Developing Creative Economies in ODA Countries

Overview Report
July 2019
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*Universidad EAFIT, Medellín, Colombia*
Executive Summary

For over a decade, the British Council has played an important and much-valued role in supporting the development and growth of the creative economy across the world. This ranges from dedicated policy guidance to advice on sector definition and mapping; from targeted support for young creative entrepreneurs to concept development of and validation for creative hubs. The British Council has been and continues to be a vital facilitator and enabler, trusted partner and guide, vital advocate and champion, and a source of expertise, knowledge and connections to the UK and globally. The work of the British Council with regard to the creative economy has been extensive and diverse, adapted to the specific opportunities and challenges presented by different countries while aligned with a growing programmatic approach devised at a global level. It has been conditioned by available resources and shifting priorities; and has always been connected to a wider set of activities in the arts and, especially recently, the social field.

This short report provides an illustrative summary of an extensive study which has looked at the role of the British Council as a partner, enabler and impactful investor in the creative economy of four Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) Countries - Nigeria, Vietnam, Colombia and Indonesia. Each country has a dedicated and extensive report which charts, details and provides a strategic review of the work of the British Council over a decade and in some cases, longer. It is undertaken by Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy (TFCC), with a methodology that included desk-based research and extensive interview, workshop and review processes in each country.

The study is aligned to the Research and Evidence Framework (REF) of the British Council, measuring the following core outcomes of activity:

- Policy and practice transfer in creative economy and cultural sector
- Sector partnerships and relationships and connections increased
- Economic benefit and sustainability
- Social and cultural transformation
- Influence and interaction with other policy areas (e.g. education) and sectors.

The study is intended to:

- Enable the British council to better understand the development of the creative economy in the specific ODA countries and the impact of local and national programmes
- Review and gather evidence of the outcomes of creative economy programmes and activity in four countries
- Provide innovative methods and approaches for analysing the impact of the British Council’s work and others in the creative economy sector.

To deliver this, a research framework was established at the outset of the study. This considered the role of the British Council across four themes:

- Policy and practice transfer in creative economy and cultural sector
- Sector partnerships and relationships and connections increased
- Economic benefit and sustainability
- Social and cultural transformation (including women and girls)
- Influence and interaction with other policy areas (e.g. education) and sectors.

The depth and detail of research findings does vary across the four countries due to a combination of factors which include:

1 www.tfconsultancy.co.uk

2 This was undertaken via a workshop and paper presented to the British Council in May 2019.
- Differing definitions of the ‘Creative Economy’, which is still an emergent concept that triggers different interpretations, priorities and activities.

- A lack of sector coordinated and up to date creative economy mapping and research from the national to local level, with a variety of sector definitions and significant gaps in baseline data, such as for micro enterprises and certain creative sectors.

- Gaps in institutional historical knowledge and organisational memory – for the British Council and its partners. In part this is due to a lack of consistent monitoring and evaluation over the last decade (although this is rapidly improving). It is also due to a churn of key staff (especially in Indonesia and Vietnam), which reduces the capacity to capture and retain key information (such as on how relationships were formed and that they delivered).

- Power and influence – with some consultees identified by British Council staff, such consultations were inevitably shaped by an anticipation of future partnership working or investment, which most probably led to a favourable resume of the role and value of the British Council.

A Broker, Facilitator and Catalyst for Creative Economy Development

A core activity of the British Council has been one of broker and facilitator, connecting local (in-country) and UK creative talent and cultural organisations to build strong and mutually beneficial relationships; highlighting opportunities for innovation and inclusive growth through the creative industries; and in directly building capacity and confidence with a focus on talent development, creative city-making, festivals and networks.

Through these activities, the British Council has had a proactive and much-welcomed presence. It has helped to increase visibility of the potential of the creative economy and provided a valued advisory role to several Governments. Activities have ranged from a portfolio of technical assistance activities (mapping, training, capacity-building and awareness-rising), to tailored interventions which have helped build partnership and investment in, for example, skills development, trade shows, festivals, research, hubs and clusters.

In each country featured in this study, the British Council has been a key international partner in shaping a policy and partnership agenda for the creative economy. Although desired capacity has not been consistently available, British Council staff have managed to build trusted relationships with Government at a national and municipal level, with key cultural organisations and education institutions, and with networks of artists and creative practitioners. In part this has been achieved by aligning work in the arts with a continued strategic agenda to build support for developing the wider creative economy. It is also testament to the openness, agility and strategic skills of British Council staff.

However, in such large, diverse and fast-changing countries as the four featured in this research, the British Council’s work is liable to be influenced by many elements beyond its control. It is also liable to be a relatively small contributor in such vast, complex and constantly transforming contexts.

In Summary:

Policy and Partnership

The British Council has played (and is playing) a pivotal role in shaping the strategic and policy agenda for the creative economy. Major successes include:
- A lead role alongside UNESCO in developing the first National Cultural Industries Strategy for Vietnam, which as been ratified by the Prime Minister.

- A central role in the ‘Orange Economy’ Agenda of Colombia – the name given to the country’s creative economy. The British Council initiated this process over a decade ago, employing and building the capacity and connections of a key contributor to the ‘Orange Economy’ concept and movement. This employee subsequently became the Orange Economy adviser to the President and is now collaborating with the British Council to drive policy formulation and delivery.

- A hugely influential role in building knowledge, capacity and commitment for the Creative Economy in Nigeria, resulting in the country’s first Creative Industries Fund and policy change at a federal and local level.

- A Memorandum of Understanding with the Creative Industries Ministry in Indonesia and multiple strategic partnerships across the country, including a vital enabling role in the development of the Indonesian Creative Cities Network.

**Sector partnerships, relationships and connections**
The British Council is a much valued facilitator and enabler across the creative economy. By linking activities in creative entrepreneurship, skills development, baseline mapping, creative hubs and showcasing, the British Council plays a primary role in nurturing local networks, providing access to information and expertise, and building connections to the UK that foster mutuality and long-term exchange. For example, the British Council:

- Has helped initiate a range of place-based approaches to the creative economy, with an influential and valued role in ‘creative city’ agendas. This includes a pivotal role in the development of ‘Bandung Creative City’, a grassroots and sector-led movement which has mobilised multiple creative activities in this major Indonesian city, with a commitment to inclusive creative practice, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

- Has supported partners such as municipalities, civil society organisations and creative networks, to recognise the value of creative hubs and clusters as critical drivers of the creative economy and essential ‘safe spaces’ for cultural dialogue, collaboration and innovation. This has included support a creative hub mapping programme in Vietnam, which has built data and intelligence on hubs and helped to promote and validate their importance.

- Has played a very impactful advisory and advocacy role on the importance of the creative economy to inclusive growth, innovation and competitiveness. One example is the role of Creative Expo events in Nigeria. These have helped raise the profile of the creative economy as a key sector, introduced collaboration opportunities with the UK and helped build local commitment to sector development. They have been supported by long-term partnership and advocacy activities which have helped initiate new investment in the creative industries, such as via the Nigerian Bank of Industry’s creative industries fund. They have also given credibility and confidence to programmes and platforms led by local talent – from Lagos Fashion Week to the Ake Literary Festival.

