

Social Innovation Grants to develop international partners and projects

January 2020

Introduction

Following its partnership with the Global Parliament of Mayors Summit 2018, the British Council selected Bristol to pilot social innovation small grants by which individuals and organisations in the city could gain access to and develop international networks and experiences. This initial pilot scheme was delivered in autumn 2019 (a summary of the projects supported is in Appendix one).

We are delighted to announce that the scheme will run again in the spring of 2020. The 2020 scheme will run as part of a programme of work exploring the 'grand challenges' facing society today and looking to find cross-disciplinary big solutions to these.

The focus is on social innovation in cities: new social practices that aim to better meet social needs in, for example, working conditions, education, community development or health, in order to extend and strengthen civic society.

£10,000 has been made available to provide grants to individuals and organisations in Bristol. The maximum grant is £1,000. These grants are open to residents of Bristol only. Individuals applying from an organisation are only eligible if the organisation has an annual turnover of less than £500,000. Grant holders will have the opportunity to feature their work in a programme of events scheduled 19-21 November 2020 as part of the Festival of Ideas.

The British Council

The British Council has developed a Global Cities Strategy for 2019 – 25. It is developing City Plans to capture the breadth of work with ten cities in the UK ('focus cities'), agree a broad strategic direction and identify key areas of priority focus. The British Council is also working closely with 'focus cities' on their international strategies and ambitions, commissioning strategic pieces of work to support their ambitions. Examples are in Appendix one.

Grand Challenge and Big Solutions

There are many challenges facing the world. It's not hard to identify many of these. What is hard is to identify the solutions, gain wide agreement for them, and take necessary action. Few deny, for example, that we have a major problem with social care; few deny that climate change is a problem. But on these two challenges alone there is no unanimity, with action on both often being kicked into the long grass by governments. There are also fears and suspicions – about use of data and digital technology and robotics – and sometimes an inability to think in the long-term. There are fears, too, about the future of democracy, the decline of the West. At the same time there are many good ideas that deserve coverage and public debate. Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP) is building a programme of work and events which will identify the challenges; promote much debate about them; solicit the widest range of responses; and debate the solutions in November 2020. Some of the challenges identified include:

- How do we encourage pluralism in society?
- Is the West losing to China and India?
- How do we renew life for all – between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are yet to be born? How do we overcome intergenerational conflict fears? How do we make sure that future generations have a better standard of living than ones who came before?

- How do we all become good ancestors? How do we encourage people to change now for results which might not be apparent for decades and which they will not benefit from personally – the debt we owe the future?
- How can we encourage healthy ageing to meet an ageing society, living a good life through all life, and having a good death?
- How do we get people to eat less meat?
- How do we all become creative people through life?
- How do we overcome the crisis in mental health and promote wellbeing?
- How do we make sure the future of work leads to being able to live a good life?
- How do we make a digital future for all and use artificial intelligence and data well?
- Where next for the Me Too movement?
- What does it mean to have a fully inclusive and representational society?
- How do we overcome long-term productivity stagnation? Can we continue to grow – but in green and clean ways?
- How do we overcome inequality, poverty and a new gilded age?
- Can we think in new ways about the idea of progress in a peak-progress world?
- How do we keep Britain international? What happens if the United Kingdom breaks up?
- How do we rebuild trust?
- How do we save animals and come to a new settlement between humans and the natural world?
- What does true sustainability mean and what is the individual's responsibility in this?
- What is the future of soft power?
- How do we maintain open cities, nations, societies and regions and welcome newcomers? Why are cities the answer?
- Are we too pessimistic? Is it happiness or wellbeing we need?
- How do we meet the challenges of collectivism?
- How do we secure pensions, social security, in-work benefits and the like in an era of rising intergenerational conflict and tight budgets?

The Grants

The British Council is providing funding to BCDP, who will manage and deliver the allocation of grants. The aim of the scheme is to 'test' the potential for social innovation practices in cities to be internationalised in the future and to identify the kinds of face-to-face and digital activities which support this.

