UCLA Luskin Center for History and Policy

DIASPORA AND IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN CULTURAL PROGRAMMING FOR LA28

Dr. Tawny Paul, Anaghime Esmeralda Ziani, Pilar Taylor

August 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	1
Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games	5
London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games	7
Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup	10
Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games	13
Looking Ahead at LA28: Cross-Case Findings	16
Institutional Planning Worksheet	19
Bibliography	21

OVERVIEW

Los Angeles is a global city whose cultural identity has been shaped by migration, displacement, and enduring connections across national borders. More than one-third of Los Angeles County residents are foreign-born, and more than 200 languages are spoken across the county (KH Consulting Group, 2025). The wider Los Angeles region is home to numerous diaspora communities with enduring cultural, familial, and civic connections to places around the world. These communities are embedded in the region's neighborhoods, cultural institutions, businesses, artistic practices, and public life.

As Los Angeles prepares to receive international visitors for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, diaspora inclusion is central to how the region represents itself both to its own residents and to international audiences. Cultural programming offers an opportunity to show how migration and transnational connections have shaped Los Angeles and continue to influence the city's cultural life. It also raises important questions about which communities are represented, who shapes that representation, and whether the Games strengthen the cultural organizations and relationships through which diasporic life is sustained.

This report examines cultural programming associated with four mega-sporting events: the Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games, the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The cases illustrate different approaches to international cultural programming, community participation, public access, and institutional partnership.

The LA84 case documents the participation of a limited number of culturally specific museums and community organizations within the Olympic Arts Festival. The available archival and official documentation provides little evidence of a coordinated strategy for diaspora inclusion or of the authority communities held within the program.

The London 2012 case demonstrates the potential of multilingual programming, community participation, and museum co-curation. It also reveals the barriers smaller organizations encountered when seeking access to official funding and commissioning structures.

The Qatar 2022 case provides the clearest example of organizers working through existing resident-community networks. Community leaders were identified through local organizations and online spaces and invited to help determine how their communities would be represented during the tournament. The available evidence offers less detail on how widely this approach was used across communities and how responsibilities and resources were shared.

The Paris 2024 case connected audience-diversification goals with territorial participation, immigration history, national houses, and programming near celebration sites. The available evidence, however, does not always establish how far local diaspora communities influenced program development.

Across the cases, meaningful inclusion was most evident when institutions worked with organizations that already had strong community relationships, created accessible opportunities for participation, and gave communities a role in shaping how their cultures and experiences were presented. Visibility alone offered limited value when it was disconnected from community involvement, material support, and sustained institutional relationships.

For Los Angeles museums and cultural institutions, diaspora inclusion concerns who appears in cultural programming and how that programming is planned, funded, interpreted, and delivered. The cases point to the importance of early partnership development, accessible participation, investment in community-rooted organizations and practitioners, and continuity beyond the Games. Together, they offer practical lessons for connecting LA28's global visibility with the communities that already shape the cultural life of Los Angeles.

DEFINING KEY TERMS

Diaspora communities encompass a wide range of experiences and perspectives, shaped by factors such as generation, language, migration history, legal status, class, race, religion, and relationships to places of origin and settlement (Brubaker, 2005). The definitions below explain how the report uses several key terms while recognizing differences within and across communities.

- **Diaspora**

This report uses the term diaspora to refer to migrants and their descendants whose identities and sense of belonging have been shaped by their migration experience and background (International Organization for Migration, 2019). Diasporic relationships may extend across places of origin, settlement, and belonging and may emerge through voluntary migration, forced displacement, colonial histories, labor mobility, or successive generations of transnational connection. The term does not imply that members of a diaspora share a uniform identity, experience, political position, or relationship to a place of origin. Diaspora is better understood as a category through which varied forms of identification, connection, and collective activity may be articulated than as the name of an internally uniform group (Brubaker, 2005).

- **Diaspora inclusion**

Diaspora inclusion is an operational term used in this report to describe the meaningful involvement of diaspora communities in the planning, interpretation, production, delivery, and benefits of cultural programming. Inclusion may involve representation, but it extends beyond visibility or attendance. It also concerns who exercises decision-making authority, whose knowledge shapes interpretation, which organizations and practitioners receive resources, and whether communities can influence how their cultures and experiences are presented. This definition draws on models that distinguish limited consultation from forms of participation involving partnership, shared authority, and community influence (Arnstein, 1969; Simon, 2010).

- **Diaspora-rooted organizations**

Diaspora-rooted organizations is an operational term used in this report to describe cultural, civic, religious, educational, artistic, or community institutions that maintain sustained relationships with particular diaspora communities. Such organizations may facilitate cultural expression, preserve linguistic and cultural knowledge, develop community networks, and maintain connections between places of origin and settlement (Agunias & Newland, 2012). They may therefore possess forms of knowledge, trust, and community access that event organizers or larger cultural institutions do not. However, no organization should automatically be treated as representing every identity, generation, or perspective within a diaspora community.

DEFINING KEY TERMS

- **Cultural programming**

Cultural programming encompasses exhibitions, performances, festivals, commissions, public art, interpretation, educational activities, community events, and other cultural experiences developed in association with a mega-sporting event. Olympic cultural programs have historically taken varied forms and have contributed to the representation of host cities and nations, cultural participation, the cultural dimensions of the Olympic movement, and longer-term cultural-policy objectives (García, 2008).

