
Corporate Plan 2018–20

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2018–19 to 2020–21.

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Introduction from the Chief Executive

The British Council is the United Kingdom’s international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

The world is experiencing an era of major change in economics and technology, politics and society. The growth of Asian economies has taken more people out of poverty than ever before in history. There has been a rise in extremism, conflict and instability, and international migration continues to increase. Digital technologies and relationships mean that wherever you are, you can access international art, music and literature. The rules-based international system is being asked to adapt as differing views of norms, behaviours and values are posing questions for liberal market economies.

The UK itself is at a critical moment in its history as it prepares to leave the European Union. It has some of the greatest cultural resources on the planet and is a global leader in arts, science, technology, education, creative industries and civil society. We are home to 16 of the world’s top 100 universities¹ and because of our excellence many world leaders have studied here. The international success of our creative industries helps define the UK as an open and innovative nation as well as adding billions to our economy. Our language connects us to the world and connects the world to us in a way few other nations can aspire to. As the UK repositions itself in the world it is our soft power and cultural relations that will help sow the ground for our future security, prosperity and influence.

As the British Council, we believe that by sharing our strongest cultural assets, we create opportunities, build connections and engender trust between people, organisations and institutions in the UK and overseas. This in turn creates the basis for the friendly knowledge and understanding of the United Kingdom our predecessors aspired to when the British Council was first established.

In the current context of change and uncertainty, the British Council’s steadfastness of purpose and our commitment to mutually beneficial and respectful relationships between the UK and countries around the world matter more than ever. Our history has shown that it is at times such as these that we can achieve the most as we help to reaffirm and strengthen the UK’s international and cultural connections.

This Corporate Plan updates the strategy we set out in 2016. We are not making any major adjustments and our strategic priorities remain the same. We will develop new and deeper connections with fast-growing and strong economies, including China and India. Using our expertise and drawing on that of our UK partners, we will support countries whose education systems are under pressure from fast-changing demographics, such as Pakistan, Egypt and Colombia. We will build education and cultural partnerships with the countries of the European Union. Although we have been asked to cease operations in Russia, our commitment to the development of people-to-people links in the longer term remains.² We also remain committed to the development of long-term partnerships with countries that neighbour Russia. In fragile environments and in response to the Syrian crisis we will use the UK’s expertise to build the resilience of young people and help them manage the risks, hazards and stresses they face in building their countries’ futures. We will continue to support international opportunities and connections for UK young people, organisations and cities, and project a global and outward looking United Kingdom, reflecting the diversity between and within our four nations.

While face-to-face engagement remains central to our work, our ability to reach out and engage with large numbers, especially of young people, through social media and online learning is ever more

1. QS rankings 2018: <https://www.topuniversities.com>

2. In the current political environment, the British Council in Russia has been told to cease operations. It is our view that when political or diplomatic relations become difficult, cultural relations and educational opportunities are vital to maintain ongoing dialogue between people and institutions and we remain committed to the development of long-term people-to-people links with Russia as we do in over 100 other countries.

important. Digital technology will also help us to drive improvements and efficiencies in the way we work internally and with partners.

We are taking the necessary actions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the British Council as our income, funding sources and market conditions change.

Firstly, we continue to grow and diversify our surpluses so that we can keep on reinvesting funds back into a broad portfolio of cultural relations activity and achieve greater impact for the UK. Over the next two years we will invest at least £25 million per annum of that surplus into funding our programmes and operations, particularly in the developed world.

Secondly, we are accelerating efficiency plans across our ways of working and our overheads. Over the past year we have reduced our UK headcount by around 17.5 per cent and we will continue to look at how best to leverage shared services, outsourcing and co-funding.

We are also embedding our results and evidence framework to ensure we focus only on activities that drive our mission most strongly and represent value for money.

We are grateful to the UK government for the grant-in-aid funding we receive, which is important to deliver our mission across the world. The portion of our funding that is directed towards official development assistance (ODA) continues to increase. This uplift will enable us to strengthen our work in Africa, support new programmes in the creative and social economy in East Asia and achieve positive social change through our work in the arts. We welcome the government's recent decision to provide additional funding to support our non-ODA work. This is necessary to ensure we remain on a sustainable footing until the end of the

Spending Review period in March 2020. The funding will be used alongside our reinvested commercial surpluses and partner resources to sustain our work in the developed world and to showcase UK arts. It will mean our unrestricted budget for non-official development assistance (ODA) work will average approximately £50 million per annum over the next two years, down from £74 million in 2016–17.

While operationally independent and guided by our Charter, we will continue to contribute to the priorities of UK and devolved government departments. We will work closely with a range of partners across the UK, opening up opportunities for them and helping them achieve their international objectives. The value we bring derives from our global reach and networks, our convening power and ability to broker relationships and connect individuals and organisations. We will continue to draw on the excellent advice and support we receive from our external advisory committees. The coming year will see a Tailored Review of the British Council which provides us with an opportunity to demonstrate the ever improving impact, effectiveness and efficiency of our work.

At the heart of our operations remain our partners and staff worldwide. The impact we have is because of them and their tireless work to deliver outstanding projects and cultural relationships with the UK, sharing the best of the UK's cultural and educational practice with the world and vice versa. It is also our staff who are guiding us through a period of rapid organisational change. We will continue to support them and build the capability of the British Council to help a global Britain build a world which is better, safer and more prosperous.

Sir Ciarán Devane
Chief Executive, British Council

Our purpose

We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries.

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust. This enhances the security, prosperity and influence of the UK and, in so doing, helps make the world a better, safer place.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Last year we engaged with over 65 million people directly and reached 731 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body.

We combine strategic alignment to the UK's long-term foreign policy priorities with the long-standing principle of operational independence in our work. This is important for our impact in building trust for the people of the UK globally and is in keeping with our legal status as a charity.

The Royal Charter which governs our work sets out the objects for which we exist. These are: '[to] advance for the public benefit any purpose which is exclusively charitable and which shall:

- a.** promote cultural relationships and the understanding of different cultures between people and peoples of the United Kingdom and other countries
- b.** promote a wider knowledge of the United Kingdom'
- c.** develop a wider knowledge of the English language
- d.** encourage cultural, scientific, technological and other educational co-operation between the United Kingdom and other countries, or
- e.** otherwise promote the advancement of education'



Our strategy

Impact and focus.

Our strategy has been developed in consultation with UK and devolved government departments, with UK sector partners and with stakeholders overseas. It is framed to deliver our purpose and support the following UK and international policy objectives:

Influence and attraction: we contribute to the UK's international influence and attraction in the world by building mutually beneficial connections and long-lasting relationships between the people of the UK and countries we work with.

Prosperity and development: we contribute to UK and global prosperity by building trust, connections and skills, which create favourable conditions for growth and development.

Security and stability: we make a lasting difference to the security of the UK and to stability worldwide by building long-term, peaceful and respectful relationships between the people of the UK and people worldwide and by creating opportunities, strengthening young people's resilience and improving governance in fragile and conflict-affected states.

The specific UK and devolved government objectives that we support are included in Appendix B.

Our strategy has four objectives

From an external perspective we will:	
<p>1. Strengthen impact and focus in our priority areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the UK's influence and prosperity in the world through stronger relationships with India, China and other high-growth developing and developed economies. Building education and cultural partnerships with countries of the European Union. Strengthening long-term connections and relationships with the next generation in Russia and neighbouring countries. Supporting stability and security in priority countries in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Responding to the refugee crisis in Syria, Iraq and neighbouring countries. Creating international opportunities and connections for young people in the UK. 	<p>2. Improve the experience of our customers, stakeholders and partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving our customer and market research, analytics and insight to better understand our audiences' views and preferences so that we can develop services, products and communications that are relevant to them. Using this insight we will build stronger, more effective relationships with our customers and stakeholders so that they understand our work and value, and seek to engage with us in longer-term mutually beneficial relationships.
From an organisational perspective and to ensure we deliver the above, we will:	
<p>3. Ensure financial sustainability and help fund developed country operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and diversifying income and surplus. Improving our operational efficiency. 	<p>4. Transform the British Council by investing in people, systems and culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the capability and effectiveness of our people. Creating a digitally enabled organisation. Strengthening our insight, research and evidence base.

As with last year’s Corporate Plan there are four organisational principles that underpin this strategy and guide our work.

Sustainable	Impact led
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income exceeds costs. • Improved commercial decision making. • Contributing around £25 million surplus per annum to grant-type activities in the developed world over the next two years. • Smaller, simpler offer. • Clear thematic and geographical priorities. • Partnership embedded in our work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting from the perspectives of customers and stakeholders. • A consistently good customer experience. • Easy to do business with. • Driven by the market, not our internal structures. • Improved evaluation.
Agile	Professional and specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitally enabled. • Standardised and simple structures and processes. • Faster decision making. • Embracing change. • Continuously learning and improving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to support and influence national and international agendas. • Strong commercial and digital capability. • Right skills in the right place. • Commissioning more through specialist partners. • Professional back office.

Measuring impact

To measure our impact and the results of our work we have placed a new framework at the centre of our planning and reporting, with a focus on eight result areas. We combine data on our customers with high-quality analysis and independent evaluation of the impact of our major activities and programmes.

This evidence is aggregated and published alongside our research and surveys to show how we deliver against our corporate outcomes and purpose and how we benefit the UK and the countries in which we operate.

Aligned to priorities	Influence and attraction	Prosperity and development	Security and stability
Purpose statement	Using the cultural resources of the UK, we create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries.		
Corporate outcomes	Create opportunities Lives are transformed through English, education, skills, qualifications, arts and culture.	Build connections Stronger cultural relationships between the UK and countries worldwide.	Engender trust Increased trust and understanding between people in the UK and people worldwide.
Eight result areas	Arts People's lives are enriched by arts and culture and cultural heritage is valued.	English Good English teaching helps people to study and work and to develop careers, confidence and networks.	Higher education and science People in tertiary education and research institutes get access, partnerships, training and collaboration which contribute to more prosperous, sustainable and equitable societies.
	Young people Young people have the skills, resilience and networks to find pathways to better lives.	Civil society and justice Citizens interact with states in ways which encourage collaboration and create stable societies that work better for people.	Testing and assessment Students and professionals get internationally recognised UK qualifications for study, life and work.
			Skills and enterprise People have the skills to be employable and to build inclusive and creative economies which support stable and prosperous societies.
			Women and girls Women and girls participate in, and benefit from, decision making and social change.

External context and strategic challenges

Our strategy takes into account a number of external factors and strategic challenges.

Brexit: as the UK leaves the European Union, the UK government's vision is to maintain a close and special partnership with the countries of Europe and for the UK to develop a stronger international role and profile, expanding partnerships and ties with nations around the world. Through our work we will continue to build cultural and educational relationships with the countries of Europe and across the world.

Growth of China, India and other emerging economies: the economies of China and India continue to grow at a rapid rate and there is significant growth in countries such as Nigeria, Turkey and Indonesia. Cultural relations provide a pathway to building closer ties with high-growth developing economies in a way that complements traditional methods of export promotion.

Security, stability and preventing violent extremism: in fragile and conflict-affected states across the Middle East, Africa and South Asia, the ability of violent extremist and terrorist groups to attract support creates risks for the UK and the countries directly affected. Cultural relations can help to tackle the economic, social and civil risk factors that can lead to violent extremism.

