

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**ROBBEN ISLAND MUSEUM ACKNOWLEDGES OPEN DAY EXPERIENCE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Tuesday, 25 September 2018**



*[Caption: Visitors experiencing a tour of the Maximum Security Prison at the Robben Island Museum (RIM) Open Day 2018. Picture courtesy of RIM]*

In its third year, Robben Island Museum (RIM) hosted an Open Day on Heritage Day and welcomed 1528 local visitors, this was 9% more than the 1 400 visitors received in 2017. The increase in visitors was an overwhelming and impressive response from South Africans to experience the island.

“We wish to acknowledge and apologise to our community for the manner in which the crowds were managed this Heritage weekend, we appreciate the enthusiasm South Africans have displayed in experiencing our tour. RIM’s management is reviewing all the feedback received and commit to improving not only our ability to offer an excellent visitor experience but maintain our commitment to making Robben Island as accessible to as many South Africans as possible,” said Morongoa Ramaboa, spokesperson for RIM.

RIM is aware that some visitors were unable to participate in the tour due to an increased demand on Heritage Day. RIM is committed to ensuring that those visitors who won tickets in our Open Day competition and met RIM's entry requirements will experience the tour in the future. RIM wishes to assure the public that management is reviewing internal procedures to increase capacity to handle a high demand and to streamline the ticket and boarding process.

The Open Day was one of the many initiatives that aim to make it easier and accessible for South Africans to visit and learn more about the Island's rich heritage and to experience the natural beauty of the World Heritage site.

The public was invited to enjoy this Heritage Day in the company of RIM by celebrating the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. For those who experienced the trip for the first time, it was a chance to share in the values of the island as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage site and the ways in which historical, cultural and environmental diversity can be celebrated.

Many of the visitors were excited to be able to experience the tour and the Islands' history on Heritage Day. When visitors arrived they were welcomed by tour guides on the Island some of which are also ex-political prisoners who were incarcerated in Robben Island's maximum security prison, along with many other South African struggle Heroes. RIM tour guides vividly narrated the Island history, including their time in the prison and the struggle for freedom and equality.

"As part of our public heritage education efforts, we really believe that by encouraging wider community participation in Robben Island we have a chance to share and preserve our rich cultural heritage with all South Africans," said Morongoa Ramaboa, Spokesperson for RIM. "Due to the significant number of people who wanted to visit Robben Island Museum, the full tour needed to be shortened to accommodate more people. We would have loved to welcome more people to join in on the experience and this is affirmation for us that there is a need for more days like these."

To continue its Heritage celebration RIM is offering a 20 percent discount for the rest of this week as part of South African Tourism's [Sho't Left Travel Week](#) Campaign.

For more information on Robben Island Museum visit their [website](#) or follow them on Facebook [www.facebook.com/robbenislandDAC/](http://www.facebook.com/robbenislandDAC/), Twitter [https://twitter.com/robben\\_island](https://twitter.com/robben_island) and Instagram [https://www.instagram.com/robben\\_island/](https://www.instagram.com/robben_island/).

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Media contact:

Fatimah Davids

Mobile Number: 081 349 0327

[fatimah@reputationmatters.co.za](mailto:fatimah@reputationmatters.co.za)

For Media Enquiries:

Morongoa Ramaboa

Robben Island Museum Spokesperson

[morongoar@robben-island.org.za](mailto:morongoar@robben-island.org.za) | 083 465 5118

### **More information about Robben Island Museum**

Robben Island Museum (RIM) is a public entity responsible for managing, maintaining, presenting, developing and marketing Robben Island as a national estate and World Heritage Site. It was established by the Department of Arts and Culture in 1997.

RIM implements a wide range of conservation, educational, tourist development, research, archiving and general heritage programmes that are designed to achieve its mandate; conserve the Island's natural and cultural resources and heritage; and promote it as a platform for critical debate and life-long learning.

RIM is also responsible for managing and maintaining the assets of the Island. These include the Maximum and Medium Security Prison Complexes, Robert Sobukwe's House, the Curio and Village Shops, the Village Precinct and associated recreational facilities, the Helipad and runway on the Island, World War 2 memorials, power generation and water processing plants, Jetty 1 and the Nelson Mandela Gateway at the V & A Waterfront, the Mayibuye Archives, the three (3) ferries that transport people to the Island and the fleet of buses used by tourists on the Island.