrika, and the Cradle Nature Reserve.

The course fee includes:

- A pre-course knowledge assessment
- Tuition in a small class (maximum of 15-17 students)
- Printed course materials
- Invite to a continuously updated Facebook group with even more information on the Cradle of Humankind and life on this planet
- Interaction and encouragement from other course participants via a facilitated WhatsApp group (standard carrier rates apply)
- Access to your Nat Geo "Umsuka" facilitator post course
- A post-course knowledge assessment
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee, tea, refreshments (Breakfast will not be served on Monday and only breakfast and lunch will be provided on Wednesday)
- Dormitory accommodations at the Hominin House (*please note that this is NOT Maropeng's Boutique Hotel)
- Tour of Maropeng Visitors Centre and exhibits

- One full-day outing to the famous hominin sites of Gladysvale/Malapa and Sterkfontein Caves
- Transportation for course outing

We pride ourselves on offering an innovative and much-needed service for the best value and share our love for the material in an open and honest fashion. We don't anticipate any danger (though it IS an exciting program) but just in case, our lead facilitator is certified in Level One First Aid by ER24.

CUSTOM-DESIGNED COURSES/WORKSHOPS

We design these courses according to your requirements. Please contact Lindsay@afriandet.org to get started creating a course or workshop that fits your unique needs.

In addition, there may be opportunities in the future for past learners to participate in half-day coaching to tune-up their Cradle Ambassador skills in preparation for elective participation in special events such as tourism expos or conferences.

REGISTRATION

Employers, please contact our programme manager at Lindsay@afriandet.org and you will be directed to our online registration form or visit our website at www.afriandet.org.

CONTACT DETAILS

LINDSAY HUNTER, PROGRAMME MANAGER AND FACILITATOR

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www.afriandet.org

ABOUT YOUR LEAD FACILITATOR

K. Lindsay Hunter

BA, MA, PhD student



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Lindsay is a trained paleoanthropologist who uses her more than 15 years of experience to make sense of the distant past of our species in ways that can help us to build a better future. She received her Master's degree from the University of Iowa, where she also conducted research on eco-geographic patterning of the rib cage in later human evolution. She has studied fossil and human bone collections across five continents with major grant support from the National Science Foundation (United States) and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research.

In 2013, Lindsay was one of six Advance Cave Scientists (nicknamed the "Underground Astronauts") chosen to excavate the newly discovered human relative, *Homo naledi*, from the Rising Star Cave system deep within the Cradle of Humankind (South Africa). The Rising Star Expedition (<http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/blog/rising-star-expedition/>), directed by National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Lee Berger, received the South African National Research Foundation's Science Team Award in 2014 and is a subject of an on-going exhibition at Maropeng the Official Visitors Centre of the Cradle of Humankind (the largest public display of hominin fossils in history).

Since its announcement in September 2015, *Homo naledi* has ignited great interest in our fossil hominin past from scientists and lay-people alike. Lindsay has been able to share the story of this early human relative with millions of people of all ages from around the world through speaker evenings, classroom Skypes, museum interpretation and exhibit writing, personal essays, and interviews with major media outlets such as *National Geographic*, *Carte Blanche*, *CNN*, *60 Minutes*, *NOVA/PBS*, *Sky News*, *Scientific American*, *The New Scientist*, *The New Yorker*, and *IFLScience*, among many others. She is featured as an Advance Cave Scientist in the PBS NOVA documentary, *Dawn of Humanity* (2015), and mentioned in Prof Berger's book, *Almost Human: The Astonishing Tale of Homo naledi and the Discovery that Changed Our Human Story* (2017).

She is an Archaeology PhD student at the University of the Witwatersrand and works as the Programme Manager and Facilitator for the National Geographic "Umsuka" Public Palaeoanthropology Project (African Digital Education Trust), which works within South Africa to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of our fossil heritage.