Refugee crisis and migration: the long-term crisis in Syria and Iraq means that at least four million young refugees in the region are vulnerable and at risk. Cultural relations help to build tolerance, understanding and resilience and help young people gain new skills through education, including English, which offer positive livelihood opportunities. In addition, challenges of climate change, conflict and poverty in parts of Africa and Asia mean many more young people seek a better life abroad. Through our education and cultural programmes we contribute to longer-term objectives to strengthen opportunities and provide young people with a credible choice to stay closer to their homes.

Devolution of power: devolution is now an established and important feature of our political landscape within the UK. The devolved administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales set the legislative and policy frameworks in key areas, including education and culture. Cities are also assuming greater responsibilities over economic and cultural affairs. Similar trends are reflected in the rise of global city networks (100 Resilient Cities, C40 network and the Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Network, among others). Cultural relations help to create a more nuanced understanding of the diversity of the UK and build international connections at city, regional and country level across the UK.

Growth of digital communication: by 2020 over 50 per cent of the global population will be connected to the internet, opening up new opportunities for cultural relations. Digital communication is providing new platforms and products to interact, learn and scale up networks that reach millions more people. The rise of social media and digital connectivity is also reshaping global politics, society and economics, placing increased importance on building trust and lasting relationships.

Finance and business context: in many of our core markets we are seeing greater security, economic and foreign exchange risks and there is increased competition in the English teaching and exams business areas. As the UK moves to leave the EU, there remains uncertainty in relation to our European funded portfolio of programmes.

Influence and attraction

We contribute to the UK's international influence and attraction in the world.

Context

The UK's influence on global affairs and its ability to form strong links with other nations relies on the strength of its relationships with decision makers, influencers and opinion formers around the world. These strong connections are built upon mutual collaboration, and the UK's reputation as a champion of internationally shared values: nurturing prosperity, expanding education, reinforcing security, and inspiring creativity.

Delivery

Our programmes will inspire and enhance positive relations and increase access to the UK's knowledge, ideas and culture. The British Council's artistic seasons and festivals, our promotion of UK education, qualifications and professional skills, English language teaching, leadership and scholarship programmes and our work in support of the GREAT Britain campaign combine to bolster the reputation of the UK as an innovative, diverse and creative nation.

We will continue to support the UK government's ambition for a global Britain and the international objectives of the devolved governments. This will include building cultural and educational relationships with European nations, as well as stepping up engagement with the next generation of leaders globally to establish lifelong relationships with the UK. We will continue to work closely with all four departments of education on programmes that provide opportunities for undergraduates from England,

Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to teach English abroad and bring modern language assistants to the UK to help improve language skills in UK schools.

The connections we build between people around the world and across the UK are associated with an enhanced willingness to trust the country and its people. In a study of ten strategically important countries, the average level of trust in the UK was 16 per cent higher among those who had participated in cultural relations activities, and 24 per cent higher for those who had participated in British Council activities, compared to those who had not engaged in cultural relations.³

Trust manifests itself in a greater likelihood to visit, study and do business with the UK. Our research has shown it also passes between generations as families pass on their connections with the UK to their children, with clear benefits to the country's reputation and soft power. Recent research also highlighted that engagement in cultural relations through the British Council is associated with an increased knowledge and understanding of the nations and regions of the UK.⁴ The percentage of respondents who had knowledge of Wales, for example, was 70 per cent among those who had been involved in cultural relations with the British Council compared to just 23 per cent among the group who had not been involved in any cultural relations activity with the UK.

The examples on the following pages are for illustrative purposes and show the impact we expect to deliver by country, region and result area.

3. British Council (2012) *Trust Pays*.

4. Survey of 18–34 year olds in the G20 (2016): fieldwork by Ipsos MORI, analysis by In2Impact. Previously unpublished results. Data excludes responses from the UK, USA, South Africa, Canada and Australia. Sample size: 14,009.

China: a strategy for mutual understanding and partnership

Operating in China as the Cultural and Education section of the Embassy, we will work closely with stakeholders across the UK and China to strengthen the bilateral relationship and strategic engagement in culture and education. Convening British Embassy partners, we will develop a new cross-Whitehall five-year strategy on **higher education and skills** which supports China’s own agenda for internationalisation. Core drivers of our work will be two-way mobility programmes, commitments to social mobility, gender diversity and women’s economic empowerment which addresses career stereotyping among **women and girls**. Under the bilateral Cultural Exchange Agreement, we will promote connections through **the arts**, and build new opportunities in the creative industries sector. We will also bring together a cross-Whitehall partnership to take forward a new UK/China senior leadership engagement programme, building connections which will drive mutual understanding, co-operation and prosperity well into the future.

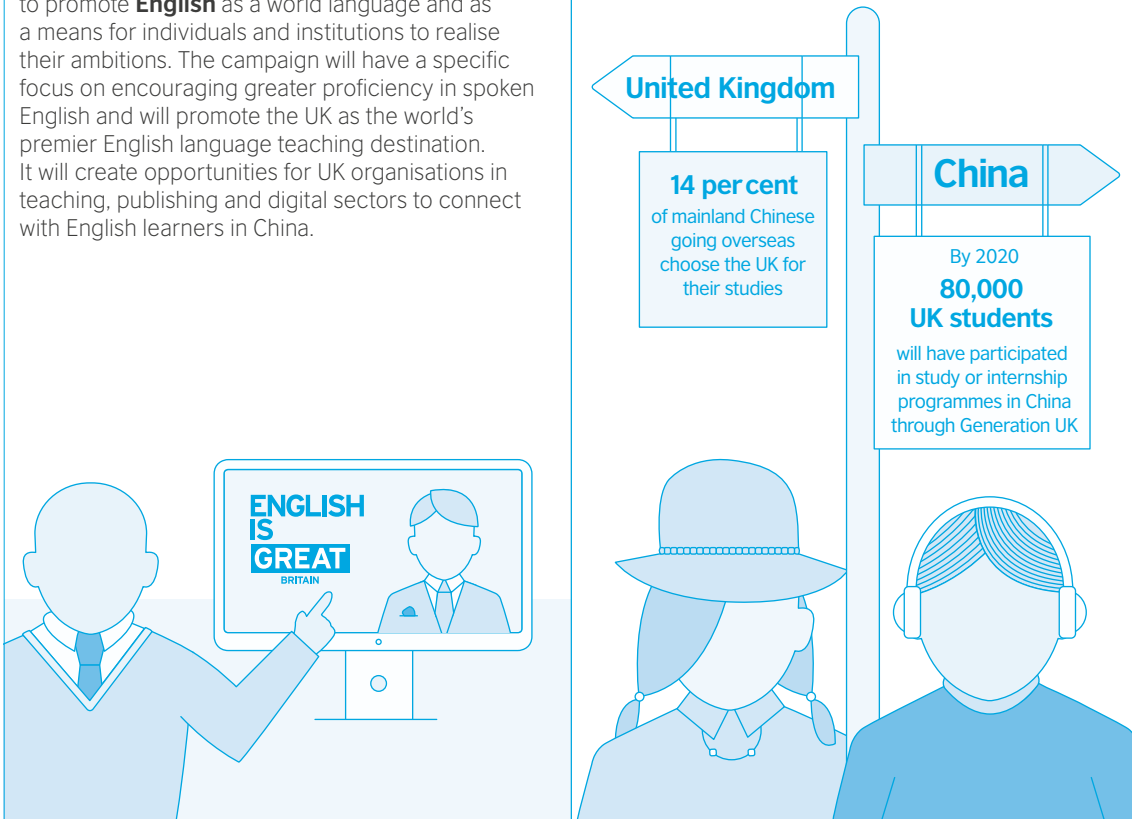
Promoting the UK as China’s partner for English

During the Prime Minister’s visit to China in early 2018, the launch of a new campaign – English is GREAT – was announced. The British Council will work with government and other stakeholders, to promote **English** as a world language and as a means for individuals and institutions to realise their ambitions. The campaign will have a specific focus on encouraging greater proficiency in spoken English and will promote the UK as the world’s premier English language teaching destination. It will create opportunities for UK organisations in teaching, publishing and digital sectors to connect with English learners in China.

Creating opportunities for young people in the UK and China

The British Council’s Generation UK–China programme will develop a new generation of globally mobile, culturally agile **young people** from the UK who can compete successfully in an increasingly borderless marketplace. The campaign is supported by the Department for Education (DfE) and by the Northern Irish, Scottish, and Welsh administrations, support that focuses specifically on boosting social mobility through internships. The DfE has committed to increasing funding for the programme from 2018–19 which will double the number of opportunities for Generation UK–China internships.

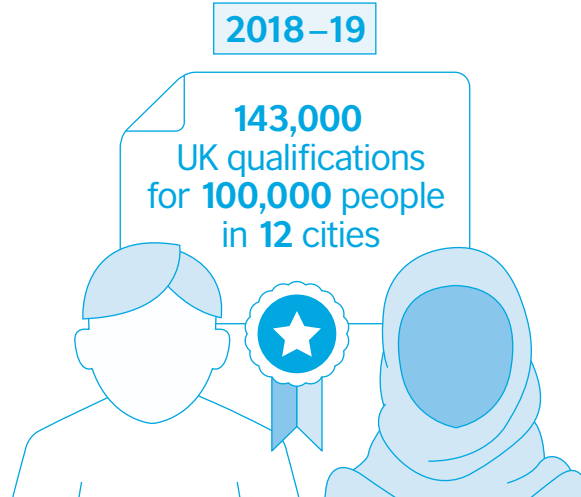
China represents the largest market for international students studying in the UK, contributing over £3.5 billion to the UK economy annually. In the highly competitive international higher education sector, our education marketing campaigns such as Study UK help maintain our market share.



Saudi Arabia: building partnerships for collaboration

As partners in the UK’s Gulf strategy, we will make a positive contribution to Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 through capacity building projects in **education and culture**, delivered with UK expertise. We will support aspirations for work, travel and study and teach **English** to 21,000 students. Saudi and UK scientists will continue to work together in joint research initiatives.

We will continue to support the creation of a more open and inclusive society by inspiring and empowering girls through our sports leadership programme. Our Gulf-wide Art in the Public Realm programme will increase engagement and appreciation of the arts. We will also commission and share new research into the emerging Saudi cultural scene, opening up opportunities for many more UK organisations to connect with Saudi Arabia’s emerging artists.



Europe: helping to shape a new relationship with the UK

The British Council is at the forefront of the cultural relations dialogue shaping the UK’s new relationship with Europe in **education, science, arts and culture**. Following the EU referendum result, and our own 2017 EU–UK Culture and Education Series, we are working with influential figures in culture and education, listening to our partners’ hopes and concerns, and reflecting these back to the UK government and institutions across the EU.

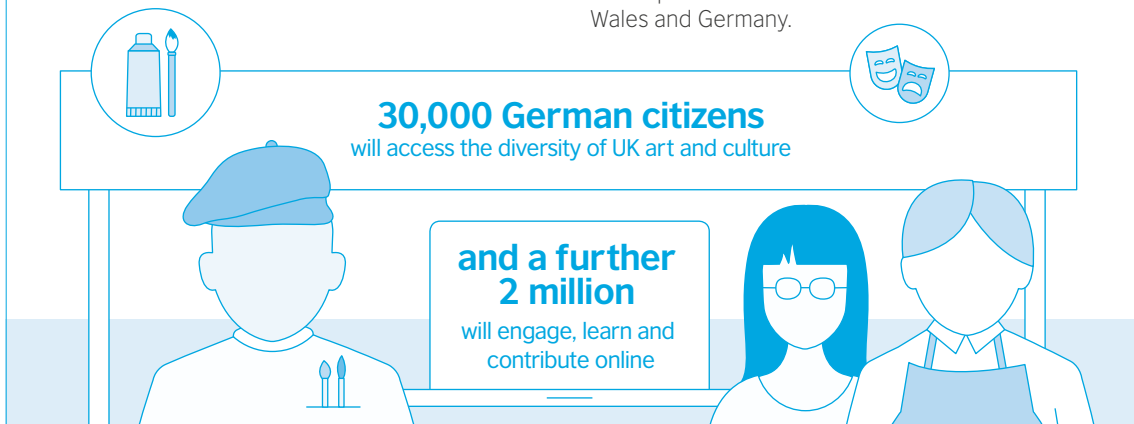
Celebrating long-term relations with Poland

Our 80th anniversary year in Poland in 2018 will be used to develop sustainable connections in **science, innovation and education** through high-level summits and exchange programmes. The anniversary starts with the launch of a specially commissioned collection of essays on the contemporary British–Polish relationship. A parallel **arts** programme focused on diversity and inclusiveness will reach over 100,000 people face-to-face and 400,000 through digital media.

