

## Case Study: International Engagement

### ***Museum Partnership Program in the Pacific***



#### *Pacific Partnerships*

Since 2005 a number of Australia's museums, including the Australian Museum, Museum Victoria, the National Museum of Australia, the Powerhouse Museum, Queensland Museum and the South Australian Museum, have developed close working relationships with museums in Papua New Guinea and Pacific Island communities including Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands as part of the ICOM Museum Partnership Program. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has facilitated grants for this project which were provided by the National Museum of Australia and AusAid.

The nations in question are greatly concerned that migration, urbanisation and the influx of foreign cultural influences accompanying globalisation are eroding cultural identities and contributing to civil unrest. Museums in the Pacific are keepers of national stories and custodians of the region's cultural heritage and as such play a unique role in the maintenance and strengthening of cultural identity and stability in the region.

Work under the partnership has included the repatriation of secret and sacred objects, capacity building with Pacific museum staff on conservation and curation, the creation of databases, the exchange of information and objects and the development of tools (such as an Intangible Cultural Heritage Field Kit) with which to record, protect and promote Pacific cultural heritage.

Image above: Kava Bowl, Samoa E91440, Australian Museum