**Economic benefit and sustainability**
The work of the British Council has been less tangibly impactful for economic outcomes. This is because its role in the growth and performance of the overall creative economy of such large and fast-changing countries cannot be viably measured. However, research clearly demonstrates the significant impact of the British Council on the career trajectories of creative talent and of the influence the British Council has
had on policy and investment that targets creative growth. Key interventions include:

- The Young Creative Entrepreneurs (YCE) Programme, though now defunct, played a transformational role in giving confidence, profile and opportunities to a cohort of some of the best emergent creative talent. YCE alumni, who benefited from the attention generated by winning the award and collaboration and exchange opportunities via working in the UK with established creative firms; have gone on to develop successful businesses, to leading creative hubs and platforms, even to political success.

- In Colombia, the British Council has been a much valued partner to the Bogota Chamber of Commerce and other creative sector trade bodies and associations. For example, it has helped shape the programme of and bring UK expertise and talent to key commercial expos such as the Bogota Music Market (BoMM) and Bogota Audiovisual Market (BAM). Plus, it initiated the collaboration between Hay Festival and Cartagena Literary Festival, which has boosted the scale, profile and turnover of Colombia’s major Literary event.

- The Creative Entrepreneurship Toolkit and advice programme delivered by NESTA, has provided support and guidance to multiple creative entrepreneurs, helping them to build effective business plans, understand markets and generate a level of sustainability. It as also reached out to entrepreneurs from different backgrounds, helping creative businesses to formalise their practice, develop skills and access networks.

Social and cultural transformation
The British Council has been a champion of inclusivity and openness in its creative economy work across the 4 countries featured in this research. Diverse creative talent has been positioned as the lifeblood of a successful creative economy and the building blocks for a creative economy have correspondingly, been promoted in terms of their openness, inclusivity and social role. In recent years, since the inception of the ‘Developing Inclusive Creative Economies’ (DICE) programme, the social impact of creative economy activities has been more targeted and purposeful. However, from YCE activities to creative hubs, the British Council has worked hard to position the creative economy as a force for good in terms of social and environmental impact, not least in terms of its role in nurturing elements of civil society such as freedom of expression and gender inclusion. For example, the British Council has:

- Played a pioneering role in promoting inclusive arts and creative practice via the Indonesia / UK programme (a curated programme of events based on cultural exchange and mutuality). This includes a 2018 focus on disability and helped kickstart the first disability-focused arts festival in Indonesia.

- Given a voice to young creatives via its ‘Next Gen Creative Economy Green Paper’ in Nigeria – which was led and co-written by young people.

- Built awareness of and a platform for diverse cultural expressions, with a particular emphasis on young women creative entrepreneurs, such as via creative hubs in Vietnam, festivals and events in Indonesia, creative entrepreneurship in Nigeria, and creative education and skills in Colombia.

Some considerations for the British Council’s work in the creative economy
The British Council continues to play a formative and often transformational role in the development of the creative economy across the four countries featured in this study. It can reasonably be associated with some of the major creative economy interventions and programmes in
each country over the last decade. Moreover, it has been specifically impactful on the careers of individual creative entrepreneurs and on the growth and sustainability of major events, networks, hubs and platforms. However, there are three areas where the British Council might consider its approach:

- **Communication**: A real strength of the British Council’s approach has been the energy, warmth and tenacity of its staff, with some very committed and talented people working to build connections, spark activities and generate commitment to the creative economy. Yet partners and beneficiaries are too often unclear of the role, vision or intentions of the British Council. For example, the relationship between the British Council and the UK government is not clear for all, which is a sensitive issue in a post-colonial context such as Nigeria. In other contexts, notably Vietnam and Indonesia, there is sometimes a lack of clarity on whether the British Council is a funder or partner, and thus whether a funded relationship is also a partnership relationship.

- **Consistency**: The range of creative economy activities supported by the British Council over a decade and more is staggering. From individual advice and brokerage to large-scale events and entrepreneurship programmes, so much has been delivered. However, the turnover of staff has disrupted partnership and programme development, and there is a lack of consistency at times between local need and the introduction of global or regional programme activities. This means some opportunities have been lost (e.g. in policy and partnership), and some partners are unclear of what the British Council might do next and/or of the sustainability of an ongoing relationship.

- **Capacity**: The British Council has achieved so much with small teams which have developed activities when both budgets and global strategic agendas have fluctuated. Yet opportunities have been missed and the British Council has lacked the resources to develop a more sustained and high profile programme of activities which go beyond major cities. The resourcefulness and fund-raising capacity of the British Council teams must be commended, but this is from a relatively low base and the wider arts and education programmes have to an extent played a surrogate role in creative economy activities.

This study has considered the development of the creative economy in four countries over a decade. Throughout this period, the British Council has contributed a range of advocacy, knowledge gathering, relationship building and targeted capacity building programmes that have ultimately served to change perceptions, raise awareness, foster dialogue and build capacity. Most significantly, the British Council can claim significant responsibility for inspiring new policy developments and in supporting hubs, networks and individual careers to flourish.

A key and growing quality of the interventions is the ways the arts, social and creative economy agendas have converged. This is in part due to pragmatism, with small teams and limited resources in large and fast-changing countries. It is also in part due to the reality of sector development in these countries, where flourishing arts scenes provides the ecosystem for the wider creative economy; and where talent is diverse and engaged, with participation in cultural practice incredibly dynamic and thus opportunities to engage people from all backgrounds very palpable. But the most overriding feature of responses from partners regarding the qualities of the British Council is that of generosity and energy.
Defining the Creative Economy

Generating $2250 billion annually and creating 30 million jobs, the ‘creative economy’ is seen as one of the ‘global economic success stories of the last 20 years’. In 2008, the term was defined by UNCTAD “as an evolving concept centred on the dynamics of the creative industries” – encapsulating the arts, cultural practice, creative business, and the spillover effects of such activities (e.g. to innovation, place-making, inward investment and tourism).

A ‘creative economy’ is inclusive and cross-cutting, encompassing everything from cultural practice to interrelated areas - such as product and service design, film and dance, music and fashion. Broadly, and though a contested term due to its wrongly assumed prioritisation of commercialisation over cultural value, the creative economy refers ‘those sectors which specialise in the use of creative talent for commercial purposes’ (UNCTAD, 2008). It also has a different ‘configuration of relationships’; high concentration of self-employed, collaborative and small, but nimble, businesses. It takes ‘culture’ to mean the creative practices that are nurtured and monetised in a creative economy. This means a successful creative economy depends on a productive and innovative cultural sector where a diversity of cultural expressions flourish, where the intrinsic value of the arts is championed, and where its social as well as economic value supported.
1. Nigeria Overview

“The British Council is playing a vital role in raising the profile of the cultural and creative industries as a policy priority in Nigeria”, Grace Isu Gekpe, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Nigeria

The British Council has had a high profile advocacy, research, knowledge exchange and brokering role for the creative economy. From the Creative Expos in 2011, 2013 and 2016, which brought UK and Nigerian policy makers and creative industries together to share opportunities and challenges growth and investment; to the creative sector mapping and creative skills analysis it has commissioned; the British Council has been a key champion and connector in the fast-changing Nigerian creative economy. Its activities have delivered tangible policy and programmatic outcomes, such as new investments in the film and music sector; a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Information and Culture and the British Council to develop the festivals sector; a commitment by the British Council to support Sector Skills Councils development to underpin the Government’s diversification of the economy, job creation and skills strategies.