Strengthening cultural relationships with Germany

British Council research has revealed the negative impact of the decision to leave the EU on young people’s perceptions of the UK in Western European countries, including Germany.

The UK–Germany 2018 season will counteract this by strengthening long-standing cultural relationships between the two countries and forging new connections. The season will include a Welsh Performing Arts Festival in Dresden to celebrate and explore the cultural connections between Wales and Germany.



Arts: showcasing the UK’s creativity

We work with some of the most exciting and emerging artists and arts organisations from across the four nations of the UK. We raise their profile across the world, showcasing UK arts to a diverse global audience, helping to increase the economic value of our partnerships. In 2016, the UK cultural and creative sector made up 12.2 per cent of the UK’s total exports to the world. Cultural and creative organisations make up seven per cent of the total foreign direct investment (FDI) into the UK.

Building on the success of the UK–Korea Season, we will continue to use seasons and festivals in targeted countries to forge new connections and relationships between the UK and other countries. Our showcasing work includes a range of centrally managed programmes such as the Venice Biennale, the Edinburgh Showcase, the UK City of Culture and the Outburst Queer Arts Festival. Large-scale digital

programmes, including digital storytelling and live streaming of events are important elements of our seasons and festivals and wider showcasing work. By providing audiences worldwide with experiences of UK arts and building connections between international and UK arts organisations, we enhance the reputation of the UK worldwide and contribute towards the UK’s influence and attraction in the world.

With our non-ODA grant declining, we will work with our stakeholders and partners to ensure we are maximising the resources and opportunities for our work in the arts.

English: the power of language and UK qualifications

The power of language is recognised as an important component of soft power. Our own research shows that the strongest predictor of trust in the UK is a person’s ability to speak **English**.

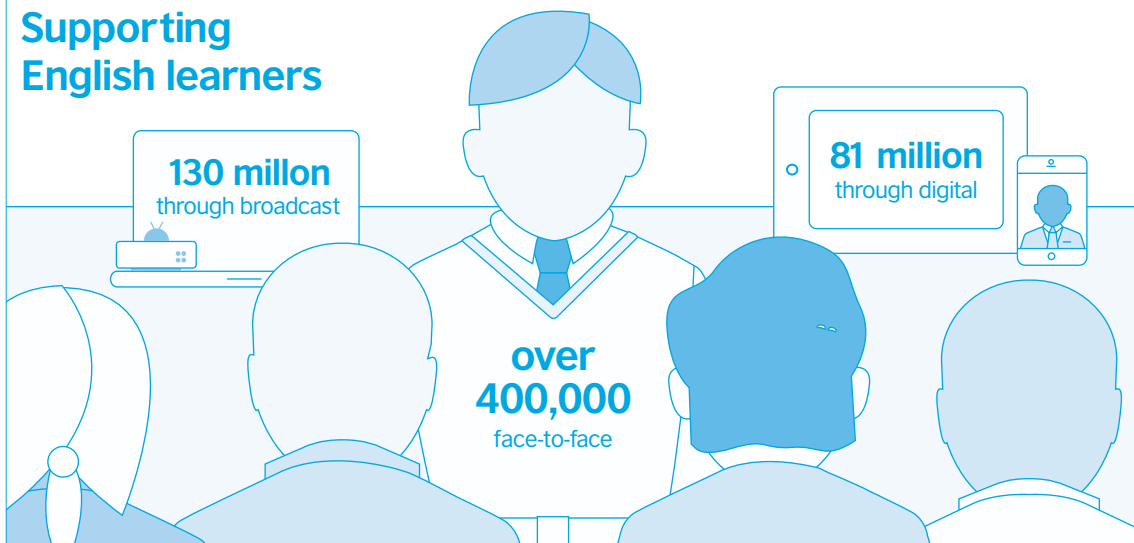
In 2018–19 we will work with education ministries, policymakers, donors and UK partners to improve the quality of English teaching worldwide and support young people with life-changing opportunities to open doors to international study and enhanced career opportunities.

We continue to invest in our network of teaching centres, expanding our reach into new markets and developing new blended digital learning and self-access products to respond to market demand.

We will generate value for the UK by working closely with the UK English language teaching sector on international opportunities. The sector is worth approximately £3 billion to the UK economy each year.

The British Council partners with UK exam boards and awarding bodies to bring their qualifications to international markets. Widely recognised and respected UK qualifications change people’s lives for the better by increasing their opportunity to study or work abroad or in their own countries. This provides positive associations with the UK and our education system and generates almost £100 million per annum for UK exam boards. We expect to provide exams for around four million candidates in 2018–19.

Supporting English learners



Prosperity and development

We contribute to UK and global prosperity by building trust, connections and skills.

Context

India, China and emerging markets across the world continue to grow and develop with ever increasing influence on the global stage. There are substantial mutual benefits from close co-operation with these countries. This work will support long-term growth and development globally, and complements the government's ambition for a truly global Britain.

Delivery

We will deliver programmes predominantly in developing and emerging economies that give people the skills they need, including digital literacy, enhancing their employability prospects and supporting the development objectives of the countries where we operate. We will build stronger connections with the UK and provide international opportunities for a range of UK organisations from the sectors in which we work.

Our programmes in this area include working with schools and ministries of education to help improve the quality of classroom teaching and deliver better education outcomes. We build research partnerships and wider collaborations between higher education institutions in the UK and around the world. We develop the skills of young people and marginalised groups, including through the English language and the creative and social enterprise sectors. We deliver major programmes which give access to justice to help support sustainable prosperity and growth.

We work in partnership to open up connections and opportunities for the UK. On Creative Europe Desk UK, for example, we work with the British Film Institute (BFI) in all four nations of the UK. With support from Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, the Welsh Government and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) we provide advice and support to UK-based applicants from the arts and creative sectors who are looking to build international connections.

We are working to build and strengthen relationships between UK cities and cities globally through exchange, partnerships, projects and forums to support growth, share expertise and showcase culture. Our ambition is to embed international cultural relations at the heart of city growth, strategy and planning, leading to cities being more creative, open, diverse and prosperous. We are working closely with Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 and Manchester in England to test new ways of working with cities, as well as with cities in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

In all we do, we focus on quality. Over 90 per cent of the programmes that we manage on behalf of the Department for International Development (DFID) have received an A rating or higher, meaning they are delivering positive impact.⁵

The examples on the following pages are for illustrative purposes and show the impact we expect to deliver by country, region and result area.

5. Based on 2016–17 data.

India: supporting stronger relationships with the UK

We will support the educational and economic ambitions of 16 states across India and a cluster of eight north-eastern states through access to **English, skills development** and international co-operation in **higher education and science**.

We will support the economic and educational participation of **women and girls** through bespoke **arts**, leadership, education and English projects.

We will partner with technology providers and national and state governments to use mobile and digital platforms to inspire **young people** across India to connect with UK ideas and innovation.

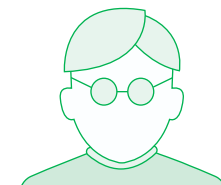
Over the next five years we aim to:

- improve opportunities for 100 million young people through access to the English language, creativity, sport, UK ideas and education
- support the ambitions of two million people to study or work overseas
- help 500,000 people improve their job prospects by improving their English and employability skills.

Improving people’s careers through English

We have been commissioned by the government of Andhra Pradesh to deliver an innovative pilot project, English Skills for Employability. As a result of this project, employers will have access to a skilled workforce of young talent, with internationally benchmarked levels of spoken **English** proficiency, which they can match to the needs of specific roles and job types.

English Skills for Employability



100,000
college students



With the potential to reach
1.7 million
young people

Sub-Saharan Africa: strategy for partnership in enterprise, skills and education

The growing youth population is one of the most significant factors for the future prosperity of Sub-Saharan Africa. We are creating opportunities and enabling **young people** to develop their social, creative and professional networks and widen their skills base to improve their employability.

We will prioritise investment in **higher education** programmes because of the significant demand from the sector; and in **skills and enterprise**, given the importance of the employment challenge. We will do this through partnerships between UK and African organisations. This includes, for example, working on an after-school coding programme through the Micro:bit Educational Foundation to enhance digital literacy, especially among **women and girls**. We are also responding to the high-growth potential of creative sectors through our **arts**

programme where we will connect young arts leaders in the UK and Africa with the skills, networks and opportunities they need to contribute to the social and economic development of their societies.

We have a strong and growing portfolio of programmes involving UK **qualifications, sport, schools, English, governance and civil society**. These latter programmes encourage collaboration among and between communities and improve access to **justice** and the rule of law.

Given the significant opportunities for the UK, we will invest increased levels of official development assistance resources in francophone and lusophone Africa, as well as Ethiopia, Sudan, Nigeria and South Africa.

Nigeria: strengthening the enabling environment for prosperity

We have significant experience in managing large-scale **justice** and peacebuilding programmes through our work with DFID. Building on this experience, we will manage two new EU contracts in Nigeria beginning in 2018–19. They will help build a stronger rule of law, creating a platform for UK business investment and trade with Nigeria as well as stimulating interest in UK law and legal services.

Over their lifetime, the programmes will reach over 2.25 million beneficiaries and see us work with over 70 civil society organisations, traditional rulers and community leaders, international non-governmental organisations and federal and state bodies and governments.

Education and science: strengthening collaboration with the UK

In the area of **higher education and science** we deliver the Newton Fund, a partnership with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. This programme enhances the quality of UK science through research partnerships with other countries.

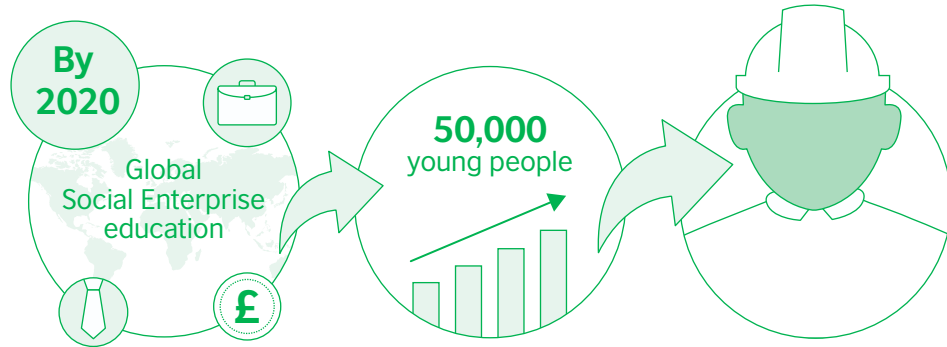
This contributes to science and innovation capacity in those countries and helps alleviate poverty, making advances in areas such as renewable energy, disaster risk reduction, disease prevention and control, and sustainable urbanisation.