- **Participation and co-production**

Participation encompasses different levels of community involvement, ranging from attendance and consultation to collaboration, shared decision-making, and community-led activity. Participatory opportunities differ substantially in the authority they give communities and should not be treated as equivalent (Arnstein, 1969; Simon, 2010). Co-production is used in this report as an operational term for arrangements in which institutions and community participants share responsibility for developing, interpreting, or delivering cultural programming. Neither participation nor co-production should automatically be treated as evidence of meaningful inclusion without examining authority, compensation, access, attribution, and continuity.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This report uses comparative case studies to examine whether and how diaspora communities were included in cultural programming associated with the LA84, London 2012, Qatar 2022, and Paris 2024 cases. The cases were selected because they offer different approaches to cultural representation, community participation, institutional partnership, funding, and legacy, with potential lessons for Los Angeles as it prepares for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The research draws on academic scholarship, official reports, cultural-program materials, museum publications, government documents, media coverage, and other publicly available sources. The London 2012, Qatar 2022, and Paris 2024 cases also draw on interviews conducted by the research team with cultural practitioners and other stakeholders involved in relevant programming. Interviewees are anonymized to protect confidentiality and support candid reflection, except where they gave permission to be identified.

The cases are considered across five areas:

- **Representation**: which communities, histories, and practices appeared in programming;
- **Participation and authority**: how communities contributed to planning, interpretation, and delivery;
- **Institutional relationships**: how organizers worked with community-rooted institutions, groups, and practitioners;
- **Access and resources**: how funding, commissioning, language, location, and capacity affected participation;
- **Continuity**: whether relationships, skills, or resources continued beyond the event.

The report distinguishes diaspora inclusion from international programming and from evidence of immigrant, ethnic, or culturally diverse audiences. Where evidence establishes community involvement in planning or delivery, this is identified directly. Where sources demonstrate only representation, attendance, or audience-diversification goals, the report uses more limited language.

The four cases differ considerably in their political, demographic, and institutional contexts and are therefore not treated as directly equivalent. The comparison instead identifies particular practices and limitations that may inform LA28 planning. The findings do not claim to represent the views of the communities discussed and should serve as a foundation for direct consultation with Los Angeles diaspora communities and community-rooted organizations.

LOS ANGELES 1984 OLYMPIC GAMES

Jllm06, CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

The 1984 Olympic Arts Festival presented itself primarily as an international cultural event. Its first seven weeks were described as "international in flavor," and the official report invoked Los Angeles as a city where "more than 80 languages and cultures coexist" (Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, 1985). Yet the Festival's recognition of the city's cultural diversity did not necessarily translate into broad participation by the communities that constituted that diversity. Its international orientation frequently emphasized artists, performances, and exhibitions brought to Los Angeles from elsewhere. The available documentation identifies far fewer programs developed with the city's diasporic and immigrant communities.

The archival records and publicly accessible documentation reviewed for this report do not identify a distinct LA84 policy or coordinated strategy for diaspora engagement. A limited number of culturally specific museums, cultural organizations, and community centers participated in the Festival, but they formed only part of a much larger program. The official report identifies Plaza de la Raza, the Craft and Folk Art Museum, and the Huntington Library as co-producers of Festival programming. It also lists the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, the California Museum of Afro-American History and Culture, and the Pacific Asia Museum among its participating venues (Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, 1985). Their presence is important, but it should not be understood as evidence that LA84 systematically represented or involved the wider range of communities that shaped Los Angeles.

Among the clearest documented examples was the Plaza de la Raza Folklife Festival, which attracted 50,000 attendees and brought together more than 50 artisans representing regions of Mexico, California, and other centers of Mexican American culture in the United States. The Japanese American Cultural and Community Center presented Bugaku: Treasures from Kasuga Shrine, a five-and-a-half-week exhibition and performance program, while A Japanese Festival at the Huntington Library attracted 8,275 attendees (Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, 1985). These programs created some visibility for culturally specific institutions and traditions. However, official reports emphasize program content and attendance and provide little information about whether or how local communities shaped their development, interpretation, or delivery.

The available evidence therefore presents a limited and uneven picture of diaspora inclusion at LA84. Although several culturally-specific institutions participated, these examples do not establish that inclusion was broad, representative, or embedded across the Festival. Many of the communities that formed the cultural life of Los Angeles are not visible in the documented program, and the available documentation provides little information about community authority, funding, or longer-term institutional benefits. For LA28, the LA84 case cautions against treating international representation or the participation of a small number of culturally specific institutions as evidence of meaningful inclusion. Local communities must also have clear opportunities to shape how they are represented and how cultural programming is developed.

The available archival and official documents for the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival focuses primarily on programs, participating institutions, artists, venues, and attendance. It provides much less information about how local organizations entered the Festival, how partnerships were formed, how resources were distributed, or whether community participants influenced interpretation and decision-making.

These omissions make it difficult to assess the extent of local diaspora participation. The available archival record does not establish whether communities were approached and declined, encountered barriers to participation, organized activities outside the official Festival, or were not considered during planning. An absence from the official program cannot explain why a community was not represented.

The LA84 case also shows the limits of using the presence of several culturally specific institutions as a measure of inclusion. Participation in an official program does not reveal how much authority an institution held, whether it received adequate financial and administrative support, or whether the relationship produced benefits beyond the Festival itself.

