

Event Programme

The Missing Pillar Talks

Common Sense and The Community

9-10 March 2022 | #TheMissingPillar

In association with:



Culture can inspire us, change our
way of thinking and bring us together.

The Missing Pillar Talks

Common Sense and The Community

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Culture and the creative economy have incredible potential to shape a greener, fairer, safer, more inclusive world for everyone. Culture is a core part of what makes us human. It helps us to make sense of the world, to challenge our perceptions, and to ignite our emotions. It has the power to unite us around shared goals and inspire action for a better future.

The Missing Pillar Talks return with 'Common Sense and The Community', taking place online Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th March, 13:00-17:00 GMT. This global programme of virtual talks, films, performances and discussions looks at culture's contribution to UN Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, including People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships. Over two half days participants will look at how culture can inspire us, change our way of thinking and bring us together.

All live sessions will be available in English, Arabic, French and Spanish and will be British Sign Language interpreted.

The Missing Pillar Talks are organised by the British Council in association with the United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO (UKNC) and the Culture Committee of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). This Missing Pillar Talk is programmed by Barker Langham.

Free to attend.
[Register here.](#)

Common Sense

Wednesday 9th March, 2022

13:00 - Part one

Culture and Common Sense

A welcome to the Missing Pillar Talks from the team at the British Council, and an exploration of what “common sense” means for culture and the SDGs.

The United Nations’ Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals represent a new way of thinking about the world, our role in it, and our responsibilities to others. Perhaps we could view them as a new “common sense”, around which to build a shared, brighter future?

But how does common sense translate from the global to the local? Is culture the tool that can make sense truly “common”? Or is it, rather, the force that will stretch such universalising schemes and concepts to breaking point?

Speakers

- Celia Barron, Culture and Development Programme Manager, British Council
- Rosanna Lewis, Culture and Development Lead, British Council
- Skinder Hundal, Director of Arts, British Council

Rewriting the Future: Culture, Communication and Women’s Equality

Common sense does not necessarily mean common good. Every day, different kinds of shared thinking can hurt people. Common sense can marginalise particular groups and deny them their freedoms. It can legitimise hatred and stifle opportunity. In many parts of the world, it justifies violence against women, limits girls’ access to education, and places restrictions on the roles that they can aspire to play in society.

In these linked sessions, an international panel of female writers, artists and leaders will share readings that have shaped their views of themselves and society, and which exemplify the power of literature to rebalance our world for the better. The panel will discuss the role culture can play in the pursuit of UN SDG5 on gender equality as well as other Global Goals, and in changing the way we see and value ourselves and others.

Moderator

- Alia Alzougbi, Joint CEO Shubbak Festival of contemporary Arab culture

Panel

- Hélène Papper, Director of Global Communications and Advocacy at the United Nations International Fund for Agricultural Development
- Lola Shoneyin, Poet, Author and Founder of the Aké Arts and Book Festival, Nigeria
- Velia Vidal, Writer and Cultural Promoter, Colombia

15:00 - Part two

Stories of Change: Films For Our Planet

United Nations’ SDG 13 calls for climate action to protect the Earth and its life systems. Yet that goal will only be realised if together we learn to view our planet in a different way for this and future generations.

In this session, we present two films which offer powerful perspectives on the environmental crisis and the response it demands from us: Joanna Vasquez Arong’s short documentary To Calm the Pig Inside, and Soumik Datta’s animated film and music album Songs of the Earth. Afterwards, Joanna and Soumik will be joined by filmmaker and activist Lisa Russell, and Ellen Windemuth of streaming platform WaterBear to consider the power and the limits of film in making change on a global scale.

Moderator

- Joanna Duncombe, Film Consultant for the British Council

Panel

- Soumik Datta, Musician, Composer, Director and TV Presenter, Soumik Datta Arts
- Lisa Russell, Artist, Filmmaker, and Founder of Create2030
- Joanna Vasquez Arong, Writer, Film Director and Producer
- Ellen Windemuth, CEO WaterBear Network

The Community

Thursday 10th March, 2022

13:00 Part one

Culture and The Community

Welcome back and exploration of the theme Community.

Art and culture can bring communities together, just as surely as they can hold them apart from one another. From mass media campaigns to small scale arts projects, culture helps bind us together and articulate shared values and purposes. Yet at the same time, cultural differences in the ways we work together, think, communicate, and value and represent people and ideas can seed mistrust and damage relations. Working with culture and community then, means working with two powerful but volatile elements.