Sustainable development: promoting the UK’s leadership in social enterprise

We promote the development of social entrepreneurship through mutual learning and the sharing of knowledge and best practice to help address entrenched social and environmental problems.

We engage with governments around the world to influence policy and embed the teaching of **social enterprise** into education systems, boosting the UK’s reputation as a world leader in the field.



Supporting creative and social enterprises

We are launching a major new programme that will promote sustainable and inclusive development in the UK and five emerging economies (Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan and South Africa). The programme will be co-designed and co-delivered by UK sector organisations working with counterparts

in these countries. It will develop enterprises that contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth and focus on unemployment and under-employment of **young people**, particularly women, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups.

Women and girls: increasing participation in society

We work to improve the skills, confidence and life chances of women and girls through education, by providing opportunities for self-expression and greater participation in society and through supporting institutions to address inequalities and reduce discrimination.

Strengthening economic, social and cultural development

In South East Asia Crafting Futures develops creative and design skills for female artisans and designers, linking cultural heritage with ethical business innovation. The projects help to increase the participation of women in developing economies. By 2020, we will have supported 1,600 **women and girls** in four countries to improve their lives, as well as helping 200 female leaders develop skills to influence social change and address gender inequalities. We plan to expand the project into South Asia and Latin America.

Supporting girls in education

Through the Take a Child to School campaign we have supported more than 90,000 girls and 135,000 boys to enrol in primary schools across 65 districts of Pakistan, which has the second highest number of out-of-school girls in the world. Over 15,000 young volunteers have been trained as agents of change, running door-to-door awareness campaigns and 3,000 community members sit on 'neighbourhood committees' and collaborate with schools, the local education department and within communities to address barriers to school enrolment including specific barriers to girls' education.

The programme recently won the Bond International Development Collaboration Award which recognises effective relationships and partnerships within and across sectors to tackle difficult issues. Under phase 2, the British Council and consortium partners aim to scale up the retention and monitoring of the children who enrolled during phase 1. We will secure the enrolment of an additional 200,000 out-of-school children (aged five to 11 years) across 70 districts in Pakistan by December 2019, with a ratio of 40 per cent girls and 60 per cent boys.

In Egypt we will work with Cairo University to develop systems and approaches to improve the safety of campus and enable students, particularly women, to be free from sexual harassment and gender based violence (SGBV). This EU-funded project will strengthen the anti-harassment unit of the university to deal with cases and engage with more than 300,000 students and 400 staff to take action to prevent and respond to SGBV by 2020.

Celebrating creativity and strengthening networks

Over the last three years the British Council has partnered with Women of the World (WOW) on major festivals in South Asia including Kathmandu, Colombo and two festivals in Karachi, involving 20,000 women to date. WOW was launched by the Southbank Centre in 2010, and in 2018–19 the British Council plans to hold partner events in Nepal, Bangladesh and Brazil.

In preparation for the festival in Rio, we are working with women's groups from 40 vulnerable communities to ensure that the festival reflects the concerns and interests of women. The festival will draw in artistic talent from the UK and Rio, providing the opportunity for women to debate issues relevant to their lives, showcase their creativity and creative entrepreneurship, and celebrate their achievements and potential. Outcomes of the festival will include a map of initiatives and resources for women in Rio, and strengthened networks of female-run non-governmental organisations and groups across the city and state.



involving 20,000 women
across major festivals in South Asia including:
Colombo, Karachi and Kathmandu

Creating opportunities and building confidence

Through our Premier Skills programme, a partnership with the Premier League, we are creating opportunities for women and girls to participate in football and benefit from increased confidence and life skills. More than 50,000 girls have participated in Premier Skills since September 2016 in 12 countries and close to 30 per cent of our coaches across the programme are women. By 2019 we will have reached a further 110,000 girls.

Security and stability

We make a lasting difference to the security of the UK and to stability worldwide.

Context

The ability of violent extremist and terrorist groups to attract support in fragile and conflict-affected states across the Middle East, Africa and South Asia creates risks for those countries as well as for the UK and its people. Political, economic and social turbulence continues in and around Ukraine. Syria's refugee crisis and instability in other parts of the world is a factor in increased global migration. Important cultural sites and heritage are often the first and easiest victims of conflict and instability.

Delivery

Our work builds long-term, peaceful and respectful relationships between the people of the UK and people worldwide. It helps individuals by providing positive futures for young people, improving their skills, employability and life chances. It helps communities and countries by strengthening civic institutions, good governance and civil society; supporting economic and social development; and encouraging

new ways of seeing and experiencing the world through debate, dialogue and the arts. It helps reconciliation by providing safe public spaces to explore alternative perspectives and promote social cohesion.

Working in fragile or conflict-affected environments, we draw upon UK skills and best practice to provide the tools and support that enables people to come together and work constructively, within partnerships and coalitions, for the good of communities, citizens and wider society. This builds trust and relationships globally and helps societies to become more inclusive, stable and have fewer tensions. The value of cultural relations in addressing the root causes of violent extremism was highlighted in the report by the All Parliamentary Group for the British Council published in November 2017: *Building Young People's Resilience to Violent Extremism in the Middle East and North Africa*.

The examples on the following pages are for illustrative purposes and show the impact we expect to deliver by country, region and result area.

Middle East and North Africa: voice and opportunity for young people

Our priority in the Middle East and North Africa is to create opportunities for the huge youth population, many of whom are unemployed, to build positive pathways to economic independence and self-fulfilment, and to find legitimate outlets to express themselves and create positive social change. We will contribute to greater stability by building individual and community resilience in conflict-affected states, supporting economic and social development through UK partnerships, and enriching people’s lives in the region and the UK through cultural exchange and the development of **knowledge and skills**. We will support the development of more inclusive institutions that encourage greater participation in peacebuilding and decision making by **young people, civil society and women**.

Strengthening the resilience of young people at risk

The British Council’s Strengthening Resilience 2 project follows a successful pilot scheme. The €12 million programme, funded by the European Union, will address the vulnerabilities which **young people** face (including recruitment by violent extremists), and strengthen their ability to ‘survive and thrive’. The programme will work with over 10,000 young people, developing their skills to engage and participate in their communities. It will foster positive social networks and allow young people to communicate their experience locally, nationally and regionally. There will also be a focus on developing the leadership skills of 1,000 young leaders and ‘self-starters’, helping them take advantage of opportunities for themselves and create opportunities for others, supporting the development of youth-led civil society organisations. By the end of the programme the approach will be embedded in the policy and programming of partner governments and the results and evidence of what works will be shared with the World Bank and stakeholders in the UK and Europe.

Supporting young people and peacebuilding

Aswat Faeela (Active Voices) is a programme which has built a network of over 20 self-sustaining Syrian youth community groups in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Europe. It has trained over 450 **young people** to conduct community-based research and advocacy, and developed small-scale projects to address the challenges in peacebuilding, social cohesion and economic recovery at grassroots level. Project stakeholders have been active participants in the formal and informal peace processes, contributing to the global commitments under UN Security Council Resolution 2250 that young people should be participants in building sustainable peace in their societies. The project will seek to influence the Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region in April 2018. Future funding rounds will extend the geographical reach into different parts of Syria, building a network of youth peacebuilders across the country.

More than
3,000
young Syrians
have participated



Peacebuilding and reconciliation: sharing international learning

Marking the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement in April 2018, we are working with Queen’s University Belfast, Ulster University, Belfast City Council and other partners on Peace and Beyond. This is a major international conference in Northern Ireland bringing together 400 practitioners, academics, policymakers and young leaders from over 20 countries with a focus on the UK, Ireland, South Africa, Lebanon, the Western Balkans and Colombia.

The conference will encourage new thinking and research in the field of peacebuilding and reconciliation and give delegates the opportunity to visit examples of ‘active’ peacebuilding throughout the city of Belfast.

The role of women and young people will be explored alongside the unique impact made by artists, theatre makers, musicians and cultural professionals in Northern Ireland’s peace process.

Ukraine: the UK as a partner of choice

We will continue to support Ukraine’s ambitions for international partnership and will maintain the UK as a partner of choice for the country in reforming its **education system** and revitalising its **cultural sector**.

We will use the UK’s experience and resources to address the educational, societal and cultural consequences of the current conflict in Ukraine, for example by supporting the 17 universities displaced from Crimea and the Donbas and by reaching hundreds of teachers and learners within non-government controlled territories by digital means.

A common thread throughout all of our work will be a focus on helping **young people** in all of Ukraine gain wider views of the world, engage with their own communities, develop the skills they need for life, and become familiar with rules-based societies.



Building the leadership of young Ukrainians

The British Council’s Active Citizens programme in Ukraine has already worked with more than 40,000 **young people** since 2014, supporting 76 partner organisations to promote intercultural dialogue and community-led social development, realised through more than 700 social action projects in all parts of the country. In 2018–19 we will equip young leaders across Ukraine with new skills, so that they can influence and collaborate more effectively with their local authorities to support social cohesion and development in their communities. We will use the Active Citizens model to work with specific audiences affected by the current conflict in Ukraine. In the east we will work with governmental and **civil society** networks of youth centres to support young people who will be vital for the eventual post-conflict reconciliation. In total, we will engage with more than 8,000 people through these intensive face-to-face activities, building trust in the UK and raising awareness of diversity and social activism.

Arts: protecting cultural heritage

The Cultural Protection Fund, managed by the British Council and established in partnership with DCMS, is a unique model that supports heritage organisations working directly with their counterparts in countries in the Middle East and North Africa to safeguard valuable **cultural heritage** and to create opportunities for social and economic development in the region. £17.5 million has been awarded to 32 projects in the first two years of operation. The Fund has been described as ‘best practice’ by cultural

protection professionals, and the British Council is currently working with the UK government to extend the Fund beyond 2020 as demand continues to grow. This project will safeguard cultural heritage at risk of destruction, develop conservation and curatorial skills among local professionals and support community involvement in cultural heritage.

Pakistan: the power of sport to build common ground

DOSTI, which is Urdu for friendship, is a Sports for Peace initiative that uses sport to cut across social and cultural barriers and to help both **young people** and diverse communities in Karachi find common ground.

The goal is to develop individuals as champions of peace within their communities to foster inter-group understanding, tolerance and eventually an appreciation of diversity – and to encourage the uptake of healthy and positive activities such as sports.

DOSTI is open to all young people, irrespective of their skill and ability levels. It has engaged over 12,000 young individuals so far for peacebuilding and community development, providing an opportunity for some to escape lives of abuse and crime as street children.

Creating value for the UK

Our work makes a significant contribution to the UK's long-term international objectives.

The British Council supports the international interests of the arts, education and cultural sectors in the UK and contributes to the priorities of the UK and devolved governments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales (see Appendix B). Our vision is for a UK which is internationally inspired and globally connected. Everything we do seeks to make a lasting difference for the UK. We do this by:

- Enhancing the UK's international standing by increasing the country's influence and networks with key decision makers, influencers and the wider public globally.
- Increasing UK prosperity by creating the connections and supporting conditions that boost trade, investment and tourism.
- Helping keep the UK safe and secure by building trust and peaceful relationships globally, addressing the factors that lead to violent extremism and improving stability and good governance in strategically important countries.

Our work has a strong partnership focus and we work with cities, universities, arts institutions, creative entrepreneurs, artists, schools and social entrepreneurs to help them realise their international ambitions and agendas.