For LA28, involving a broader range of culturally specific organizations should be accompanied by clear routes into planning and commissioning. Cultural institutions and organizers will also need to identify which communities are being reached and document the authority and resources available to participating partners. This would allow LA28 to reflect the cultural life of Los Angeles more fully and provide a clearer record of how local communities shaped the program.

Opening ceremony of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, July 28, 1984.

LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

London 2012 placed internationalism and community participation among the stated objectives of its Cultural Olympiad. The UK's bid promised a program that would "champion culture and education alongside sport," celebrate the country's "unique internationalism," and be developed "by and for communities," particularly young people (Garcia et al., 2013). These commitments created a stronger basis for community participation than was evident at LA84. However, the official evaluation does not identify a distinct strategy for diaspora inclusion, and its broader language of internationalism and diversity should not be treated as evidence that diasporic communities consistently influenced the program.

Stories of the World provides the clearest museum-based example of participation: described as the largest youth-participation program undertaken by UK museums at the time, it recruited thousands of young people to reinterpret collections and co-curate exhibitions (Garcia et al., 2013). This approach moved beyond presenting cultures to audiences by giving participants a role in interpretation and exhibition-making. Nevertheless, the summary evaluation provides limited information about participants' backgrounds, the authority they exercised, or the extent to which the program worked specifically with diaspora communities. It is best understood as a significant participatory model with potential relevance to diaspora inclusion. The available evidence does not establish direct diaspora participation.

Other major programs emphasized international and multilingual representation. BT River of Music presented work associated with all 204 nations competing in the Games across six free stages along the Thames. The World Shakespeare Festival's Globe to Globe program presented Shakespeare's 37 plays in 37 languages through companies from 35 countries (Garcia et al., 2013). These initiatives gave substantial visibility to cultural and linguistic plurality, but the available evidence does not establish whether London-based diaspora communities participated in selecting, shaping, or delivering the work. As at LA84, international representation should therefore be distinguished from the inclusion of diasporic communities within the host city.

Audience data offers some evidence that particular programs reached ethnically diverse publics. At Mandala, a free program of visual art, British Asian music, and dance presented in Birmingham and Nottingham, 29 percent of surveyed attendees were recorded as non-White, with notable attendance by people identifying as Indian or Pakistani. At The Big Concert, the corresponding figure was 31 percent, including notable Black African and Black Caribbean attendance (Garcia et al., 2013). These figures indicate ethnocultural reach, but they do not by themselves demonstrate diaspora participation in planning or decision-making. The evaluation's findings that free access and proximity influenced attendance are nevertheless relevant for LA28, as they show how cost and location can affect which communities are able to participate as audiences.

LONDON 2012: LIMITS OF ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

Ank Kumar, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

Despite London 2012's emphasis on participation, the opportunities created through the Cultural Olympiad were not equally accessible to all organizations. Interviewees described official commissioning and funding processes as complex and difficult to navigate, particularly for smaller community-based organizations without established institutional capacity. These accounts suggest that formally open programs may still favor organizations with the staff, experience, and existing relationships needed to secure recognition and resources.

Interviewees also recalled community-led festivals, informal celebrations, and neighborhood activities taking place outside the official Cultural Olympiad. Some considered these initiatives more closely connected to the everyday experiences of London's diasporic communities than larger programs organized around international representation. However, their position outside the official structure may also have limited their access to funding, visibility, and opportunities for longer-term institutional development.

The London 2012 case therefore demonstrates both the possibilities and the limits of a large participatory cultural program. Initiatives such as *Stories of the World* created meaningful roles for participants within museums, while free and locally situated programs reached ethnically diverse audiences. At the same time, the interview evidence indicates that smaller community organizations did not experience access to the official program equally.

For LA28, the case underscores the importance of considering international representation, audience diversity, and open participation alongside the institutional conditions available to community-rooted organizations. Meaningful diaspora inclusion depends on whether these organizations can navigate official processes, obtain resources, and influence the development of cultural programming.

LONDON 2012 TAKEAWAYS FOR LA28

The London 2012 case shows that a large cultural program can create meaningful opportunities for participation, but that broad commitments to diversity and community engagement do not necessarily produce equitable diaspora inclusion. The case offers several lessons for LA28.

Distinguish international representation from local inclusion. Programming featuring artists, languages, or traditions from around the world may reflect the international character of the Games without involving Los Angeles's diaspora communities. LA28 institutions should consider which cultures are represented and whether local communities participate in selecting, interpreting, and producing that programming.

Create substantive roles for participants. *Stories of the World* illustrates how museums can involve participants in researching collections and developing exhibitions. Similar initiatives for LA28 could give diaspora communities meaningful roles in interpretation and program development, provided that their authority, attribution, and compensation are clearly established.

Reduce barriers for smaller organizations. Open calls and participation programs are not equally accessible when application processes require substantial staff time, institutional experience, or existing relationships. LA28 partners should provide clear information, proportionate requirements, technical assistance, and funding pathways suited to smaller diaspora-rooted organizations.

Use free and locally accessible programming. The London 2012 case suggests that cost and location can significantly affect audience participation. Free programming delivered through neighborhoods and familiar community institutions may reach residents who are less likely to attend activities concentrated in major cultural venues or central event sites.

Recognize activity beyond official programs. Community-led festivals and informal cultural activity may engage diaspora communities even when they sit outside the official cultural program. LA28 institutions should identify and support existing community initiatives without requiring them to conform entirely to large institutional models.