In the area of policy change and practice transfer, British Council interventions facilitated UK - Nigeria connections and the sharing of UK best practices, while advocating the benefits of a creative economy through events such as the Creative Expos and exchange visits. Research, instigated and supported by the British Council, with partners such as the Ministry of Information and Culture, NEXIM Bank and the Pan-Atlantic University, has helped build a baseline knowledge and understanding of the sector through mapping and skills analysis, which has helped to influence Government an unlock new investment.

On partnerships, the British Council in Nigeria has a long and proven track record as open collaborators and effective partners. It has worked as respected brokers, facilitating knowledge sharing and exchange, mobilising networks and delivering genuine mutuality between Nigerian and UK creative talent.

On economic benefit and sustainability, the British Council Nigeria’s focus on the creative economy and building skills and capacity of policy makers, creative practitioners and businesses is paying dividends. Many of the young entrepreneurs supported through early interventions such as WaPi get togethers and Young Creative Entrepreneurs Awards, have gone on to be creative leaders. Embedding skills, learning and practice sharing alongside festivals and showcasing, has served to build the wider capabilities, networks and sector infrastructure.

On social and cultural transformation, the British Council Nigeria has been a leading advocate for inclusive and participatory cultural audience development, as part of the programmes of sector capacity building. The ongoing investment and focus on festivals, such as the launch of Lagos Theatre festival in 2013, UK/NG 2015-16 and the Festival Management Training 2017-2020, has seen the festival scene, particularly in Lagos, shift from a series relatively small scale events operating individually, to an expansive festival season with a much broader and inclusive reach.

Sample of British Council work in the Nigerian Creative Economy 2012-17

- **The Lagos Theatre Festival.** The British Council, working with local and UK partners, established the Lagos Theatre Festival in 2013, as a platform for connecting the UK and Nigerian theatre sectors to enhance artistic exchange, collaboration and professional development of artists and other theatre practitioners. The idea for the festival emerged from a lack of cultural infrastructure that was undermining the growth of the theatre and wider performing arts sector in Lagos. The aim was to build capacity and mitigate the dearth of performance spaces by using non-conventional spaces such as open public spaces – parks, cars
parks, restaurants, etc. as a stage. This was, purposefully, not to remodel them to look like traditional theatres, but to adapt the performances to the spaces. Through extensive partnership work, the Festival has grown from just four companies (3 Nigerian and 1 UK) showing their work in one venue at the 2013 Festival, to featuring over 100 shows from 47 companies/producers from Nigeria, UK, USA and Ghana in 2018.

- **Creative Industries Mapping Study (2013)** - co-commissioned by the British Council, the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, NEXIM Bank and others. This focused on defining an evidence base of the Film, Fashion and Music industries in Lagos. It helped build awareness of the current baseline for the creative industries, of gaps in evidence, and opportunities for growth.

- **Creative Education and Skills Rapid Analysis (2016)**. This research by TFCC provided the basis for ongoing work in advocating for a Creative Sector Skills Council and the further Road Map for a Film and Broadcast Sector Skills Council in 2018.

- **The Culture Shift programmes in Lagos (2012-14)**, bringing together creative practitioners with some of the city's best digital developers. The programme involved ideation workshops, hacks and pitching opportunities. The British Council's UK partners were Snook and Social Innovation Camp, alongside its Nigerian partner, CCHub.

- **GenTalks Creative: Growth Strategies for the Nigerian Creative Economy (2014)**. Sponsored by First Bank Nigeria, this was an initiative to stimulate youth participation in the articulation of practical growth strategies for Nigeria's creative industries. The project crowdsourced ideas online and curated these into a series of face-to-face events with participation from key Nigerian creative industries stakeholders and young people interested in the growth of the sector. The project output was a green paper mapping out recommendations for the development of the sector in Nigeria and advocating for a more supportive policy framework.

- **Fashion DNA (2014-15)** - aimed at building the capacity of emerging fashion designers in Lagos as well as linking Nigerian and UK organisations and practitioners in the fashion sector. In 2014 a two-day event in September introduced new business skills and innovative fashion techniques, while also connecting with a network of cross-sector contacts to inspire new ways of working. In 2015 a programme of masterclasses, collaborative workshops, and public events were delivered in partnership with Lagos Fashion and Design Week.

- **The UK/Nigeria 2015-16 season** - one of the British Council's biggest arts programmes co-created in Africa, worked to develop interdisciplinary and collaborative ways of working between the UK and Nigeria and building new audiences for UK and Nigerian arts and culture. By increasing access to arts and culture from the two countries and engaging with a target of forty million young Nigerians (aged 18 – 35), the programme also sought to build mutual understanding among young people in both countries and reaffirm the UK's position as a partner for the growth of the arts and creative industries in Nigeria.

- **Film Connections** - a partnership between Sterling Bank, Africa International Film Festival (AFRIFF) and British Film Institute (BFI), sought to create more opportunities for UK and Nigerian filmmakers through capacity building, networking and exchange. The Film Connections Programme at AFRIFF was curated by Nadia Denton, an independent film curator from the UK. The UK phase of Film Connections, in late 2018 (with BFI Future Film and SOUL) was curated by Ikenna Ezenyirioha, film curator from AFRIFF.
Yoanna Chinezie, Assembly Fashion Hub, Lagos

For Yoanna Chinezie who runs The Assembly Fashion Hub, the outcomes of British Council-led training have helped her to formalise and expand the Hub and support more young fashion and fashion media entrepreneurs to develop their careers.

The Creative Hub Creative Enterprise Programme (CEP) training has given Yoanna the confidence and tools to really grow the hub. It helped her identify the kind of team she needed to grow the business – people committed to growing the Nigerian creative economy and harnessing the country’s vast young creative talent base.

Before the training she employed one person part-time, now she has a team of three people. The Assembly now also runs an internships programme, which is being rolled out to secure internships for young creative talent in other fashion and media businesses. When The Assembly was first launched, most of the services were free. The business now charges for most services and is launching a membership scheme, with varying subscriptions for a range of services including workshops, advice and mentoring.

Since the training, The Assembly has partnered with two of the other hubs on training events and skills sharing. They have run the CEP training for their own Assembly hub members with a grant from the British Council in 2018 and have also run bespoke 5-day entry level and next stage training for fashion businesses. A total of 87 young fashion related entrepreneurs have been trained. Since the initial CEP training, The Assembly has also successfully secured sponsorships by the Rising Tide Africa, women angel investors network, Dalberg and tremendoc, the latter interested in the wellness aspect The Assembly include in their training for entrepreneurs.