All projects/ individuals who receive this support will present their work at a special round-table discussion.

The scheme could include grants to individuals and organisations who wish to:

- Attend conferences or seminars internationally to disseminate their models of practice.
- Engage in a 'go-see' trip to observe innovative practice elsewhere.
- Participate in a workshop or visit with a potential international collaborator or partner to identify future collaborations.
- Scope out international market opportunities for the work of the individual or organisation.
- Capture case studies of work for a defined international publication or online platform which would promote the social innovation, the city of Bristol as a social innovation hub and the UK as a country with extensive experience in social innovation.
- Attend global social enterprise network meetings, such as Social Enterprise World Forum.

- Host an organisation from another country whose work is relevant to social innovation practices here in the UK for a workshop, seminar, conference or network meeting.

This is not an exhaustive list and applicants may make other proposals which they feel will bring mutual benefit for their work and for the work of other organisations they work with overseas.

Ideally, countries and organisations would be those in the British Council network in order to facilitate further exchange where it is of interest.

Successful applicants are also expected to contribute funds to the cash contribution provided from the grant.

Reporting

Each project will provide the following:

- A copy of any presentations to share with British Council and BCDP partners.
- A short report on the learning of the organisation/ individual from the international experience, the new contacts forged, the opportunities opened up and how these will be taken further forward.
- Social media responses to any engagement.
- Collated feedback from some people and organisations with whom the Bristol-based organisation has worked to understand the benefit on both sides.
- Any feedback around overseas perceptions of England and Bristol from grant holders.
- An outline of how the organisation will share their learning in Bristol and through their wider networks.
- Some photos of visit/conference/workshop attended (with copyright clearance for use by BCDP, British Council and partners).
- Participation in November 2020 workshop (this is likely to be either 18 or 19 November).

To apply

Please email an application of no longer than two sides of A4 at minimum 12 point size (any application over two sides of A4 will be rejected) to amy.obeine@businesswest.co.uk detailing:

- An outline of the activity to be funded
- The difference that this will make to your practice or professional development
- A short budget
- References

Applications can also be made by video/ audio. Please let us know if you would like to submit the application in a different format.

Timetable

Open call for ideas: 29 January 2020

Proposals submitted: 17.00, 6 March 2020

Decisions: 10 March 2020

All activity to be completed by end August 2020

Further Notes

Management and Decision-Making

All funding decisions will be made by a special advisory panel.

Credit and branding

British Council is the designated international partner in the Social Innovation Internationalism Grants scheme, along with BCDP and Bristol City Council.

The British Council will be credited as the funder of the Grant scheme in all press releases and publicity related to the scheme, as follows: *“This scheme has been developed by The British Council in partnership with Bristol City Council and the Festival of Ideas: Grand Challenges in response to demand at a round-table held in October 2018 to discuss the British Council’s Global Cities Framework 2020 – 25 and builds on the Social Innovation Grants Scheme and programme of work delivered in 2019.”*

British Council logos will be displayed on all print and online promotional materials, including websites and all emails to potential applicants. This will be done in accordance with the organisation’s brand guidelines, a copy of which will be supplied. The British Council’s branding will also feature at all events related to the Grants scheme in a format to be agreed. The British Council’s representatives (to be agreed) will also be given the opportunity to have a significant speaking opportunity or facilitation opportunity at the workshop where the experience of the successful organisations on is shared.

The British Council will be provided with all copies of reports produced by the grant recipients and all photos and media content. This will be written into the grant agreements.

Data Sharing

By applying to this scheme, you agree that all material provided can be shared with British Council, Bristol City Council and BCDP.