We have five principal aims for our work in the UK:

1. Representing and serving all parts of the UK and the particular interests of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
2. Engaging with cities and supporting their international ambitions.
3. Working with institutions, networks and partners to share the best of the UK with the world and bring learning and insight back to the UK.
4. Ensuring every young person in the UK has intercultural and international experience.
5. Helping enhance the world's understanding of a contemporary devolved UK.

Our work creates benefits directly for UK individuals and organisations that are involved in our programmes. These benefits include:

- Sharing and connecting the UK's cultural and educational resources with the world and giving organisations and individuals opportunities to exchange skills and ideas and build lasting relationships with people in other countries.
- Bringing the best the world has to offer in culture and education to organisations, individuals and audiences in every corner of the UK.

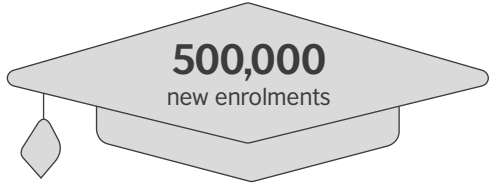
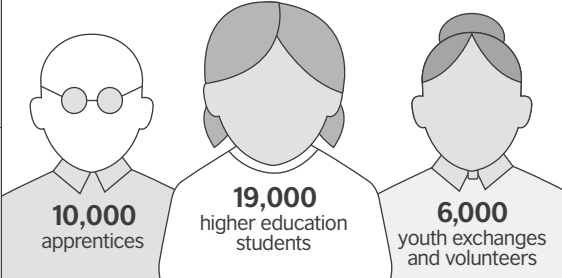
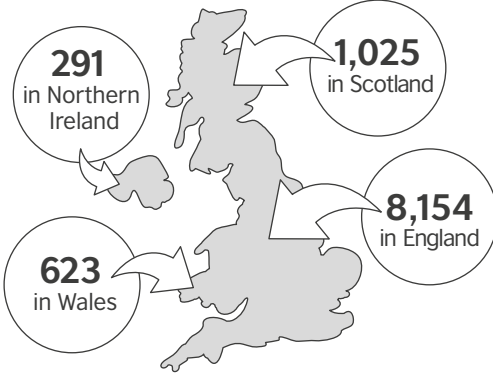
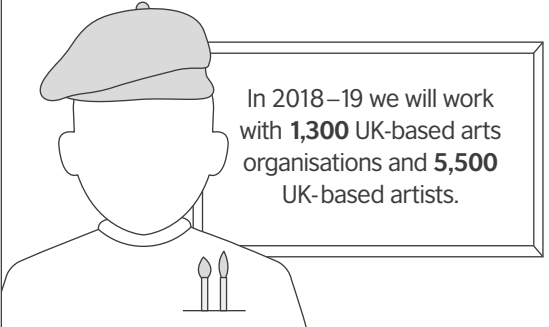


6. British Council (2012) *Trust Pays*.

7. The Erasmus+ UK National Agency is a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK.

8. University UK International's *Gone International: Mobility Works*.

9. Gross value added is a measure of the economic value of goods and services produced in an area. It is defined by the Office for National Statistics as '...the difference between the value of goods and services produced and the cost of raw materials and other inputs which are used up in production.'

Some examples of the benefits of our work to the UK are shown below.

<p>Encouraging young people to study in the UK</p>  <p>Working with the sector, the British Council helps attract higher education students to the UK contributing to the vitality of academic life in the UK and bolstering the UK's international reputation.</p>	<p>Providing international opportunities for UK young people</p> <p>In 2018–19, through Erasmus+,⁷ we will provide young people with opportunities for study, work, vocational training, youth exchanges and volunteering. Mobility programmes have been shown to boost employability prospects, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.⁸</p> <p>Erasmus+</p>  <p>10,000 apprentices 19,000 higher education students 6,000 youth exchanges and volunteers</p>
<p>Supporting UK schools through international connections</p> <p>Between 2013 and 2017 we worked with 10,093 schools across the UK, supporting the development of young people as engaged global citizens.</p>  <p>By 2020, 5,000 UK pupils will gain fluency in Mandarin Chinese through our Mandarin Excellence Programme in partnership with the Institute of Education.</p>	<p>Providing international opportunities for UK arts organisations</p> <p>We create new opportunities for UK artists and organisations to work internationally and introduce audiences around the world to the best of UK creativity.</p>  <p>In 2018–19 we will work with 1,300 UK-based arts organisations and 5,500 UK-based artists.</p>
<p>Contributing to the UK's soft power</p> <p>Participation in cultural relations activities with the British Council is associated with significantly increased levels of trust in the UK.⁶</p> 	<p>Contributing to the UK economy</p> <p>The work of the British Council leads to a range of economic benefits.</p>  <p>Estimated gross value added⁹ from increased connections and trust with the UK.</p>

Organisational change

Faster change for
greater impact.

The British Council in 2020

Whether we are providing English language programmes to learners, strengthening international opportunities for UK organisations or delivering contracts for governments, we have to give people a reason to choose the British Council.

That means staying ahead of global competitors, working more with partners, delivering value for money and ensuring we engage audiences in ways that are inspiring and relevant to them.

We have five priorities to deliver this organisational change:



Growing and diversifying income and surplus

Helping people learn English and gain valuable UK academic and professional qualifications is central to the British Council's mission. Promoting the English language is enshrined in our charter and is a vital contributor to connections, relationships and influence for the UK around the world. English teaching and exams are also the part of the British Council that generate surplus – the organisation's genuinely unrestricted financial resources. By reinvesting these surpluses back into our work they enable us to maintain a global impact for the UK which is significantly greater than we would be able to achieve if we were solely reliant on government grant. Our operations in the UK and developed world, programmes that directly showcase the UK's arts and culture and free digital content for English language learning are dependent on this funding.

Since 2015 we have been delivering surplus growth across our teaching and exams businesses at approximately 8.5 per cent per annum. With increased competition, risk and slower growth in key markets we are revising these targets downwards to three per cent growth per annum in operating surplus over the next three years.

Our strategy to grow surplus is based on:

- **New product development** – improving the customer experience with digitally enabled products and services, providing new services for UK exams boards, and opening new British Council schools and teaching centres in priority markets overseas.
- **More efficient operations and processes and a stronger commercial business practice** – to support faster decision making we are transferring all reporting lines for teaching and exams into a vertical structure with a single point of global accountability to Director English and Exams.
- **Rationalising our offer** – by 2020 our teaching portfolio will be simplified to 14 products. Teaching operations which are not in the UK's interest or which are not economically viable will be closed.

A valuable UK qualification can be life changing. In response to feedback from exams candidates we have so far enabled online payments in 86 countries so that our customers from Afghanistan to Zambia can register and apply for tests and pay online.

We will continue to develop high-value strategic partnerships with UK and international organisations to co-create initiatives. By working even more in partnership and harnessing the skills and expertise

of others, our programmes will be more innovative and of higher quality and consistency. We will diversify our income through new partnerships across all our work.

The British Council has been responsible for the British presentation at the Venice Biennale since 1937 – the world’s foremost contemporary art exhibition.

We are developing partnerships with individuals and organisations who will become patrons of the British Pavilion. This will enable us to continue to develop and launch the international careers of the UK’s most significant artists and architects, celebrating the best of contemporary practice and the UK’s leadership in the arts.

Through the Art Biennale, the British Pavilion has profiled acclaimed artists including Anish Kapoor, Henry Moore, Richard Hamilton, Steve McQueen and Tracey Emin. Since 1991, through the Architecture Biennale the British Council has commissioned exhibitions by cutting-edge British architectural practices including Adjaye Associates, Foster + Partners and Zaha Hadid.



Improving our operational efficiency

Our corporate overheads: By 2020–21 we are projecting our corporate overheads to reduce by four per cent to £76 million against the 2017–18 baseline. This is after accounting for inflation which is expected to run at 2.0–3.0 per cent over the period.

We will leave Spring Gardens when our lease runs out in 2020 and move to the International Quarter in Stratford, London E20. With a dedicated exhibition and event space, the new global HQ will allow us to showcase the breadth and value of the British Council’s diverse work. Our new offices will inspire and engage our staff and visitors, and represent our values and ambition as a truly global 21st century cultural relations organisation. The move will provide value for money, a more efficient and sustainable environmental footprint and lower annual running costs. Savings against our current premises are estimated at over £30 million over the life of the lease.

In April 2017 we committed to reducing the number of posts in the UK and as a result we have reduced our UK headcount by 17.5 per cent.¹⁰ In 2018 we will continue to explore overhead efficiencies across all of our organisation. We will look for efficiencies and effectiveness gains through the increased use of shared services, developing more efficient global operating models and control of our non-staff costs.

Overseas network: By 2020–21 we are projecting our overseas overheads to reduce by over two per cent to £94 million against the 2017–18 baseline. This is after accounting for inflation which in emerging

markets and developing economies is expected to run at 4.0–4.5 per cent and during a period when our total income continues to grow.

We continue to concentrate regional and professional resources in a limited number of cities as this supports efficient working (see map) and structure regional operations into clusters to increase impact, grow business and deliver further efficiencies. In 2018–19, new cluster models will be developed in the Americas, in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Caucasus and Central Asian republics. We will restructure our non-ODA operations to become less grant dependent. We will develop a long-term Global Estates strategy to deliver efficiencies across our premises worldwide. We will review our structures at regional level to ensure we are deploying the best talent in the right roles without duplication and ensure the right balance between UK-appointed staff and leadership among local staff to maximise impact and value for money.

Ways of working: We are introducing technologies such as Microsoft Office 365 to enable more flexible working, improve networking across locations and reduce the need for travel. The roll out of a new customer relationship management system will professionalise and standardise how we work and manage our relationships with our customers, strengthening customer satisfaction, enabling sales and reducing operational costs. We will continue to drive efficiency through improved procurement and greater consolidation and standardisation in shared services such as HR, finance and analytics.

10. By UK headcount we mean staff located in the UK. Final end of year results will be confirmed in the Annual Report.

Managing grant-in-aid: rebalancing government funding towards the developing world

Government funding for our work continues to increase in the developing world. Over the next two years it will rise from £136 million in 2017–18 up to £160 million in 2019–20. The additional funding will strengthen connections with the UK through new programmes in the arts and in the creative and social economy. It will support entrepreneurship and skills programmes in Africa, and grow our work and the UK's relationships with developing countries that border Russia.

We are working closely with government partners, delivering organisational efficiencies and reinvesting commercial surplus to maximise available funding for our work in the developed world and to showcase the UK's arts and creativity. Nevertheless unrestricted funding¹¹ for this work continues to reduce from £74 million in 2016, to £55 million in 2017 and an anticipated £50 million per annum in the next two years. We will review and agree priorities for this work with UK sector stakeholders and government partners. This will include key areas of delivery in the next two years as well as clarifying the strategic focus beyond 2020.



Creating a digitally enabled organisation

Digital is at the heart of how we operate and engage, transforming impact and how we work while simultaneously improving efficiency and reducing costs. This is evident in our products, people and processes for which we are developing a digital maturity score to track progress. Our digital engagement will increase from 209 million people to 226 million next year.

Products: we are developing leading commercial and cultural relations products with online payment available across the digital estate. User centred design and testing is fundamental to our product development which enables us to adopt and learn from developing technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence.

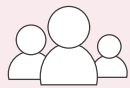
People: we are developing our digital capability with training for staff focused on customer experience and journeys and supporting iterative and agile working. We are developing cross-functional teams using the talent across our global network to ensure the best products and experiences are created. Our Innovation Platform enables staff to upload ideas and initiatives which are peer reviewed and can be linked to an innovation seed fund for prototyping.