“The CEP training was hugely valuable for my personal development and the sustainability of the business. I felt validated that most of what I was doing was right and it provided a structure for areas for the business to build on. The British Council support has also been hugely valuable for the hub, then our hub members and for providing the space for our start-up and next stage training.” Yoanna Chickezie

Looking Forward

The British Council Nigeria is leading on the West Africa Art Connects Us programme. The programme objectives are to achieve the following three changes by 2020:

1. An increase in the number and quality of UK collaborations, exchanges and connections with artists and creative entrepreneurs in West Africa resulting in more highly skilled young artists and creative entrepreneurs more able to connect, share and exchange with each other and with their contemporaries in the UK.

2. Stronger networks (informal or formal) and communities of (young) artists in West Africa will have a stronger voice in and for their communities and can engage in more institutional UK-West Africa partnerships that are mutually beneficial and to scale.

3. More up-to-date and diverse awareness and representation of West African arts in the UK and vice versa.

On related policy areas, the British Council is supporting the development and strengthening of Sector Skills Councils, in turn supporting the Nigerian Government with its job creation strategy and national skills policy to address skills and capability challenges across all sectors. The 2018 Road Map for Film and Broadcast Sector Skills Council, commissioned by the British Council, is taking forward this work for the creative sector bringing on board a wide range of partners from industry, Government, vocational and higher education, to develop an industry-led skills strategy.
2. Indonesia Overview

“The British Council has been a big supporter of young talent. We approached them for IFF and they connected us to the Centre for Fashion Enterprise (CFE) and invested in a programme of mentoring. About 45 young Indonesian designers have come through this process and the CFE still comes, so it wasn’t just a one-off” (Lenni Tedja Jakarta Fashion Week).

As part of its broader portfolio of social, education and cultural activities, the British Council has operated as an enabler and influencer for the creative economy in Indonesia, supporting an emergent Indonesian creative industries sector to develop a voice and profile; and working in partnership with civil society, including a new generation of creative entrepreneurs and intermediaries, to mobilise a network of creative cities.

This role has gained in momentum and profile in the last five years, with the Indonesian Government first of all setting up a Department for Creative Industries and then a dedicated development agency – BEKRAF. The policy focus has raised the profile of the Indonesian creative economy and helped legitimise sector development across this huge and diverse nation. This has given energy and purpose to the development of local initiatives including city-based networks and hubs. The designation of Indonesia as a ‘Developing Inclusive Creative Economies’ (DICE) country, further opens up creative economy opportunities in Indonesia, not least in aligning agendas in economic growth with cultural and social inclusion.

Overall, the British Council has had a proactive and much-welcomed presence. It has helped to increase visibility of the potential of the creative economy and provided a valued advisory role to Government and BEKRAF. With the Centre for Innovation Policy and Governance (CIPG), it
commissioned the 2017 study ‘Research in Creative Economy – a Module’, which has been instructive in understanding the position and performance of the Indonesian Creative Economy at a local city level at a time when BEKRAF is actively promoting the economic and social value of the creative industries nationally.

But the role of the British Council has been most impactful in its dedicated work with creative entrepreneurs and intermediaries, often facilitated through study visits to the UK or brokered exposure to UK creative and cultural organisations in Indonesia. Activities have ranged from a portfolio of technical assistance activities (mapping, training, capacity-building and awareness-rising), to tailored interventions which have helped catalyse a new movement of creative hubs and networks, crystallised in the Indonesian Creative Cities Network (ICCN).

The British Council has worked to set agendas – for example on the important role of creative hubs as safe spaces for diverse cultural expression and as vital enablers for collaboration and innovation. Or on the vital contribution of disabled artists for a flourishing creative economy. With respect to the former, the British Council has helped to give profile and legitimacy to a nascent ecosystem of creative hubs and networks otherwise struggling for visibility and voice. With respect to the latter, the British Council can be credited with championing a more inclusive and diverse creative economy.

**Policy Development: A Memorandum of Understanding**

In Indonesia, the British Council has majored on an accessible advisory role because the national Government has been relatively proactive in developing policy – inclusive of key building blocks such as a vision, strategy, a new Ministry and dedicated agency. A more structured and high profile relationship was established in 2013, when a **five-year Memorandum of Understanding** (MoU) was signed between the UK’s Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Indonesia’s Ministry of Culture and Tourism. This was at first a largely symbolic act helped to shine a light on the UK creative economy at an important time for Indonesia, with some high profile events staged such as a Film Symposium with Lord Puttnam as keynote³.

However, the British Council, once it had recruited respected Indonesian creative expertise to its team⁴, was able to pivot the MoU toward longer-term planning and the notion of sustainable legacy building. This includes a UK / Indonesian Film Programme, which linked Indonesian film-makers to partners in Film London. This also comprised a suite of activities in creative city development, including baseline diagnostic research with the CIPG; partnership and capacity development in Bandung and the Yogyakarta Festival Platform which brought together key festivals in this Javan city to develop a shared strategic approach to planning and resources.

The British Council policy role can be summarised as follows:

- **Knowledge enabler.** In the mid-2000s, the British Council led some initial support and technical assistance sessions on baseline mapping for the creative industries⁵. This was to add UK expertise to a growing appreciation in national and local government of the need for solid baseline data which can be benchmarked regionally and internationally. This was positioned as part of a process of awareness-raising of the role and potential of the creative industries and knowledge exchange with UK professionals (e.g. academics and consultants).

http://filmlondon.org.uk/news/2013/october/film_london_speaks_alongside_lord_puttnam_at_first_indonesian_film_policy_forum

³ Felencia Hutabarat (Ellen)

⁴ Although monitoring / evidence on this was not available.
- **Knowledge exchanger.** For many, the British Council is seen as the ‘go to partner’ to find out what is trending in the creative economy and/or to access examples of good practice – not just in the UK but internationally. Partners are aware that the British Council works across Southeast Asia and internationally, which leads to interest in the approaches to sector development elsewhere. The British Council has worked with real vigor to build relationships and to amplify them by brokering connections and channeling knowledge exchange across the boundaries of organisations, places and sectors. A prime example is **UK / ID 2016-18** - a three-year programme that has been building new links between young creatives and build awareness of contemporary arts and the creative economy in the UK and Indonesia⁶.

In 2018, the programme focused on ‘breaking boundaries’, celebrating disability arts and championing the role of disabled creatives as vital to a healthy and dynamic creative economy. It culminated in the festival **Bebas Batas** which, inspired by the Unlimited Festival in the UK, was Indonesia’s first arts and disability festival. This has helped build visibility and voice for disability arts in Indonesia, coinciding with the Asian Para Games in Jakarta in October 2018. While the core thrust of the programme was to build lasting relationships between UK and Indonesian artists and organisation, the focus on disability is building policy awareness based on the mutually beneficial exchange of creative activities for UK and Indonesian artists and audiences.

**Backing Talent**
The British Council has long been a champion of young creative talent. This was most emphatically demonstrated through its YCE programme which helped mobilise a cohort of creative entrepreneurs from across the world, building a community of practice and helping to validate the work of young creative talent in emergent economies such as Indonesia.