Key lesson: Meaningful diaspora inclusion encompasses representation and attendance, access to resources, influence over decisions, and participation in shaping the program.

QATAR 2022 FIFA WORLD CUP

During the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, museums, heritage sites, and cultural spaces across the country welcomed large and internationally diverse audiences. Qatar Museums explicitly treated football fans as a museum audience: its World Cup guide described museums as "the perfect arts and culture break before, after or even in between matches" and promoted exhibitions, public art, parks, and heritage sites across Doha (Qatar Museums, 2022a). This integration of cultural institutions into the wider tournament experience expanded their visibility and accessibility. However, it was directed primarily toward visitors and should not, by itself, be understood as evidence of participation by Qatar's resident diaspora communities.

The 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum provided a prominent connection between the tournament and the country's cultural institutions. Its *World of Football* exhibition used football's global appeal and the journey "to Doha" to connect Qatar's role as host with the international history and culture of the sport. Multilingual audio guides also made the museum more accessible to visitors and residents navigating the exhibition in different languages (3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum, 2022; 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum, n.d.). These measures reduced linguistic barriers, but the available documentation does not establish whether diaspora communities participated in shaping the exhibition or its interpretation.

Qatar Foundation's Education City Fan Experience similarly combined Qatari, regional, and international programming. Its post-event summary describes an accessible program intended for "all members of the local and global community," with entertainment reflecting Qatar and the countries competing at Education City Stadium. Programming included Arabic poetry, art and music, Arabic- and English-language hip-hop, Qatari majlis traditions, and Ardha performances (Qatar Foundation, 2023). This range reflected the international character of the tournament and created opportunities for intercultural exchange.

Qatar Museums' post-event reflection also emphasizes intercultural contact. Staff reported record attendance across museums and heritage sites and described visitors of different nationalities, religions, and languages encountering one another in shared cultural spaces. They also presented museums as places where visitors could learn about Gulf art and heritage and reconsider assumptions about the region (Qatar Museums, 2022c). These reflections provide evidence of audience reach and exchange, but not necessarily of diaspora authority or co-production.

More direct evidence of community participation appears in the Qatar 2022 Cultural Activation Program. FIFA describes its three objectives as establishing new community groups in Qatar, supporting the participation of existing groups, and celebrating the country's cultural diversity (FIFA, 2023). Unlike initiatives primarily intended to welcome international visitors, this program explicitly recognized communities within Qatar as participants in the tournament's cultural life. Its emphasis on strengthening social and cultural networks connected participation to relationships that could continue beyond the tournament.

DIASPORA INCLUSION

The Qatar-MENASA 2022 edition of Years of Culture involved artists and institutions connected to countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Pakistan, and Türkiye—countries whose communities also form part of Qatar's resident population (Years of Culture, 2022). This created opportunities to connect international cultural exchange with communities already living in Qatar. However, programming involving artists or institutions from these countries did not, by itself, establish the participation of their Qatar-based communities.

The project's interviews provide clearer evidence of community involvement. Lana Kayed, a Senior Project Manager at the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, described how organizers joined community Facebook groups to understand existing networks and identify community leaders. Those leaders were invited to help develop community-specific programs and determine how their communities wished to represent themselves during the World Cup. As Kayed explained: **"[Diaspora members and sports fans] were engaged. They were part of the celebration. They were able to draw things that really relate to the fans who are coming from that community or the fans who are following that team. And that's why the offer was that much more authentic and organic."**

This approach gave community members a role in shaping cultural programming and extended their involvement beyond performance or attendance. Interviewees also described artists receiving commissions and institutions developing joint exhibitions with partners from countries represented in the Qatar-MENASA program. Further evidence would be needed, however, to assess how these opportunities and resources were distributed.

Hayya was the digital Fan ID and central information system created for the World Cup. For match-ticket holders, it helped facilitate entry into Qatar and the stadiums and provided access to free public transportation during the tournament. The platform also brought together accommodation, transport, maps, schedules, ticketing information, and updates about activities taking place across the country (Hayya, n.d.; FIFA, 2023).

Tasnim News Agency, CC BY 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

Cultural programming was incorporated into this wider system. Interviewees involved in the platform's development described access to information as a practical challenge during the tournament: residents and visitors needed to be able to find cultural activities while navigating matches, fan zones, transport routes, and other events. Including cultural listings within a platform that audiences were already using made those activities easier to discover. This widened access to programming, although it did not necessarily give communities greater influence over program content or the distribution of resources.

FIFA reported that more than 1.4 million fans came to Qatar and that entertainment events drew more than 530,000 attendees each day during the tournament (FIFA, 2022). In this context, cultural institutions had to consider what they presented and how audiences would find and reach it. The Qatar 2022 case therefore points to two distinct dimensions of inclusion: digital infrastructure helped residents and visitors navigate the cultural program, while direct engagement through existing community networks gave some communities a role in deciding how they would be represented.

QATAR 2022 TAKEAWAYS FOR LA28

The Qatar 2022 case shows how community engagement can be built into cultural planning for a mega-event. Its most relevant lessons for LA28 come from the methods used to find community leaders, involve them in shaping programs, and make cultural activities easier to navigate during a crowded event.

Begin with the networks communities already use. Organizers joined community Facebook groups to learn how communities in Qatar were connected and identify people active within those networks. LA28 institutions could begin in a similar way by learning where communication and cultural activity already take place, including through neighborhood groups, cultural associations, faith organizations, social media, and informal networks.