Examples of British Council work with ‘focus cities’ on their international strategies and ambitions

- ‘Transforming Narratives’ – building relationships through culture between Birmingham and cities in Bangladesh and Pakistan over a three-year period (2017 – 20).
- Commissioning a scoping study on the potential for the British Council to work with Birmingham on the cultural and participation programme for the Commonwealth Games 2022.
- Co-commissioning research for Manchester City Council’s international team and the city’s cultural partners on Manchester’s soft power with China.
- Partnering with Manchester’s young people on the international dimensions of a ‘Curriculum for Life’ for young people, and ‘Radical Reads’ a reading resource on protest in the last 200 years to mark the 200th anniversary of the Petrol Massacre.
- Supporting Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 on a travel grant scheme, a programme of work with the Youthful Cities network and to build international relationships, engaging with creative producers working internationally.
- Working with Belfast on its Resilience Plan in partnership with the 100 Resilient Cities Network.
- Partnering with Liverpool City Region on their 30-year Culture and Creativity Strategy, building their relationships with Shanghai and Surabaya, Indonesia, as well as developing robust impact measurements of the city’s international work across arts, education and society.
- Partnering with Festival of the Future City as international cultural relations partner 2019.

- Partnering with the Urban Psychology Summit being delivered by Heseltine Institute at University of Liverpool, Summer 2019.
- Continuing to work as international partner with Hull UK City of Culture 2017 through the development of an international strategy for the city.
- Partnering with International Newcastle to build the city's international cultural relations strategy.
- Contributing to the cultural resilience of two cities in our global network per year as part of our three-year agreement with 100Resilient Cities network.
- Building partnerships with international and other city networks including Euro cities, UNESCO Creative Cities network, the Core Cities Group, UCLG and others identified through our mapping of these networks.

Appendix one: 2019 Projects Supported

Annie Menter: Afrika Eye / Dakar. Afrika Eye, an annual festival of film arts and culture in Bristol and the South West, is linked to Dakar through a young film makers' exchange with the Image et Vie film festival. Annie Menter, director of Afrika Eye, travelled to Dakar to develop further work between the two festivals. Among other things, she aimed to: meet with her counterpart at Image et Vie to discuss how to build an ongoing relationship to facilitate further exchange and sharing of experiences for young people; and meet with artists for conversations towards further exchanges, commissions or residencies with Afrika Eye.

Becca Rose Glowacki: Making Futures / Berlin. Becca Rose Glowacki travelled to Berlin to take part in the Making Futures symposium, a two-week workshop where participants are invited to discuss ideas around future perspectives for learning and educational spaces and practices. She aimed to deepen her understanding of alternative learning practice and develop ideas around alternative learning spaces, which could then be applied to Bristol.

Bristol Links with Beira (Dominik Byrne, application made by Steve Strong): Post-Cyclone Activities / Beira. Dominik Byrne is the Project Director at Bristol Link with Beira. He travelled to Beira and engaged in post-cyclone activities there, learning about the Municipal Local Authority's rebuilding plan, strengthening the partnership between Bristol and Beira, and building toolkits to help the network support the city of Beira in the long term.

Dave Taylor-Matthews: Encounters / Hamburg Kurzfilmfestival – A Wall is a Screen. Dave Taylor-Matthews (Festival Producer of Encounters) attended Hamburg Kurzfilmfestival, meeting the team behind the festival, sampling their programmes (including A Wall is a Screen) and gathering the views of the audiences. He explored the possibility of an international collaboration between Bristol and Hamburg around A Wall is a Screen.

Edson Burton: Afrofuturism / Chicago. Edson Burton travelled to Chicago, visiting the Dorchester Projects (established by Theaster Gates), connecting with the Afrofuturist community, meeting the curator of the newly-established Blues Museum and meeting some of the leading names in the Black tech community. He hoped to develop his insights and practices by seeing how the legacies of slavery are handled in other cities, and gain insights into engagement methods that could be used by the Pervasive Media Studio and other organisations.