Examples of YCE success stories include the work of UK YCE Justin Smith and Indonesian YCE Oscar Lawalata, who created an inspirational collaboration for Jakarta Fashion Week 2013. Most prominent is the Young Design Creative Entrepreneur of 2006, **Ridwan Kamil**, who progressed from a very promising career as an architect and academic in Bandung, to become the mayor of the city and one of the pioneers for the creative city concept in Southeast Asia. This is an example of the British Council investing in creative talent with leadership qualities, where the character of the individual and their ability to affect change in their local creative economy is also factored in.

**Creative Communities: Hubs and Cities**
Much of the British Council’s creative economy work has focused on nurturing creative communities. Often this is described in terms of supporting the conceptualisation and formulation of creative hubs or even creative cities. There is however considerable cross-over with the British Council’s work building partnerships and nurturing creative entrepreneurship. This is evidenced in the below case study for **Brightspot**: the emphasis here is on nurturing a scene and building relationships which enhance that scene – both in Indonesia and through links to the UK. It is also evidenced in Bandung – a city which over a decade has been re-imagined as a leading creative city for Southeast Asia and a prominent urban innovator globally. It is also a UNESCO City of Design.

The British Council can take significant credit for its role in Bandung’s rise as a renowned creative city (see case study below). Bandung is on a journey of urban transformation and re-imagination through the energy, resourcefulness and togetherness of its creative talent. The British Council’s role has been one of active supporter and advocate; of enabler

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⁶ [https://www.britishcouncil.id/en/uk-indonesia-2016-18](https://www.britishcouncil.id/en/uk-indonesia-2016-18)
and facilitator; and of strategic partner in supporting the Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF) to lead the set-up of what became the Indonesian Creative Cities Network (ICCN).

Brightspot Market – Hogi Wirjono and Lita Nugraheni
https://www.brightspotmrkt.com/

Hogi and Lita are creative entrepreneurs, producers, enablers and catalysts. Hogi is also a DJ. They work independently and together (always with other collaborators), to energise the creative scene across Jakarta. Their main event / programme is Brightspot – a creativity festival which takes place at the end of October every year:

“We were the first pop up market in Indonesia. There is a strong fashion and lifestyle focus, with bands…we take over abandoned spaces and malls. It is more than a market though – it is becoming a fully-fledged creative festival, so it is not just about consumption” (Hogi Wirjono).

Brightspot is growing in scale. The first event had 5,000 attendees, the most recent had close to 90,000. Brightspot is also growing in prominence and strategic significance for the Indonesian creative economy, with a direct partnership with JFW (including shared events), and increasing numbers of established creative firms seeking exposure through the platform Brightspot provides. Eschewing cigarette sponsorship, Brightspot is also trying to take a symbolic lead against the dominance of tobacco firms sponsoring the arts.

The British Council has been supportive in two main ways:

- As a partner and facilitator – recognising the convening role of Hogi and Lita and their projects: “They are partners. They support ideas and creatives and put them in touch with UK artists”. (Hogi Wirjono).
- As a commissioner – of their services to produce events and / or source and connect talent: “they are really up to date with the local scene. They have also helped us to source talent in the UK – we wanted to get the band British Sea Power to Brightspot. It didn’t come off, but the connection is still there. In the future we would also like them to work with us to build the investment readiness and management capacity of local creatives” (Lita Nugraheni).
**Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF)**

http://www.bandungcreative.id/

In the mid-2000s, creatives, urbanists and civic activists began to cohere around some core development opportunities (and challenges) for their city. The holistic concept of creativity was adopted to help shape a narrative of urban change and innovation, stoked by a shared passion to improve the quality of life, economy and equality of life chances for citizens. The BCCF was conceptualised as a community hub, formed by 45 creative individuals & communities. It started as a form of activism that uses design and creative activities to create prototypes of urban solutions. Since 2008, it has delivered more than 250 programmes, with a crowning achievement the establishment of Bandung as a UNESCO City of Design. Activities have included:

- Prototyping urban solutions – to test remedies for urban challenges and explore innovations for urban futures
- Design-thinking: “Design is not only to the physical appearance and built environment of the city, but also the idea that “design” can be a way of thinking to solve urban issues.” (Tita Larasati, Chair of BCCF).
- Creative hubs and districts. In recent years, the BCCF has developed from its ideation, simulation and advocacy role to drive the development of sustainable and inclusive creative hubs for the city.

Today BCCF is one of the more established and well-known citizen-led movements in the region.

The British Council was an active supporter of the BCCF before its official launch. This was both directly:

- By actively championing their work as part of a wider Creative Cities Programme (which included some support for mapping activities and led to the diagnostic research study by CIPG). The British Council also directly invested into BCCF activities, including the international design workshops / weeks. It was at the Design Week in 2014 that the BCCF officially launched the Indonesian Creative Cities Network – in agreement with the city of Solo that the first ICCN Symposium would be held there (in 2015). The British Council actively encouraged this roll-out and scale-up of the network, playing a facilitating and advocacy role and helping to bring other cities into the conversation.

And indirectly:

- By backing talented individuals with leadership qualities. This includes the current Chair, Tita Larasati, who has an ongoing strategic relationship with the British Council and is working in close partnership to build the profile and capacity of the Indonesian creative economy.
**Social and cultural transformation**

The British Council’s work on the creative economy in Indonesia traverses a set of cultural, economic and social outcomes. A key attribute of the British Council approach has been to connect creative economy activities to those of its wider arts and cultural programme. This is based on pragmatism: with small teams working in a complex multi-partner environment to build relationships and support cultural development and exchange, it would be impractical to run creative economy activities separately. This is also based on the reality of creative practice: the arts and cultural sectors are part of the creative economy, generating ideas, developing content and mobilising talent. Plus the main resource of the creative economy is a diversity of talent drawn from across different communities.

Thus, a real strength of the British Council’s work in Indonesia is its integration with an arts and cultural programme that purposefully delivers social outcomes as a vital element for an inclusive, sustainable and high quality creative economy. This is evidenced in a number of ways, for example:

- By engaging ‘bottom-up’ initiatives such as BCCF, where young talent plays a leadership role in driving innovation and change in their local creative economy
- By reaching out and supporting young and emergent creative talent, initially via YCE and more recently via creative entrepreneurship capacity building and support with networking and showcasing
- By embracing a diversity of cultural expressions – working with artists and creative practitioners from across Indonesia and connecting with them with UK and Southeast Asian talent to share and co-produce
- By championing the work of women in the creative economy, such as through support to women-run creative projects and enterprises
- By supporting the development of creative hubs and networks – as safe spaces for creative expression and as tolerant and inclusive platforms for talent development
- By celebrating the work of disabled artists and demonstrating their vital contribution to civil society and creative industries development. For example, UK / ID 2016 – 18 is one of the major interventions for the British Council in Indonesia. It is a three year programme which builds new links between young creatives and builds awareness of contemporary arts in Indonesia and the UK. It converges outcomes in social development, cultural excellence, and innovation and growth for the creative economy.