Give communities a role in deciding how they are represented. Community leaders involved in Qatar 2022 were invited to help develop programs and determine how their communities wished to present themselves. For LA28, consultation should begin while themes, commissions, and formats are still being developed, so that community input can affect the final program.

Create funded opportunities for artists and community partners. Qatar-MENASA programming included commissions and partnerships with artists and institutions connected to communities represented in Qatar. LA28 museums and cultural organizations should ensure that participation includes paid commissions, production support, and appropriate recognition for the knowledge and work communities contribute.

Connect cultural programming to the systems audiences already use. The Hayya platform placed cultural listings alongside transport, maps, schedules, ticketing information, and other World Cup services. LA28 cultural activities should be visible through the main digital tools used to plan journeys and navigate the Games. This will be especially important for programs taking place across different neighborhoods and institutions.

Plan for relationships that continue after the event. The Qatar 2022 Cultural Activation Program aimed to support existing community groups, establish new ones, and develop social and cultural networks with value beyond the tournament. LA28 partnerships should be designed with a clear path for continued collaboration, including future commissions, shared programs, and relationships between cultural institutions and community organizations.

Key lesson: Engage local diaspora communities directly. Embassies, national houses, and visiting institutions can contribute important cultural programming, but they may present official or nationally framed accounts that do not fully reflect the experiences of people living in the host city. By finding community leaders through existing local networks and asking communities how they wished to represent themselves, organizers developed programs grounded in their perspectives. For LA28, international partnerships should be complemented by direct collaboration with Los Angeles communities from the countries and cultures being presented.

PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

The Paris 2024 Cultural Olympiad adopted formal goals concerning audience diversification and participation across France. Its official evaluation covers 2,596 labelled projects and identifies two central aims: to "diversify the publics for culture, art and sport" and to "engage all territories in France and overseas." Seventy percent of projects were free, 65 percent of activities took place outside Paris and the Île-de-France region, and programming reached nine French overseas territories (García, 2024). These measures broadened the geographic reach of the Cultural Olympiad, although territorial distribution alone does not establish the participation of diaspora communities.

The Cultural Olympiad included several programs concerned with migration, colonialism, and belonging. Its official evaluation identifies exhibitions on Olympic and Paralympic history at the Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration and the Panthéon. It also records a Ministry of Culture call that funded 20 projects in French overseas territories and a Nuit Blanche program involving collaborations with those territories (García, 2024). These initiatives reflect different histories and communities and should not all be classified as diaspora inclusion. The overseas programs are more appropriately understood within the Cultural Olympiad's wider territorial and postcolonial context unless the evidence establishes the involvement of diaspora communities living elsewhere in France.

The clearest diaspora-related example was *Olympisme, une histoire du monde* (*Olympism: A History of the World*) at the Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration. The exhibition examined Olympic history through colonialism, racism, segregation, gender parity, geopolitics, and the experiences of exiled athletes who became champions. Its location within France's national museum of immigration placed migration and displacement within the public history of the Games (Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration, 2024). This was an important curatorial intervention, but the available evidence is clearer about the exhibition's subject matter than it is about the involvement of diaspora communities in its development.

Several Cultural Olympiad projects in Seine-Saint-Denis focused on local history, neighborhood identity, and public perceptions of the department. The evaluation cites projects intended to help audiences discover or revisit the area's history and heritage, change how local communities were perceived, and present young residents in a more positive light. Organizers saw cultural programming as a way to influence how residents and visitors understood Seine-Saint-Denis and the people who live there (García, 2024).

This place-based work is relevant to diaspora inclusion because Seine-Saint-Denis is home to communities shaped by migration and connections across countries. Even so, the demographic diversity of a neighborhood does not make every project within it a diaspora initiative. The available documentation would need to show which communities participated, what authority they held, and how they contributed to the stories being told. The Paris 2024 case therefore provides clear evidence of migration-focused curatorial framing and neighborhood-based cultural programming, while offering less information about direct participation by diaspora communities.

The Paris 2024 case also shows how public gathering spaces became part of the cultural experience of the Games. The City of Paris reported more than 3.8 million cumulative visits to the Parc des Nations and Club France in the 19th arrondissement. The Parc des Nations brought together 15 National Olympic Committees, whose national houses presented food, music, performances, exhibitions, and other public activities associated with their countries (Ville de Paris, 2024; Le Monde, 2024b).

These houses created visible spaces for international cultural exchange and may have attracted people with personal or family connections to the countries represented. However, they were organized through National Olympic Committees and reflected forms of national presentation developed for the Games. The available evidence does not show how diaspora communities living in Paris participated in selecting or presenting their content. National houses can provide a meeting place for diaspora publics, but their presence should not be treated as evidence that those communities influenced how their cultures were represented.

Africa Station, organized separately in L'Île-Saint-Denis, offered free access, concerts, conferences, food, and screenings of Olympic events. Its location brought this programming close to communities in Seine-Saint-Denis and created a public gathering place connected to African cultures during the Games (Le Monde, 2024c). The available documentation indicates local relevance and accessibility, although it provides less information about the role surrounding communities played in developing the program. The presentation of many African countries and cultures within a single program also raises questions about whose perspectives were included and how cultural differences were represented.

The composition of Games-time audiences helps explain the emphasis on free and public-facing programming. The City of Paris estimated that 11.2 million people visited Paris during the Games period: 44.6% were residents of the Paris region, 12.5% were domestic tourists, 15.2% were international tourists, and 27.7% were day visitors.