Processes: iterative and agile test-learn methods are enabling swift development of ideas into action and implementation. The use of technology is increasingly embedded in our internal processes, driving collaboration and efficient workflows. Robotic Process Automation, for instance, is being used to drive operational efficiency and we are increasingly using data science to improve how we analyse our operations and improve decision making. Partnership is fundamental to our work and we are developing our use of Open Innovation tools, including APIs (Application Protocol Interfaces).

Use of rich media to engage audiences

The British Council's English Channel, which is multi-platform, uses UK arts and lifestyle content to teach the English language through the medium of video. The British Council has partnered with the National Theatre, Scottish Ballet, Time Out and Channel 4 among others to create and curate resources for English learners worldwide. Fifty per cent of visitors surveyed stated they were more likely to go to the UK to study English. We are currently scoping the opportunities of scaling the English Channel into new markets in 2018.

11. Unrestricted funding consists of non-ODA grant plus surplus.



Increasing the capability and effectiveness of our people

Our ability to deliver our plans is completely dependent on the capability and effectiveness of our people. We will continue to invest in building the capabilities of individuals, providing an environment where personal growth is aligned to challenges that we face as an organisation.

Specifically we will strengthen capability in key areas such as, digital, commercial, marketing and data-led decision making. To enable our people we will ensure that our line managers are supported and given the necessary accountabilities.

We will increase the diversity of our talent across the organisation, strengthening career development and pathways and ensuring that we are able to retain and attract the skills to deliver our strategy. In particular, we are committed to increasing the number of women we have in senior management roles across the world from a baseline of 40 per cent.

To bring out the best in a highly capable and diverse workforce we will create a work environment that is highly engaging. In 2016, our staff engagement score (measured through the staff survey) stood at 78 per cent, which we are aiming to increase to 80 per cent next year.

We will continue to improve our organisational effectiveness through clear accountabilities and efficient operations. The benefits of this to our staff and partners will be improved and faster decision making, more collaborative ways of working and a workforce which increases its focus on customer, stakeholder and programming priorities.



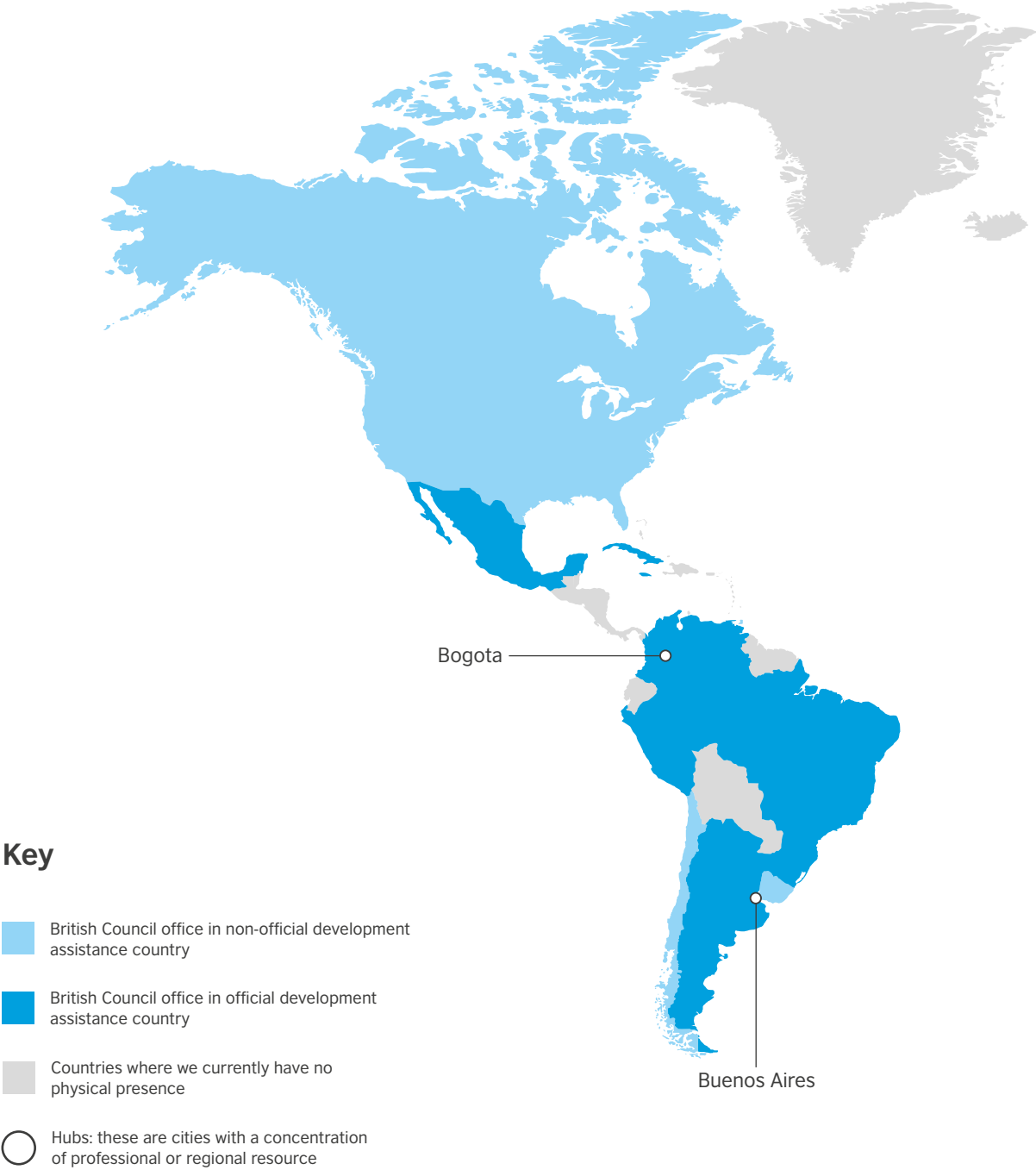
Strengthening our insight, research and evidence base

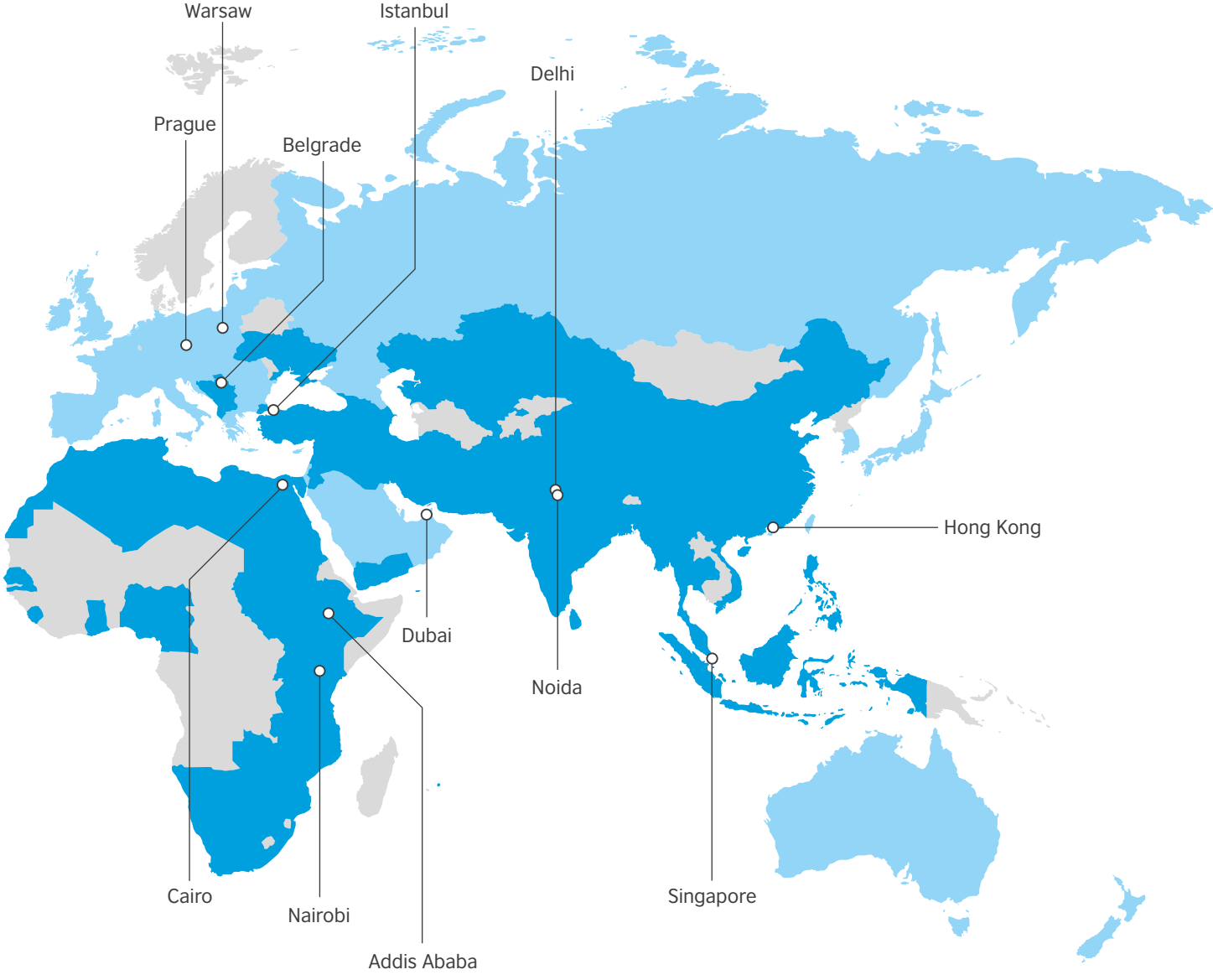
We will continue to strengthen our research and evaluation capability and our global approaches to programme management to ensure our activities are focused only on outcomes that drive our mission and present value for money. We will use this insight to drive our decision making, planning and reporting and to share learning more widely with partners and stakeholders.

In 2016 we conducted a pilot survey reviewing our global brand in 22 countries. This told us that familiarity with our brand is fairly strong (70 per cent) while 30 per cent of people who have some knowledge of us felt close to our brand. We are aiming to improve this brand sentiment in 2018.

Underpinning the above is transparency. We are fully committed to transparency in our decision making processes, the way we work and in the programmes and services we provide.

British Council global network 2017–18





Completing implementation of the actions from the 2014 Triennial Review

In 2018–19 we will undergo a Tailored Review, which is expected to evaluate the organisation’s effectiveness, efficiency and impact. The review will also report on actions taken on the 72 recommendations in the Triennial Review of 2014, which set out the value of the British Council’s work for the UK and underlined the importance of the organisation continuing to act as the UK’s main body for international cultural relations. Action has been taken on all of the agreed recommendations. In some cases action involves embedding processes and changing behaviour in ways that require continuous monitoring. Action we are taking to address the findings of the Triennial Review in 2018–19 includes:

- Creation of a stand-alone Commercial Committee to oversee all of the organisation’s revenue generating activities in teaching, exams and schools. This will comprise Trustees and additional external appointees with suitable commercial experience and will report to the British Council Board of Trustees.
- Completing a comprehensive change programme to improve financial transparency.
- By the end of 2019 we expect the new commercial operating model to be fully implemented, including financial separation and more transparent reporting on our commercial performance.
- Developing further clarity on how we contribute to the long-term priorities of the UK government and of the devolved nations as well as a wide range of UK partners and stakeholders. For example, in 2018 we will publish a set of maps showing how our work contributes directly to the objectives of relevant government partners as described in their single departmental plans and national strategies. We will also review and increase the frequency and effectiveness of our communications with stakeholders to maximise opportunities for them to contribute to our strategies and plans.
- Continuing to respond to any complaints entering the independent complaints process set up since the Triennial Review.
- Continuing to embed processes which ensure that the organisation always competes fairly and transparently for new work overseas and shares opportunities with the UK education sector in accordance with guidelines agreed with the Department for International Trade.
- Updating our menu of paid services to clarify which services will be offered in which markets.