HIJUP, Jakarta, a women-led modest fashion company which the British Council supported to showcase in London
3. Vietnam Overview

“The British Council-led Creative Hubs programme is a big leap for the development of creative hubs in Vietnam. It focuses on the issues and situations in Vietnam and the things that are most lacking, for example legal status. It is a very realistic goal” (San Art, Ho Chi Minh City).

Over the last decade, the British Council has played an important and much-valued role in connecting Vietnamese and UK creative talent and cultural organisations to build strong and mutually beneficial relationships; in highlighting opportunities for innovation and inclusive growth through the creative industries; and in directly building capacity and confidence. As part of its broader portfolio of education and cultural activities, The British Council has operated as an enabler and influencer, supporting an emergent Vietnamese creative industries sector to develop a voice and profile; and working in partnership with Government, civil society and other international agencies to build the first National Strategy for the Cultural Industries. This role has gained in momentum and profile, with the 2016 National Strategy for the Development of the Cultural Industries catalysing a set of practical strategic relationships between the British Council and Vietnam, such as via a network of creative hubs, festivals, fashion and crafts programmes.

Vietnam, which remains a centralised one-party communist state, is embarking on a process of 'marketisation' triggered by an opening up of the economy by the Government in an attempt to keep pace with the economic growth shown elsewhere in the region (in what were, at least until the 2008 global downturn, referred to as ‘tiger economies’). The British Council, alongside UNESCO, has had a high profile in Vietnam as a widely trusted provider of knowledge and expertise on how to effectively build a strong creative economy which enables Vietnam to grow its economy while retaining its distinctive cultural identity.

The British Council has worked to set agendas – e.g. on the important role of creative hubs as safe spaces for diverse cultural expression and as vital enablers for collaboration and innovation. With a national mapping exercise, capacity-building activities and the launch of a Vietnam network of creative hubs, The British Council has helped to give profile and legitimacy to a nascent ecosystem of creative hubs and networks otherwise struggling for visibility and voice.

The British Council’s creative economy programmes have led to improved partnership and sector engagement across creative economy. For example, the first creative economy mapping research (2014), Creative Hub Toolkit (2016), and Creative Hub: Experience from Europe (2016), have helped raise awareness of the potential for creative growth, the role of hubs and the importance of developing stronger networks both within civil society and business and with Government. The forthcoming Directory of Creative Industries, funded by the British Council, being produced by University of Leicester and Hanoi Grapevine’s Ms Truong Uyen Ly, will also be another valuable tool.
The British Council can be credited with identifying an opportunity to move beyond an historically piecemeal approach to policy and partnership toward a breakthrough moment where the creative industries were recognised as a major driver of economic development and inclusive growth for Vietnam and thus deserving of a high profile and programmatic approach. This opportunity came in the form and process of the country’s first National Strategy for Development of the Cultural Industries, for which the British Council played a formative role.

This Strategy was triggered by Vietnam signing the 2005 United Nations Convention on the Protection and Promotion of a Diversity of Cultural Expressions. It therefore enabled the British Council, alongside UNESCO and other international organisations such as the Goethe Institute, to couple economic development with inclusion, tolerance and freedom of expression.

The British Council and UNESCO, were the key international players responsible for the drafting, introduction (2013-2015) and subsequent ratification by the Vietnamese Prime Minister (2016) of the Strategy. Between 2012 and 2016 the British Council, UNESCO, the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, and the Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies, developed a number of technical assistance projects and delivered a series of practical workshops that served to bring experts, practitioners and government together, raise awareness, share skills and build toward the National Strategy for the Development of the Cultural Industries. It was the British Council’s core work in knowledge gathering, relationship building, exchanges and partnering that ensured this new Strategy was realised.

The British Council effected successful cultural industries policy change in Vietnam through a series of critical interventions using its core capabilities to its advantage: knowledge gathering (in the form of reports on creative hubs); exchanges, advocacy and partnering. These individual interventions had different short, medium and long-term impacts, from initial baseline understanding of the sector, to awareness raising, forging UK connections, advocacy, sharing UK best practice, facilitating practice transfer and establishing a lasting dialogue between government and the cultural/creative sector.

Though the Goethe Institute held a workshop in 2014, and Denmark conducted diagnostic work in 2012, there is little evidence of their involvement, unfortunately, data on these (and other international institutes’) interventions is lacking.
Crafting Futures 2017

Crafting Futures is a global British Council programme to support the future of craft internationally and strengthen creative practice and skills between craft artisans and designers. It was brought to Vietnam in 2017 to help upskill rural artisans and highlight traditional craftsmanship to emerging designers and practitioners. It had a particular focus on women and girls.

The project was built around an open call for designers to attend a series of workshops on business development, sustainable design, creative thinking and working with artisans. The workshops were run by local hub partners Kilomet 109 and Work Room Four. NESTA also delivered a session on creative entrepreneurship. Applicants came from multiple different specialisms and were aged between 20 and 40.

Selected designers were given residencies in local communities where they met with artisans and craft communities to learn traditional techniques and share their own creative processes in return. This helped upskill both communities. Participants were then encouraged to write business plans and submit a prototype design. Out of the 20 submissions, the best three projects received funding (£2,000, £1,500, £1,000) to develop their plan further. All 20 received Women and girls in ethnic minority and rural communities are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and their talents too rarely generate economic sustainability or critical success. Crafting Futures seeks to respond to the structural challenges facing Vietnamese crafts and explore its potential as a source of inclusive growth.

Crafting Futures is an example of a British Council intervention at its most impactful – based on extensive knowledge gathering, partnership-driven, inclusive and thus in keeping with the international Global Arts Strategy. The winner Ms Vi Thi Thu Trang, a young member of the Thai ethnic group, used the project to explore the traditional weaving of the Mông ethnic group and the patterns of Hàng Trống folk painting. In 2018 she was using her prize fund to open a new shop selling her collection of handicrafts in Hanoi.
4. Colombia Overview

“The British Council is someone you need to be talking to. It is holistic and looks long-term. They give us the space to think and we work closely, providing mutual feedback and even therapy!” (Adriana Gonzalez, Ministry of Culture of Colombia).

For 18 years, the British Council has played an important and much-valued role in supporting the development and growth of the Colombian creative economy. Indeed, it was through the work of the British Council that the concept of creative economy was first explored in Colombia; that the first sector mapping activities were undertaken; that the first policy development processes commenced; and that the first tailored creative entrepreneurship training took place. Moreover, the role of the British Council can be attributed directly to the design and now delivery of the first national creative economy policy in South America: The Orange Economy Law. This is because it was through British Council partnership work in Colombia, led by a skilled, engaging and passionate team, that the creative economy gained a profile and became a serious consideration for both economic and social development. Plus a key member of the British Council’s international creative economy team (based in London) returned to Colombia and has since played an important leadership role as adviser to the current President Iván Duque.

The work of the British Council in Colombia has been extensive and diverse, with a convergence of activities in the arts and the creative economy. It began earlier than for most countries, with initial creative economy policy study visits to the UK and pilot activities in mapping and entrepreneurship undertaken as early as 2001. As with other countries, a core activity of the British Council has been one of broker and facilitator, connecting Colombian and UK creative talent and cultural organisations to build strong and mutually beneficial relationships; highlighting opportunities for innovation and inclusive growth through the creative industries; and in directly building capacity and confidence with a focus on talent development, creative city-making, festivals and networks.