Ji-Elle, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

The Cultural Olympiad used free entry, outdoor spaces, and venues across the city and surrounding regions to reach this mixed audience (Ville de Paris, 2024; García, 2024).

These formats made cultural activities visible to people who might not have planned a museum visit during the Games. They also created opportunities for residents and visitors to share the same public spaces. Audience access, however, tells us little about who held authority within the programs. The Paris 2024 case provides clear evidence of migration-focused interpretation, geographic reach, and public cultural access. The available evidence is less clear about whether local diaspora communities participated in commissioning, curating, or deciding how they would be represented.

PARIS 2024 TAKEAWAYS FOR LA28

The Paris 2024 case offers lessons on connecting cultural programming with migration histories, neighborhoods, and public space. It also shows why broad geographic reach and visible international programming should be accompanied by clearer opportunities for local communities to shape what is presented.

Include migration and displacement within the public history of the Games. *Olympisme, une histoire du monde* connected Olympic history with colonialism, racism, segregation, exile, and migration. LA28 museums could similarly use their collections and exhibitions to examine how migration has shaped sport, Los Angeles, and the communities participating in the Games.

Develop programs through neighborhoods as well as major cultural institutions. Projects in Seine-Saint-Denis used local history and heritage to address perceptions of the area and its residents. For LA28, neighborhood-based programming can give communities space to present their own histories and draw visitors to parts of the region that may sit outside the main Olympic and cultural corridors.

Make cultural programming visible in public space. Free events, outdoor programs, and activities in spaces not ordinarily used for cultural events helped the Cultural Olympiad reach residents, day visitors, and tourists. LA28 institutions should consider how exhibitions, performances, and community programs can extend beyond museum buildings and become part of how people move through the city during the Games.

Connect national houses with Los Angeles communities. National and Olympic houses can introduce audiences to the cultures of participating countries, but their programs may reflect official national priorities. LA28 organizers should create opportunities for Los Angeles communities connected to those countries to contribute their own perspectives, host activities, and help shape how their cultures are presented.

Track participation as well as attendance. The Paris evaluation provides extensive information on the number, location, cost, and reach of Cultural Olympiad projects. It offers less detail about who made decisions within individual programs. LA28 evaluation plans should record the roles communities hold in planning, commissioning, interpretation, and delivery, along with attendance and geographic reach.

Key lesson: The Paris 2024 case shows how a cultural program can place migration histories and culturally diverse neighborhoods within the public story of the Games. For LA28, the next step is to connect that visibility with community authority, giving Los Angeles communities a role in telling those histories and shaping how their neighborhoods are presented.

LOOKING AHEAD AT LA28: CROSS-CASE FINDINGS

The four cases provide different forms and levels of evidence about diaspora inclusion. The LA84 case documents the participation of several culturally specific institutions but offers limited information about community authority or access to resources. The London 2012 case demonstrates the potential of co-curation and open participation structures, although its evaluations do not consistently identify participants as members of diaspora communities. The Qatar 2022 case provides the clearest evidence of organizers working directly through resident-community networks. The Paris 2024 case connects cultural programming with migration history, territorial participation, and public access, while leaving some questions about the influence of local diaspora communities.

Taken together, the cases point to five dimensions that museums and cultural institutions should consider when planning for LA28.

1. Representation

Cultural programming can give visibility to the histories, practices, and contemporary experiences of diaspora communities. The cases also show that international representation does not necessarily reflect the perspectives of communities living in the host city. The LA84 case featured visiting artists and international productions alongside a limited number of locally rooted cultural institutions. The Paris 2024 case combined national houses with exhibitions addressing migration, colonialism, exile, and race. These formats served different purposes and should not be treated as equivalent forms of diaspora representation.

For LA28, institutions should distinguish among official national presentations, visiting international programs, and programs developed with Los Angeles communities. Each can contribute to the cultural program, but local communities should have a role in determining how their histories and cultures are presented.

2. Participation and authority

Participation ranged from attendance and performance to co-curation, commissioning, advising, and program delivery. The London 2012 case shows how museums used co-curation and youth programs to involve participants in interpreting collections, although the available evidence does not consistently establish whether these participants represented diaspora communities. The Qatar 2022 case offers more direct evidence: organizers entered community networks, identified local leaders, and invited resident communities to help determine how they would represent themselves during the tournament.

For LA28, consultation should begin early enough for community partners to influence program concepts, interpretation, artist selection, delivery, and evaluation. Institutions should also define which decisions community partners can shape and how disagreement will be addressed.

3. Institutional relationships

Existing community organizations can provide cultural knowledge, trusted relationships, communication networks, and access to participants who may have little connection to major institutions. The Qatar 2022 case demonstrates the value of identifying community leaders through the organizations and online spaces that communities already use. The London 2012 case also shows that smaller organizations may struggle to enter official commissioning and funding structures, even when a cultural program is publicly committed to participation.

LA28 institutions should begin building relationships with diaspora museums, neighborhood cultural centers, archives, artists, faith organizations, and informal networks before programs are finalized. These partners should receive appropriate funding, attribution, and administrative support.