Managing risks

As a global organisation working in some of the most difficult places in the world, understanding the extent of risks and managing them effectively is crucial.

The Board of Trustees has overall accountability for ensuring effective risk management and sets strategic direction and determines risk appetite. It maintains oversight of the top risks facing the British Council through periodic review to satisfy itself that the risks are being adequately mitigated.

The overall strategic direction on risk management is set centrally by the Executive Board. The Executive Board revises the top risks register at least twice a year and the risk team co-ordinates a twice-yearly assessment process in which each business area reports on their top risks. This bottom-up and top-down approach enables the British Council to consider the potential impact of different types of risks on processes, activities, stakeholders, products and services. Successful enterprise risk management can positively affect the likelihood and consequences of risks materialising as well as deliver benefits related to better informed decision making.

We continue to establish strong second line of defence functions for material risk areas, and embed risk management into core processes and strategic planning.

Principal risk profile

The following principal risk areas have been identified as the greatest potential impact on the achievement of our strategic objectives. Each area has been assigned a senior manager to lead monitoring and strategic response activities.

Risk area

- Income generation concentrated in certain countries and particularly in East Asia.
- Sustainability of our developed world programme as access to flexible funding declines.
- Maintaining a strong relationship with UK government and the devolved administrations.
- Competition in the global, and increasingly digital, English and exams market could threaten our financial sustainability and erode our impact.
- Developing and maintaining corporate partnerships.
- Change management.
- Availability and analysis of data and information to support decision-making.
- Staff skills, recruitment of talent and reward.
- Protecting the children in our care from abuse.
- Failure to implement and comply with corporate policies and priorities resulting in reputational damage including cyber security, child protection, General Data Protection Regulation, legal, physical security and fraud-related risks.

Measuring our performance

To improve our performance, share lessons and help strengthen our international reputation and leadership in cultural relations.

Results and evidence framework

The results and evidence framework is part of our strategic effort to improve our evidence base and ensure consistency of delivery.

The main principles of the framework include:

- Focus on our customers, stakeholders and beneficiaries and measuring the impact and results of our work.
- Value for money.
- Consistent standards in measurement and the evaluation of our work benchmarked against best practice.

- Transparency in how we define, collect and report on our data and sharing results internally and externally to strengthen cultural relations.

How we measure the benefits and impact of our work

Research, strategic evaluations, surveys and in-depth interviews, alongside the aggregation of results, will evidence how our work contributes to creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust with the UK and how this contributes to the wider objectives of security, prosperity and the long-term influence of the UK in the world.

Research programme: into cultural relations and soft power, trust in the UK, the economic value of our work to the UK, young people's voice and aspirations, societies in transition and building resilience to violent extremism and supporting peaceful societies.

Corporate surveys: to understand the impact and perceptions of the UK resulting from our work among beneficiaries and high-level influencers in priority countries and among partners in the UK.

We will also **measure impact across eight results areas**, to understand at a deeper level how our work delivers against corporate priorities and against the

priorities of our clients and partners. Our result areas are summarised below.

<p>Arts People's lives are enriched by arts and culture and cultural heritage is valued.</p>	<p>Young people Young people have the skills, resilience and networks to find pathways to better lives.</p>
<p>English Good English teaching helps people to study and work and to develop careers, confidence and networks.</p>	<p>Civil society and justice Citizens interact with states in ways which encourage collaboration and create stable societies that work better for people.</p>
<p>Higher education and science People in tertiary education and research institutes get access, partnerships, training and collaboration which contribute to more prosperous, sustainable and equitable societies.</p>	<p>Testing and assessment Students and professionals get internationally recognised UK qualifications for study, life and work.</p>
<p>Skills and enterprise People have the skills to be employable and to build inclusive and creative economies which support stable and prosperous societies.</p>	<p>Women and girls Women and girls participate in, and benefit from, decision making and social change.</p>

For each result area we are looking in-depth at programme and thematic area impact, underpinned by theories of change, value for money analysis and validated through independent advice. As well as evaluating our current portfolio, including across

contracts, paid services and official development assistance, we are also managing longitudinal analyses to understand benefits over time. In arts the focus is on evidence against the following impact statements.

Result area	Impact statement
People's lives are enriched by arts and culture and cultural heritage is valued.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals have improved social outcomes, contributing to greater social inclusion and social engagement. • Cultural professionals and artists develop their knowledge, artistic practice, skills and networks contributing to greater prosperity. • Arts and cultural organisations in the UK and target countries raise their profile, showcase UK arts and increase the economic value of their partnerships, contributing to the UK's influence and attraction in the world. • The arts and cultural infrastructure and creative economies of the UK, cities and target countries are strengthened through investment and collaboration. • The UK's international reputation is enhanced through experiences of arts and culture, contributing to our cultural relations and soft power approaches.

To complement the impact data we collect customer and stakeholder quantitative data on the number of people we work with.

Continuing with the arts example, we are planning to deliver the following outputs in 2018.¹²

Result area	Outputs
People's lives are enriched by arts and culture and cultural heritage is valued.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reach an arts audience of 18.1 million people directly, 13.1 million people online and 171 million people in print and broadcast media in 110 countries. • To partner with 5,500 UK-based artists and 1,300 UK-based arts organisations. • To partner with 27,500 artists and 3,200 arts organisations outside the UK in 110 countries.

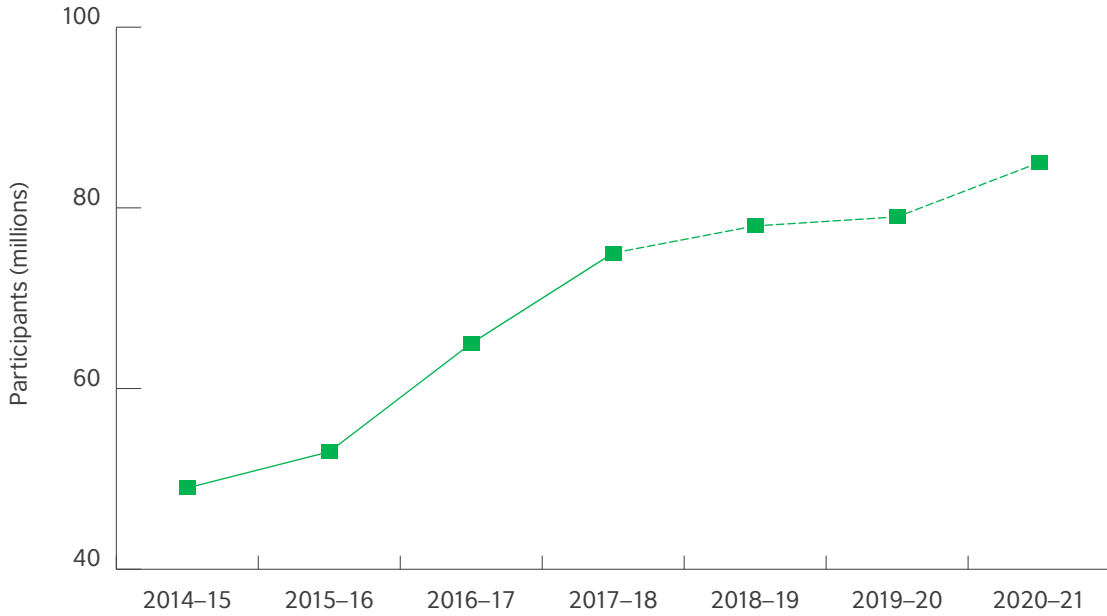
12. Total numbers are aggregated from the number of people who participate in individual programmes, and as such do not represent unique numbers.

Global level targets

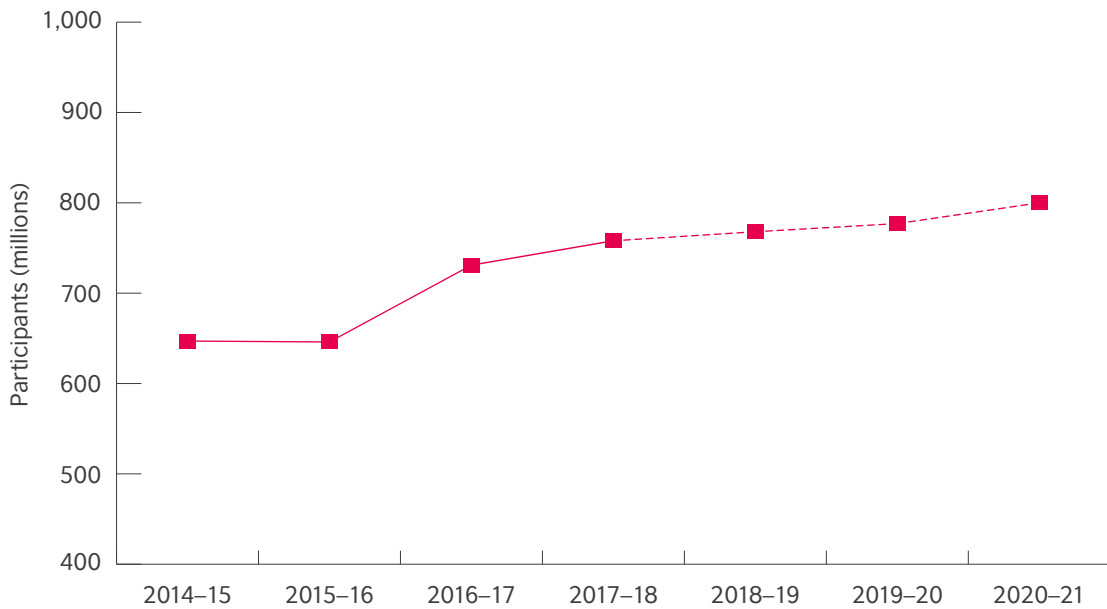
The number of people we work with from 2014–15 to 2020–21 is outlined below. We are signalling a lower direct engagement by 2020 from previous plans,

reaching 85 million people by 2020–21 compared with 100 million in previous plans. This is because we have had to adjust down plans to bid for cross-Whitehall funding.