Euella Jackson: Rising Arts Agency – Art activism and technology / New York. Euella Jackson (Engagement Producer at Rising Arts Agency) went to New York to connect and learn from artists and organisations that are interrogating the relationship between art, activism and technology. She met and observed Eyebeam,

Stephanie Dinks and Morehsin Allahyari, and discussed the following questions: What is the relationship between art and technology in activism? And how can art and technology be used to empower marginalised groups and communities? How can alternative spaces – be it virtual or physical – be used to showcase artwork, provoke change and interrogate the world in which we live?

Georgina Perry: Hartcliffe Health Environment Action Group / Berlin. Hartcliffe Health Environment Group partnered with an urban growing project that could help them embrace new innovation in the approach to food and horticulture production and community action. They visited and met with Prinzessinnengarten, an urban farming project in Berlin, developing a partnership and bringing back options and ideas that they can develop further into programme activity in BS13.

Janine Marriott: Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust / Ghent. Janine Marriott (Public Engagement Manager, Arnos Vale Cemetery) attended the AGM of the Association of Significant Cemeteries of Europe, the theme of which was 'Heritage Cemeteries in the Twenty-First Century. She presented a paper ('Entertaining Living amongst the Dead') and made connections with a range of sites across Europe. The ideas gained at the conference will be used to develop the public offers at the cemetery, create new exhibitions and develop partnerships and city-wide working.

Jenny Foster: Global Goals Centre – SDGs / Dublin. Jenny Foster (Project Lead of the Global Goals Centre) and Caroline Pitt (steering group member) visited the Cool Planet Experience in Ireland, experienced the tour and met with key members of the management team. Their learnings clarified their ideas around what they can offer in the new Sustainable Development Goals Hub in Bristol, and they hope to build a relationship with the Experience to enable future collaboration for both parties.

Mena Fombo: Black Girl Convention / AfroTech 2019 California. Mena Fombo (Founder and Director of Black Girl Convention) attended the AfroTech2019 Conference in California. She gained new insights into the opportunities for growth for Black Girl Convention, and developed new networks and partnerships for women, exploring the possibilities of international exchanges for Black Girl Convention members and the potential for a virtual conference.

Rissa Mohabir: Trauma Awareness / Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. Rissa Mohabir aimed to pioneer an online Trauma Awareness training programme to meet the needs of those providing refugee/trauma-related services in the UK, and to pilot an international version by forging a partnership and collaborative project with Youth Activity Organisation in Sulaymaniyah, Northern Iraq.

Sado Jirde: Social Enterprise World Forum / Addis Ababa. Sado Jirde (Director, Black South West Network) and Angelique Retief (Research Associate, BSWN, and PhD student at the University of Bristol) attended the Social Enterprise World Forum, a forum for international exchange and collaboration in social entrepreneurship and social investment, held in 2019 in Addis Ababa. They explored new partnerships and shared ideas and practices with Black South West Network's international counterparts.

Simon Tepper: BLINC / Eco-tourism, Puerto Morazán. Simon Tepper is a director of BLINC, Bristol's twinning association with Nicaragua. He travelled to Puerto Morazán, one of Bristol's twin cities, to meet key stakeholders and partners, to consolidate Bristol's relationship with the city, and to explore the potential for eco-tours, assessing the infrastructure and facilities and collating relevant data needed for future funding bids for the planned eco-friendly tourism projects.

Terri Rotchell: Nightingale Valley Practice / European Forum Primary conference, Paris. Nightingale Valley Practice sent a delegate to the European Forum Primary Care conference in Paris, the theme of which was

Primary Care and Local Communities: Health Equity for Everyone, Everywhere. As well as workshops and talks from leading primary care specialists, international professors in health inequality and global champions in urban health, there were visits to community initiatives and opportunities for networking and building international links. Knowledge of projects that have improved the quality of life for communities and improved neighbourhoods were brought back to Bristol to be disseminated to the GP community through pathways such as the Clinical Commissioning Groups.