In Colombia, the British Council has been the key international partner in shaping a policy and partnership agenda for the creative economy. Although capacity have not been consistently available for intensive policy and partnership work (with a small team which has not always had dedicated resources for creative economy activities), the British Council has managed to build trusted relationships with Government at a national and municipal level, with key cultural organisations and education institutions, and with networks of artists and creative practitioners. In part this has been achieved by aligning its work in the arts with a continued strategic agenda to build support for developing the wider creative economy. This has involved agility and smart partnership working to ensure the creative economy ‘agenda’ has not been significantly compromised during periods when there has been no creative economy programme. It has also involved smart prioritisation. For example, rather than attempt to work in every region, the British Council has focused its energy to help shape local development pathways in places where the appetite, energy and competencies for creative economy development were deemed to exist – e.g. Bogota, Medellin, Cartagena and Cali.

In 2019, to coincide with its 80th anniversary working in Colombia, the British Council is developing a three year creative economy programme, with a dedicated resource to build activities across three areas of activity:

1. **Systemic**: To influence policy and build on existing partnerships with Government – e.g. via the Orange Economy bill

2. **Institutional**: To support institutional change, including capacity and innovation in key cultural organisations, universities and programmes.

3. **Individual**: To offer individual opportunities so talent can flourish and a new generation of leaders be nurtured.
Policy and Practice Transfer in the Creative Economy
Policy-led solutions have grown in significance in Colombia since the early 2000s – both at a national level via the Ministry of Culture; and at a local level, with some proactive municipalities, notably Bogota, Medellin, Cali and Cartagena. Colombia has been the most proactive of all Latin American states in its creative economy formulation and in the development of dedicated policy platforms and actions, notably the establishment of the Orange Economy Law and, before that, the establishment of a Creative Economy Unit in 2010. Colombia became a signatory of the UN Convention on the Protection and Promotion of a Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2013, which has also helped advance policy and investment in the creative economy.

The British Council has been an active and prominent partner. The Ministry of Culture of Colombia value the work of the British Council in three main ways:

- **As an illuminator** – highlighting good practice in the UK via study tours and by bringing UK experts to policy seminars in Colombia. Plus disseminating information and building awareness.

- **As an advocate** – supporting national and local government to prioritise investment in and support for the creative economy, via workshops and an ongoing process of advice and guidance.

- **As an enabler** – providing technical assistance through workshops, such as through baseline mapping activities in Bogota and then Medellin. This includes working with the Ministry of Culture, which has the satellite account for the National Statistics Agency of Colombia. The Government of Colombia has also established a programme called ‘Clusters of Creative Entrepreneurship’ in smaller cities across the country – as a direct response to baseline work in Bogota and Medellin.

Creative Cities
The British Council has also played an active role at a regional and / or municipal level, helping to build awareness of and commitment to cities as drivers of innovation and growth in the creative economy. For example, it has built a strong a trusted relationship with the **Municipality of Bogota** over more than a decade – kickstarted with the first baseline mapping research. Bogota has since become a regional pioneer for sector baseline mapping – as the first major municipality to take the satellite account for culture and develop a detailed baseline mapping study.

The British Council has played an instrumental role in this policy journey – initiating the first mapping exercise and providing an ongoing presence of advice and guidance as the Bogota Ministry of Culture has shown increased aspiration and leadership. This is leading directly into some pioneering policy activities – such as the first Music Strategy for Bogota; a Creative Economy masterplan which prioritises creative hubs and districts; targeted programmes to build capacity and entrepreneurship; the introduction of new investment models; and market development for the creative industries.

**Idartes**, the City of Bogota’s major cultural development agency, has had a strategic programme for the creative economy since 2016. It has worked closely with the British Council across three main areas:

- **Creative Industries development** – including advice on entrepreneurship models and hubs and clusters (Idartes is a leading partner to the new Bronx Creative District).
- **Social Transformation** – toward a more inclusive, fair and sustainable sector

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8 With over 20,000 activities. Idartes also manages 20 cultural buildings.

tom fleming / creative consultancy /
- **Art / science / technology** – a convergent, innovative creative economy.

Idartes see the British Council as a pioneer:

“The first organization talking about the creative economy over 10 years ago. They are a good ally and the UK is a leader in this topic, so we look to them for advice and connections”.

Similarly, the **City of Medellin** sees the British Council as a much valued source of advice and inspiration – especially with regard to agendas such as art and education and creative- and culture-led urban renewal. Working with organisations such as the city’s entrepreneurship and skills development agency **CONFAMA** and **Circulart** (the major independent music industry event for Colombia), the City of Medellin has big aspirations for the Creative Economy.

The British Council played an important role in building municipal appetite and commitment, with the **Creative Economy Medellin** project in 2013. This was an 8-month programme which included creative economy baseline research and a publication; a policy guidance publication; creative entrepreneurship support activities; hands-on apprenticeship and creative skills provision (with the support of CCSkills from the UK). It came at a vital time for the city, as it was in a process of being reborn from a desperate crisis of violence and dislocation caused by the drugs trade. The British Council worked as a sensitive enabler and seeded activities which have gained real momentum five years on.
**Backing Talent**

The British Council has long been a champion of young creative talent. This was most emphatically demonstrated through its YCE programme, which provided a much valued showcasing and validation mechanism – which catapulted creative entrepreneurs into the limelight and gave some a significant career boost. Examples of YCE success stories include Liliana Andrade (Velouria), Andrés Barragán (Puntoaparte) and Johanna Pinzón (Poliedro).

The British Council team in Colombia are credited by YCE participants for their openness and eagerness: to explore the evolving creative scene in Colombia, to source emergent talent, and to flexibly identify ways talent can be championed. Johanna, who runs an innovation and creative technology company, with a big focus on creative tech for women, won the YCE in 2014 and then went on to be given the ‘Young Leader of America’ in 2014, with a highlight being a ceremony at The White House:

“It enabled me to test ideas and build new models which I wouldn’t have had the confidence to do before. The British Council was the first organisation which believed in a woman – which is so important in Colombia, where less than 1% of technology companies are run by women”.

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**Economic benefit and sustainability**

The British Council has played a facilitating and value-adding role in the Colombian creative economy story. In a small and often tailored way, it has helped to:

- Raise awareness of and validate the economic (as well as social) significance of the creative industries and creativity more generally.
- Support talent to reach markets and build alliances – e.g. via showcasing activities and events from BAM to BOMM, ART BO to Cartagena Literary Festival. The focus on relationship building and network navigation has unlocked multiple B2B and B2C transactions which have helped build sustainable creative businesses and brands.
- Demonstrated the link between arts and cultural activities and the higher growth creative industries sectors by affirming the importance of networks and communities and of building links across the value chain(s). This has enabled the British Council to connect its work in the arts to the creative economy.
- Recognising that creative practice is context specific and that a place-based approach is required – hence nurturing embedded relationships in cities across Colombia. This has been difficult to deliver given the very small arts and creative economy team. Credit must be given for managing to retain and in some cases build relationships, especially outside Bogota.