Direct interactions 2014–15 to 2017–18 and targets to 2020¹³

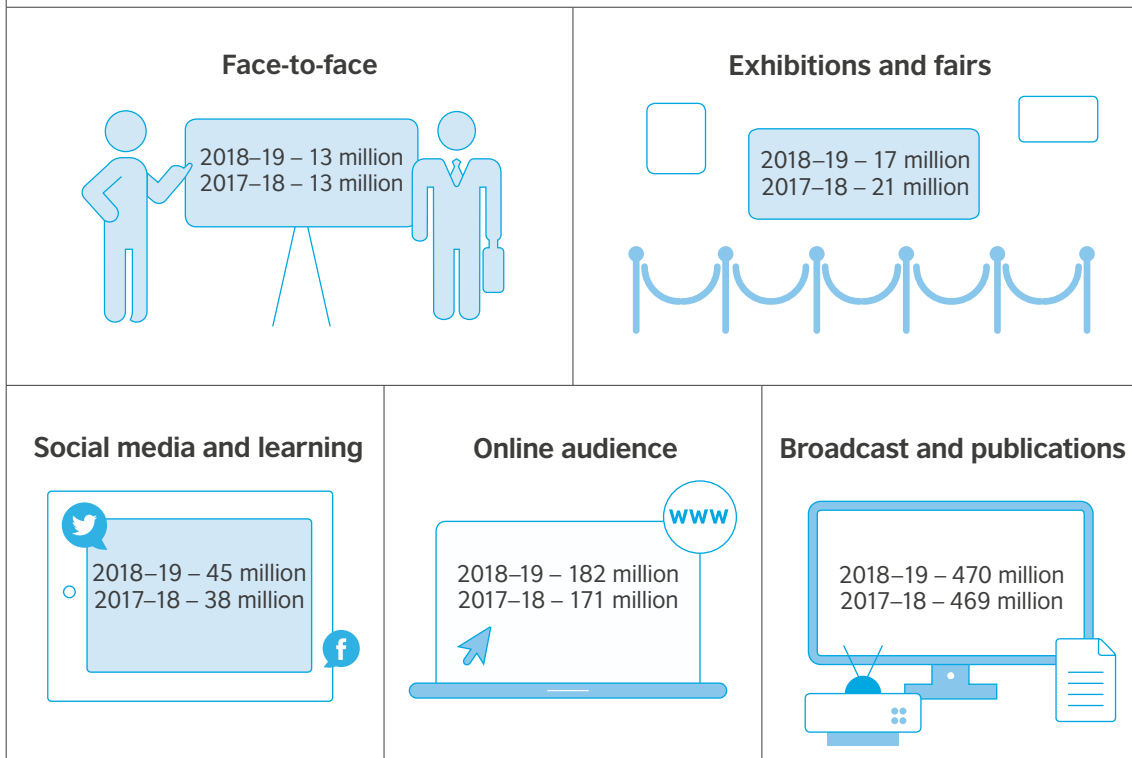


Total interactions 2014–15 to 2017–18 and targets to 2020



13. Direct interactions include face-to-face, exhibitions and social media channels.

By customer channel our targets for 2017–18 and 2018–19 are as follows:¹⁴



During 2018 we will baseline new measures including the number of women and girls we work with face-to-face, the number of institutions that develop partnerships in the UK and overseas, and the numbers of people that benefit from our work indirectly (for example school children who benefit from our work in curriculum reform or from teacher training).

We measure how our **customers view the quality of our work** in three main ways:

- Customer satisfaction surveys.
- Net recommendation score to measure the willingness of participants to recommend others to work with us or use our services. The score ranges from -100 to +100. A score of 50 or more is considered to be excellent.
- Responses to a question asked mainly of teaching centre students and examinations candidates to find out the extent to which they feel they have acquired new knowledge and/or skills.

In the 2018–19 plan we have set global targets at the following levels:

Quality	2018–19 target
Customer satisfaction – paid for services	80%
Net recommendation – paid for services	47
Net recommendation – free services	62
Learning of new knowledge and skills	85%

14. Total numbers are aggregated from the numbers of people who participate in individual programmes and as such do not represent unique numbers.

Financial plan

An efficient and sustainable British Council.

Delivery is funded through a mixed funding model:

- Core grant-in-aid from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) (allocated through the UK government Spending Review).
- Government grant for key activities (for example GREAT Britain campaign).
- Funding for work delivered under contract to international and national bodies, for example for the European Commission, Department for International Development, overseas governments and other funders.
- Partnership income, including income-in-kind and co-creation.

- Fees from customers paying for services direct (the largest part of this is teaching and exam services).

Surpluses from earned income are used to support the network and recycled back into delivery, to fund work in places that are not eligible for ODA.

Financial plan

The table below shows the income and expenditure projection to 2019–20 with grant-in-aid funding beyond that subject to the next Spending Review.

Table 1: Financial plan

£ in millions	2017–18*	2018–19	2019–20
FCO grant-in-aid (ODA and non-ODA)	168	178	167
Earned income	992	1,105	1,139
Total income	1,160	1,283	1,306
Contract disbursements	(151)	(211)	(226)
Direct costs	(774)	(834)	(861)
Indirect costs and taxation**	(235)	(232)	(232)
Total costs	(1,160)	(1,277)	(1,319)
Net surplus	(0)	6	(13)

* 2017–18 figures are based on latest forecast.

** Indirect costs and taxation includes investment in change programmes.

Income projection

Incoming resources comprise:

- Grant-in-aid (ODA, non-ODA and support for restructuring)
- Earned income, predominantly from English teaching and exams and contracts with international donors.

Table 2: Income projection

£ in millions	2017–18*	2018–19	2019–20
FCO grant-in-aid ODA	136	145	161
FCO grant-in-aid non-ODA	32	27	6
FCO grant-in-aid restructuring fund	0	6	0
Sub-total government funds	168	178	167
Teaching and schools	215	227	227
Examinations	480	522	539
Income from other activities	146	145	147
Income for contract disbursements	151	211	226
Sub-total earned income	992	1,105	1,139
Total income	1,160	1,283	1,306
Non-ODA grant as a percentage of FCO grant	19%	15%	4%

* 2017–18 figures are based on latest forecast.

Reserves projection

The table below shows the reserves projection up to 2019–20 and relates to 'free reserves'. Free reserves are essentially those reserves over which Trustees/



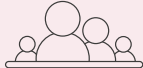


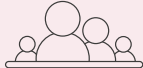


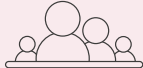


management exercise a degree of discretion – these exclude the capital, heritage assets and revaluation reserves.

Table 3: Reserves projection

£ in millions	2017–18*	2018–19	2019–20
Funds brought forward at start of year	60	60	66
Net movement on reserves	(0)	6	(13)
Funds carried forward at end of year	60	66	53

* 2017–18 figures are based on latest forecast.

Appendix A

Purpose statement: Using the cultural resources of the UK, we create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries.												
Vision for 2020: To make a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust. This enhances the security, prosperity and influence of the UK and, in doing so, helps make the world a better, safer place.												
1. Strengthen impact and focus in our priority areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the UK's influence and prosperity in the world through stronger relationships with India, China and other high-growth developing and developed economies. Building education and cultural partnerships with countries of the European Union. Strengthening long-term connections and relationships with the next generation in Russia and neighbouring countries. Supporting stability and security in priority countries in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Responding to the refugee crisis in Syria, Iraq and neighbouring countries. Creating international opportunities and connections for young people in the UK. 											
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving our customer and market research, analytics and insight to better understand our audiences' views and preferences so that we can develop services, products and communications that are relevant to them. Using this insight we will build stronger, more effective relationships with our customers and stakeholders so that they understand our work and value, and seek to engage with us in longer-term mutually beneficial relationships. 											
3. Ensure financial sustainability and help fund developed country operations	 Growing and diversifying income and surplus		 Improving our operational efficiency									
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="2">4. Transform the British Council by investing in people, systems and culture</td> <td>  Increasing the capability and effectiveness of our people </td> <td>  Creating a digitally enabled organisation </td> <td>  Strengthening our insight, research and evidence base </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Underpinned by our principles</td> <td>Sustainable</td> <td>Impact led</td> <td>Agile</td> <td>Professional and specialist</td> </tr> </table>				4. Transform the British Council by investing in people, systems and culture	 Increasing the capability and effectiveness of our people	 Creating a digitally enabled organisation	 Strengthening our insight, research and evidence base	Underpinned by our principles	Sustainable	Impact led	Agile
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	Underpinned by our principles	Sustainable	Impact led	Agile	Professional and specialist							
Underpinned by our principles	Sustainable	Impact led	Agile	Professional and specialist								

Stronger impact



Faster change

Appendix B

Supporting UK and devolved government objectives

The British Council actively contributes to a wide range of the objectives of UK government departments (as shown in their departmental plans) and the devolved administrations as summarised below.



UK policy objectives contributed to by the British Council



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

- Protect our people.
- Project our global influence.
- Promote our prosperity.



Cabinet Office

- Deliver a stable constitutional settlement that represents a fair deal for every part of the UK.
- Co-ordinate, deliver and implement the National Security Strategy and respond to national security threats at home and abroad.
- Co-ordinate and develop international policy across government.
- Support the implementation of the government’s priorities.
- Reform, improve and ensure accountability of public bodies.



Department for Digital, Culture Media & Sport

- Global: promote global Britain, demonstrating that the UK is a great place to live, work, visit and invest.
- Growth: grow an economy that is creative, innovative and works for everyone.
- Digital: make the UK the best digital economy in the world and drive its digital transformation.
- Participation: maximise cultural and sporting participation and social action.

(Culture devolved like education but DCMS placed in this category given its wider international role)



Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

- Invest in science, research, innovation.
- Support world leading sectors.
- Support businesses to start and grow.
- Build the UK’s international profile.



Department for International Development

- Strengthen global peace, security and governance.
- Strengthen resilience and response to crisis.
- Promote global prosperity.
- Tackle extreme poverty and help world’s most vulnerable.
- Deliver value for money and efficiency.





Department for Exiting the European Union

- Lead and co-ordinate cross-government work to seize the opportunities and ensure a smooth process of exit... on the best possible terms.



Department for International Trade

- Enable and support firms to seize the opportunities of trade and international investment to establish a culture of exporting in the UK.
- Ensure the UK is recognised as the best place to invest and to attract, retain and grow international investment that strengthens the economy.
- Open markets, building a trade framework with new and existing partners which is free and fair.
- Use trade and investment to underpin the Government’s agenda for Global Britain and its ambitions for prosperity, stability and security worldwide.

 <p>England policy objectives contributed to by the British Council</p>	 <p>Scotland policy objectives contributed to by the British Council</p>
 <p>Department for Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: to help create a country where there is social mobility and equality of opportunity by providing excellent education, training and care, and to help everyone reach their potential, regardless of background. • Closing the word gap: boosting access to high-quality early language and literacy. • Closing the attainment gap: raising standards for every pupil, supporting teachers early in their career. • Real choice at post-16: creating world-class technical education. • Rewarding careers for all: boosting skills and confidence to make the leap from education into work.  <p>Department for Communities and Local Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow local economies. • Build integrated communities. • Support effective local government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overarching purpose: to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. Scotland’s International Framework has been developed to support this. • Cultural relations: showcase our culture and heritage to strengthen our international relationships and to better share ideas and enhance co-operation. • Global outlook: embed internationalisation to ensure that Scotland continues to be attractive and our people are able to seize new opportunities and participate in a globalised world. • Good global citizen: continue to make distinctive contributions in addressing global challenges, sharing our knowledge, skills and technical expertise for global good. • Research excellence: continue to invest in and promote our universities, helping them to build educational links and research collaborations across the globe. • Improving attainment: ensure our young people are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil their potential.
 <p>Wales policy objectives contributed to by the British Council</p>	 <p>Northern Ireland* policy objectives contributed to by the British Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Wales as an internationally focused, ambitious country engaged and connected to the wider world. • Raise standards in schools and close the attainment gap, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential. Promote and support modern foreign language learning in Wales by becoming bilingual plus. • Promote the distinctive cultural identity and assets of Wales through arts. • Support the internationalisation of education in Wales, including inward and outward student and academic staff mobility and world-class research links. Contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by promoting social justice, fairness and equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a confident, welcoming, outward-looking, inclusive society that respects fairness, equality and diversity by international engagement. • Support strong relations between Northern Ireland and Ireland through cross-border programmes in education, society and arts. • Support internationally engaged innovation and creativity in arts, sport and education to help people fulfil their potential and strengthen the economy. • Share Northern Ireland’s experience of peace-building internationally. <p>*Northern Ireland does not currently have a government but we continue to work closely with officials in the Executive Office and other key ministries and support the work of the Northern Ireland Executive’s overseas offices.</p>