4. Access and resources

The cases identify several practical conditions that shape participation: cost, language, location, transportation, scheduling, digital information, application requirements, and organizational capacity. Free events, outdoor programs, neighborhood venues, and activities near major celebration sites widened opportunities for audiences to encounter cultural programming. In the Qatar 2022 case, the Hayya platform connected entry requirements, transportation, accommodation, and event information within a shared digital system. London's experience showed that open participation structures could widen involvement while formal funding and commissioning requirements still presented barriers for smaller organizations.

For LA28, access planning should include multilingual communication, free or affordable programs, transit-connected venues, family-friendly formats, and clear digital information. Funding and contracting processes should also account for the capacity of smaller organizations. Audience access should be accompanied by commissioning processes that smaller community partners can enter and sustain.

5. Continuity

The available evidence concerning long-term benefits is uneven. The Qatar 2022 Cultural Activation Program sought to strengthen community groups and cultural networks alongside the delivery of tournament programming (FIFA, 2023). The London 2012 case documents efforts to build cultural capacity and partnerships, although smaller organizations experienced uneven access to official opportunities (García et al., 2013). The longer-term effects of the Paris 2024 case remain under evaluation (García, 2024).

LA28 institutions should determine from the beginning what participating communities and organizations will retain after the Games. Possible outcomes include continuing partnerships, future commissions, acquisitions, employment, training, strengthened archives, and access to new audiences or funding. Evaluation should document these outcomes alongside attendance and program totals.

Key lesson:

The cases show that cultural diversity within a program does not, by itself, establish diaspora inclusion. The clearest evidence of inclusion appears when locally rooted communities can influence how they are represented, participate in planning and delivery, receive resources for their work, and maintain institutional relationships beyond the event.

For museums and cultural institutions preparing for LA28, this means:

- establishing relationships with diaspora-rooted organizations early;
- creating defined roles for community participation and decision-making;
- compensating partners for their knowledge, time, outreach, and creative work;
- reducing financial, administrative, linguistic, and geographic barriers; and
- planning for relationships and benefits that can continue after the Games.

OPEN QUESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The sources reviewed do not use a common definition of diaspora inclusion. The LA84 case emphasizes international and cross-cultural programming; the London 2012 case focuses on internationalism and community participation; the Qatar 2022 case refers to cultural diversity, accessibility, and local and global communities; and the Paris 2024 case emphasizes audience diversification and territorial reach. Comparison therefore requires interpretation. International programming, culturally specific institutions, diverse audiences, and activities in immigrant neighborhoods may be relevant, but none automatically establishes diaspora participation.

The available evidence is clearer about programs, venues, attendance, and stated objectives than it is about community authority, funding, or long-term benefits. Formal attendance data disaggregated by migration background or diaspora affiliation is limited, and nationality or broad racial and ethnic categories cannot serve as reliable substitutes. Official reports also tend to reflect institutional perspectives. The project's interviews add practitioner accounts for the London 2012, Qatar 2022, and Paris 2024 cases, but they do not represent every community or organization involved. The LA84 case relies more heavily on available archival and publicly accessible documents.

The timing of evaluation presents a further limitation. The Paris 2024 evaluation was completed soon after the Games and describes its findings as an initial account of impact. Its longer-term effects on institutions, neighborhoods, partnerships, and participating communities will require continued study through 2025–2030. Findings concerning the legacy of the Paris 2024 case should therefore be treated as provisional (García, 2024).

DIASPORA INCLUSION: INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING WORKSHEET

Questions for institutional discussion	Notes and decisions
1. Understanding the communities involved • Which diaspora communities have existing relationships with our institution, collections, programs, or surrounding neighborhood? • How do these communities describe themselves, and are we relying on labels they may not use? • Which community organizations, artists, cultural practitioners, faith groups, informal networks, and online spaces should inform our planning? • Whose perspectives might be missed if we work only through our existing institutional contacts?	
2. Representation and authority • What aspect of a community's history, culture, or contemporary experience is the program proposing to present? • Who will decide how the community is represented? • At what stage will community members become involved? • Which elements of the program will community partners be able to shape or change? • Are we presenting an official national account, a local diaspora perspective, or several perspectives? • If an embassy, consulate, national house, or visiting institution is involved, how will local communities contribute, if at all?	

DIASPORA INCLUSION: INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING WORKSHEET

Questions for institutional discussion	Notes and decisions
3. Participation, resources, and access • Are community partners being invited to advise, co-curate, commission, perform, host, interpret, or make decisions? • Will artists, community leaders, and organizations be compensated for their time, knowledge, outreach, and creative work? • Could contracting requirements, application processes, insurance, or short timelines exclude smaller organizations? • Will programs be affordable, multilingual, physically accessible, and reachable by public transportation? • How will residents find the program? Will the program be visible through the digital platforms, calendars, and communication networks already used by the community? • What support will community partners need to be bale to participate on equitable terms?	
4. Continuity and accountability • What should participating communities and organizations retain after LA28? • Could the partnership lead to future commissions, exhibitions, acquisitions, employment, training, or shared programs? • How will community partners raise concerns or request changes? • How will the institution assess whether communities had meaningful influence? • What will be documented beyond attendance, including compensation, authority, partnerships, and longer-term benefits?	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum. (n.d.). 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum. https://321qosm.org.qa/en/

3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum. (2022). World of Football: More about the exhibition. https://321qosm.org.qa/en/calendar/world-of-football/more-about-the-exhibition/