To kick off this second day of the Missing Pillar Talks and frame the discussions to follow, we will hear from Piers Bradford of Project Everyone, an ambitious initiative mobilising film and multiplatform content in a media and communications campaign that aims at uniting people everywhere behind the UN's Global Goals.

Speakers

- Rosanna Lewis, Culture and Development Lead, British Council
- Piers Bradford, Managing Director, Project Everyone, a United Nations Global Partner for SDG Advocacy and Outreach

Two Worlds? Formality, Informality and the Creative Economy

To open this session, we will screen a short film exploring the role that informal creative economies play in bringing people together, creating shared prosperity, driving innovation and catalysing social change in the Global South.

Building from research carried out by the International Council of the Policy and Evidence Centre, the film asks what lessons we can learn from the informal 'sector', and how policymakers and funders can best adapt to support it. The film will be followed by a panel discussion bringing together cultural economists, policymakers, funders and thought leaders from around the world to reflect on the implications of the research.

Moderator

- John Newbigin OBE, Founder and first Chairman of Creative England, Chair, PEC International Council

Featuring

- Avril Joffe, Head of Cultural Policy & Management Department, Wits School of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand
- Priya Krishnamoorthy, Founder and CEO of 200 Million Artisans
- Dimakatso Mtholo, performing artist, researcher, and the Project Manager for SO | Academy and The Centre for the Less Good Idea.
- Leandro Valiati, Lecturer in Arts and Cultural Management, University of Manchester
- Edna Dos Santos, Economist, associated expert for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR); vice-president of the International Federation on Internet and Multimedia (FIAM)
- George Gachara, entrepreneur, arts manager, and managing partner at HEVA Fund LLP
- Jairaj Mashru, Innovation Executive at Salesforce.com

The Five Ps: Networking Session on People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals aim to stimulate action around five areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet - the "Five Ps": People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership.

In this dynamic networking session, participants will be shuffled at random into pairs and invited to share their perspectives on each of the 5 Ps with other attendees. Each paired conversation will last five minutes before the next begins with a new partner. Like speed-dating for sustainable development, this will be a fast-paced, challenging, and fun way for attendees to find and forge new connections, share ideas and map out new futures with others within and beyond their own fields, to start to build a sense of community..

Introduced by

- Rosanna Lewis, Culture and Development Lead, British Council

The Community

Thursday 10th March, 2022

15:15 - Part two

From the Ground Up: Culture, Community and Crisis

Viewed from the ground up, the UN Global Goals can appear distant and abstract. It can be difficult to connect community action to a coherent bigger picture. Yet it is often through local initiatives within those communities, frequently responding to contexts of crisis, that the most profound changes occur, and the strongest visions of a better future take root and grow.

In this final session we'll learn about three projects that harness global cultural networks to drive tangible change on the ground. In Colombia, ¿Cuál es la verdad? - one part of a wider project called Changing the Story, is using music to bring young people together in the wake of violence. In South Africa, Cambodia and Jordan, Skateistan is changing children's lives through the power of skateboarding. And around the world, Arts and Homelessness International is connecting people who experience poverty and extreme social marginalisation with cultural centres and creative projects to encourage expression, and build resilience and solidarity among an ever-growing community.

Moderator

- Charlotte Pyatt, Project Coordinator, Toward 2030

Panel

- Edwar Calderon, Changing the Story
- Juana Paola Palacios, Changing the Story
- Cyndi Mendoza, Programs Director, Skateistan
- Mbali Mthethwa, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Manager, Skateistan
- Yvette Waweru, Arts and Homelessness International
- Renata Pepl, Arts and Homelessness International
- Matt Peacock, Arts and Homelessness International

Closing Remarks

Following two days and four sessions of conversation, debate and provocation, this final short panel discussion will bring the Missing Pillar Talks to a close. A panel of leading cultural policy makers will reflect on the lessons we can learn and the inspiration we can take from the event as a whole. This will be a chance to reflect together on the progress we have made, the challenges that still lie ahead, and the opportunities that culture presents to us in pursuit of the UN Global Goals.

Moderator

- Rosanna Lewis, Culture and Development Lead, British Council

Panel

- James Bridge, Chief Executive and Secretary-General, UK National Commission for UNESCO
- Jordi Pascual, Coordinator, United Cities and Local Governments Culture Committee
- Maria Garcia Holley, Head of Arts Mexico, British Council
- Diana Marcela Rey Vásquez, Political Scientist and Expert in Creative Economy



The British Council would like to thank all speakers and moderators, the members of the global working group, our partners UKNC and UCLG, and the creative team at Barker Langham for helping to curate the programme for this Missing Pillar Talk: Common Sense and The Community.

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