In all of the above, the British Council has played a pragmatic and at times responsive role which has been driven by a hunger to connect and keenness to build relationships. The focus on intercultural dialogue, collaborative practice and sustainable social and creative economies in more ‘marginal’ locations such as the south of Bogota and Cali, are pointing toward a focus on inclusive creative economy.
**Case Study: The Bogota Chamber of Commerce (BCC)**

www.ccb.org.co/en

The BCC, which operates as an arms-length provider for the City of Bogota, is a long-term partner to the British Council. It was involved as a partner to the 2001 creative industries mapping pilot and was given specialist advice and guidance from the Cultural Industries Development Agency (CIDA) of West Yorkshire. This experience is credited as being key to shaping the idea and rationale for major creative showcase and market events: BAM (Bogota Audiovisual Market) and BOMM (Bogota Music Market). The British Council was a guest of honour for these events in their earliest forms and has, with its limited resources, had an active presence – attending events and where possible supporting creative forms and artists to participate.

In 2012, the British Council had a more prominent role in BAM as guest of honour – also in collaboration with Proimágenes, the Colombian audiovisual development agency. Over 30 prominent UK professionals came to Colombia which was vital for exchange. However,

“It was hard to do business because we were not at the same level. But now we are better and have much more to share” (Proimágenes).

In the last three years, the BCC has developed two further work streams (to this focus on creative markets), both of which have been influenced by the advocacy and relationship-building role of the British Council:

- **Creative districts**, with a focus on the Bronx in Bogota. There is also a focus on establishing a new science, technology and innovation district – to interconnect emergent strengths in the Bogota economy.
- **Creative skills / entrepreneurship**. This is to build capacity and formalise key parts of the creative industries value chain. There is also a gap in technical English skills, which reduces international competitiveness.
The British Council has contributed to the development of capacity, connectedness and exposure of the Colombian creative economy. This includes targeted support to connect Colombian creative talent to the UK - to introduce talent to new ways of working and develop fresh and sustainable collaborations. The British Council has also helped advance the growth of an expanding cohort of creative businesses, with facilitated support to participate in showcase events, festivals and networks.

British Council support is most impactful in building relationships within the Colombian creative economy, enhancing the visibility, confidence and strategic value placed upon the sector. In turn, this has helped to strengthen sector partnership and organisational capacity, which can heighten the potential for growth.

However, the scale and diversity of Colombia and the very limited (and fluctuating) capacity of the British Council have meant that opportunities have been missed. This includes opportunities to build a stronger profile for UK and Colombian collaboration at major trade and exchange events; and opportunities to connect activities in creative entrepreneurship to those in social transformation (such as via the programmes of SENA).

A major ongoing challenge is managing expectation and building relevance as a valued-partner without significant spending power. To date, the British Council has managed expectation quite well, although there is some frustration that activities have not been scaled or that there have been gaps in intensity. A future opportunity over this new three year **British Council creative economy programme** will be to grow the role and influence of the creative economy in Colombia in ways that maximise mutuality to both the UK and Colombia.

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**Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (SENA)**

**www.sena.edu.co**

SENA is the umbrella agency for all the skills programmes in Colombia, working under the Ministry of Labour. It has 85 different training programmes working across trade, science and industry. It majors on boosting the employability of the workforce, including a focus on increasing access to the labour market for women and people from the informal sectors. As with the BCC (see above), SENA has a long-term relationship with the British Council – a relationship which has fluctuated according to the capacity of the British Council and/or the priorities of SENA. It began in 2001, when some of the senior management of SENA participated in a British Council-led UK study visit to the Creative Industries Development Agency (CIDA) in West Yorkshire. This provided exposure to the targeted business support, skills and employability programmes underway in the UK. This was followed-up by tailored coaching from a UK creative entrepreneur coach; and a further study visit to the UK in 2008, to engage with Merseyside ACME. In 2009 / 10, the British Council provided a workshop with SENA on creative entrepreneurship in fashion/textiles (e.g. with a focus on dance-wear).

These activities helped colleagues in SENA to build the rationale for dedicated creative industries training programmes and for a targeted approach to incubation. Today there are 117 SENA centres across Colombia, with 15 in Bogota. Each has a tailored package of training activities, with 8,000 training places available in the creative industries per year and 62,000 short courses (in all sectors) across Bogota.

The British Council has played a long-term role as a provider of knowledge and, on occasion, SENA have connected with the British Council to access expertise. The British Council can be credited with playing a formative role in shaping the creative economy agenda within SENA, which at the time was more geared toward sport. However, it has been difficult to maintain strong partnership. In part this is due to the mismatch in terms of scale, with SENA operating as a vast high volume training provider. It is also in part due to a lack of clarity on where mutually beneficial partnership can be established. For example, SENA works toward the provision of training to the relatively socially marginal, for which mutuality is harder to achieve with UK organisations which have historically worked in Colombia. In addition, skills provision tends towards relatively basic levels, with pathways into the higher education sector and higher growth creative industries still being explored by SENA and partners.
5. In Summary
Over the last decade, and in some cases longer, the British Council has had a major impact on building awareness, policy commitment, partnership and capacity across the creative economies of four large, complex and fast-changing countries:

- It has played a pivotal role in shaping the strategic agenda for the creative economy and in pioneering approaches to sector development (e.g. entrepreneurship, hubs, mapping, new types of partnership)
- It is a much-valued facilitator and enabler, connecting talent locally and with the UK, giving visibility and voice and thus acting as a go-to partner for information, access to networks and connections to the UK
- It has delivered transformational impact on the career trajectories of creative talent, from the YCE programme to Creative Enterprise toolkit; and via programmes of showcasing and exchange.
- It has influenced step change in national policy and strategic partnerships, leveraging investment and building new alliances
- It has been a catalyst for place-based approaches, pioneering models for creative cities and establishing creative hubs as forces for good and vital safe spaces for creative dialogue and expression
- It has consistently been a champion of inclusivity and openness, with a particular focus on women and girls, young people, people with disabilities and minorities.

Much of this has been achieved with limited and fluctuating budgets, considerable turnover of staff and constant changes to the strategic partnership landscape.

In each of the countries featured in this expansive study, the creative economy has become a key national priority. The British Council can take considerable credit for this. Yet it is not always clear how the British Council has played a role and the impact it as made, with issues of monitoring and gaps in institutional memory. It is also challenging to isolate cause and effect in such vast and transforming countries. However, the testimonies provided in this research and the clear evidence of policy change and investment, indicate that the role of the British Council is much valued and significant.

With improved monitoring and evaluation, enhanced continuity of programmes and projects, and a clearer overall value proposition, the British Council can build from a position of good will and high profile to support these countries and others to develop inclusive creative economies which deliver locally and for the UK. Continued ‘deep dive research’ such as this study, and a refreshed commitment to new types of collaboration, will ensure an evidence-based and engaging approach to creative economy development which will serve creative policy, partnership and talent development well for the next decade and more.