Agunias, D. R., & Newland, K. (2012). Developing a road map for engaging diasporas in development: A handbook for policymakers and practitioners in home and host countries. International Organization for Migration and Migration Policy Institute. https://publications.iom.int/books/developing-road-map-engaging-diasporas-development-handbook-policymakers-and-practitioners

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35(4), 216–224. https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225

Brubaker, R. (2005). The "diaspora" diaspora. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 28(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/0141987042000289997

FIFA. (2022). Fan experience. https://inside.fifa.com/tournament-organisation/world-cup-2022-in-numbers/fifa-world-cup-qatar-2022-fan-experience

FIFA. (2023). Cultural events series. FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Final Sustainability Report. https://inside.fifa.com/tournament-organisation/world-cup-2022-sustainability-report/social-impact/cultural-understanding/cultural-events-series

García, B. (2008). One hundred years of cultural programming within the Olympic Games (1912–2012): Origins, evolution and projections. International Journal of Cultural Policy, 14(4), 361–376. https://doi.org/10.1080/10286630802445849

García, B. (2024). Cultural Olympiad evaluation: Paris 2024. Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games Organising Committee. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/64d11ec5a9dd7e4e83dac000/t/683ee84d9daaea35cfe21147/1748953177385/Paris2024-RAPPORT-OLYMPIADE-CULTURELLE_ENG.pdf

García, B., Cox, T., & Crone, S. (2013). London 2012 Cultural Olympiad evaluation: Executive summary. Institute of Cultural Capital. https://www.beatrizgarcia.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Garcia2013London2012COEvaluation-Summary.pdf

Hayya. (n.d.). FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. https://business.hayya.qa/en/event/fifa-world-cup

International Organization for Migration. (2019). Glossary on migration (International Migration Law No. 34). https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iml_34_glossary.pdf

KH Consulting Group. (2025). Participatory mapping study: Executive summary. County of Los Angeles. https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/ceo/ardi/1202071_ParticipatoryMappingStudy-ExecutiveSummaryofComprehensiveReport-Final_Designed_.pdf

Le Monde. (2024a, April 21). Les Jeux olympiques, une antique tribune géopolitique. https://www.lemonde.fr/m-le-mag/article/2024/04/21/les-jeux-olympiques-une-antique-tribune-geopolitique_6229017_4500055.html

Le Monde. (2024b, July 29). Paris 2024: Where are the foreign delegations' Olympic houses? https://www.lemonde.fr/en/sports/article/2024/07/29/paris-2024-where-are-the-foreign-delegations-olympic-houses_6704154_9.html

Le Monde. (2024c, August 5). Paris Olympics: The "Africa Station" fan zone knows how to party. https://www.lemonde.fr/en/france/article/2024/08/05/paris-olympics-the-africa-station-fan-zone-knows-how-to-party_6709657_7.html

Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee. (1985). Official report of the Games of the XXIIIrd Olympiad, Los Angeles 1984: Volume one, part two—Olympic Arts Festival. https://www.antenna-theater.org/antest/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/1984OlympicsArtsFestival_LA.pdf

Marks, R., Jacobs, P., & Coritz, A. (2023, September 21). Lebanese, Iranian and Egyptian populations represented nearly half of the MENA population in 2020 Census. United States Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/09/2020-census-dhc-a-mena-population.html

Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration. (2024). Olympisme, une histoire du monde: Dossier pédagogique. https://www.histoire-immigration.fr/accompagnement-pedagogique-des-expositions/olympisme-une-histoire-du-monde-dossier-pedagogique

Paris je t'aime. (2024). Paris 2024 Games: The Cultural Olympiad. https://parisjetaime.com/eng/article/cultural-olympiad-paris-a871

Qatar Foundation. (2023). Qatar Foundation's World Cup story: Welcoming the world—Executive summary. https://stories.qf.org.qa/world-cup/welcoming-the-world/

Qatar Museums. (2022a, November 20). A football fan's guide to Qatar Museums. https://qm.org.qa/en/stories/all-stories/football-fans-art-culture-guide/

Qatar Museums. (2022b). Qatar Museums' Years of Culture 2022 showcases and supports the artists and people of the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA). https://qm.org.qa/en/press/press-releases/qatar-museums-years-of-culture-2022-showcases-and-supports-the-artists-and-people-of-the-middle-east-north-africa-and-south-asia-menasa/

Qatar Museums. (2022c). When the world came to town: The view from Qatar Museums. https://qm.org.qa/en/stories/all-stories/reflecting-on-fifa-world-cup-qatar-2022/

Simon, N. (2010). The participatory museum. Museum 2.0. https://participatorymuseum.org/read/

Ville de Paris. (2024). Paris 2024 Games: 11.2 million visitors to Greater Paris! https://www.paris.fr/en/pages/paris-2024-games-11-2-million-visitors-to-greater-paris-28160

Years of Culture. (2022). Qatar-MENASA 2022. https://yearsofculture.qa/editions/qatar-menasa

IMAGE SOURCES

Jllm06, CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:California_African_American_Museum_sign.JPG

Revisorius, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Los_Angeles_Memorial_Coliseum_Olympic_Statues.jpg

Ank Kumar, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:London_2012_Cultural_Olympiad_Carnival_(Ank_Kumar)_07.jpg

Tasnim News Agency, CC BY 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2022_FIFA_World_Cup_opening_ceremony_4.jpg

Ji-Elle, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cit%C3%A9-Immigration3.jpg

U.S. Air Force, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Opening_ceremony_of_the_1984_Olympics.jpg