

RESEARCH GRANTS SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



Photo by Georgina Johnson at Africa Nouveau Festival, Nairobi Kenya

Call for Expressions of Interest

Art Connects Us

1. Introduction

The British Council is aiming to increase connections between the UK creative sectors and young creative professionals in Sub-Saharan Africa.

As well as building connections, we aim to expand knowledge of contemporary African art in the UK with a view to increase work from Sub-Saharan Africa being seen and experienced by UK audiences.

With this in mind we are seeking expressions of interest from UK based arts **organisations / curators / programmers** working in any of the following art forms - Visual Arts, Literature, Music, Theatre, Dance, Architecture, Design, Fashion and Film to travel to Sub-Saharan Africa to **connect with the local contemporary art sectors, and undertake their own professional research** to be shared with a wider UK sector in their chosen field. The trips should take place between April 2019 and March 2020.

Research may take the form of **meeting with potential artists and partners; finding out more about your chosen art forms' ecosystem in a country or countries; gaining an understanding of art trends in Sub-Saharan Africa; meeting arts organisations and/or attending events and festivals with a view to programming or curating work in the UK.**

The countries covered under the programme (in which the British Council operates) are: Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

2. Aims of the grant

This opportunity aims to:

- facilitate the UK creative sector's ambitions to connect with young, African creatives and art professionals who are 18 to 35-year-olds;
- increase opportunities for UK arts organisations and individuals to visit African cities and gain further insight into the chosen local art sector;
- encourage and support the development of networks that connect the UK and Sub-Saharan African arts sectors for the long term;
- widen the opportunities for art professionals in Sub-Saharan Africa to connect with UK arts organisations and arts professionals.

3. The British Council's Art Connects Us Programme

Our work in the arts creates new relationships between artists, organisations and audiences to develop stronger creative sectors around the world. Our work also recognises that supporting the development of the creative industries can contribute to more prosperous, fulfilling, and enriching lives for us all.

Our arts programme in Sub-Saharan Africa has three focus areas:

Creative Enterprise

We support young artists to professionalise their skills through opportunities to create work, connect with their peers and engage with formal training programmes. Through this work, which

primarily occurs in a Creative hub¹ context, we are supporting the contribution that the creative and cultural industries make to increasing career opportunities for young people.

Festivals

Festivals are a meeting point, a hive of activity for young people to network, share art, share skills, exchange ideas, and celebrate each other's art to wide and varied audiences. We support festivals across sub-Saharan Africa and the UK with new networks and ideas to help strengthen their artistry and impact.

New Connections

Our country-based arts teams continually explore the art sectors in which we work, so that we can share knowledge with others and inspire new connections between creative communities. We support initiatives that increase the awareness of contemporary culture in the countries in which we work and in doing so challenge the established narrative of Africa in the UK and vice versa.

For further reading please download our Sub-Saharan Africa Arts strategy

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british_council_arts_strategy_ssa_digital_0.pdf

4. The Grant

The British Council will award up to **9 grants** of **£2,500** (each) to proposals to undertake research of your chosen artistic sector & travel in the Sub-Saharan Region between **April 2019** and **March 2020**. We will be considering a geographical spread across the continent when assessing applications.

4.1 The selected applicants will be expected to:

- Commit time before the visit for preparation and research, including a briefing session with the British Council's arts team in advance (either in person or via video conference);
- Provide a plan of travel and outline areas of interest before departure for the research visit in the region;
- Document observations and keep a travelogue which could be published via the British Council;
- Provide a final report outlining main research finding, activity including who you met and connected with and potential suggestions for future programmes or curation linked to the artists you met. The report could take different formats (e.g. written, digital, film, photo-essay, interviews, podcast);
- Organise, in consultation with the British Council, a way to share the findings with your creative community in the UK;
- Be UK based.

5. Press and publicity

- The selected grantees are expected to agree to any reasonable requests for press or media, to discuss media coverage with the British Council and to assist in ensuring the British Council is credited in any press coverage sought independently.
- Press information will be agreed upon with the British Council.

¹ "A **Creative Hub** is a place, either physical or virtual, which brings **creative** people together. It is a convenor, providing space and support for networking, business development and community engagement within the **creative**, cultural and tech sectors." **Creative Hub definition**, Creative HubKit,

6. Procedure

If you are awarded the grant you will be put in touch with your art form UK Programme Manager who will help you shape the content of your trip with input from local art staff in the country/countries, you are visiting. We can provide different levels of care depending on the country/countries you will visit. This will be discussed with you once your grant is confirmed but an overview is detailed below:

East Africa:

1. Email/phone advice prior to departure on partners/artists/organisations to meet
2. Meet and greet with country arts team once you arrive in your host country

Southern Africa:

1. Email/phone advice prior to departure on partners/artists/organisations to meet
2. Meet and greet with country arts team once you arrive in your host country
3. Connections to events and activities over the time you are in country

West Africa:

1. Email/phone advice prior to departure on partners/artists/organisations to meet.
2. Visa support letter (if required)
3. Security briefing for important security tips

7. Criteria

The successful applicant is likely to:

- be based at UK arts organisation or individual with a proven track record of working internationally;
- have a minimum of 3 years professional experience in their sector;
- demonstrate experience in working with international partners to deliver collaborative arts programmes;
- have a basic knowledge of their chosen art sector in the region which is being visited (although the British Council will provide support in putting together a detailed programme);
- demonstrate a clear rationale for the research they want to undertake;
- demonstrate a commitment to our British Council values (see Notes on page 6).

In addition, applicants should:

- commit to programme a UK public forum to share/disseminate the research findings, this can either be done online or in person (see Notes on page 7 for examples);
- have a valid passport for travel;
- have a valid visa for travel (if required);
- have valid travel insurance;
- be able to travel between April 2019 and March 2020.

8. How to apply

If you would like to apply for this research grant, please submit a PDF Expression of Interest. This should comprise:

- Up to 2 examples of key projects and/or programmes that you feel represent your work
- A short statement (max 800 words) outlining why you are applying for this research grant and clearly state the following:
 - State the country or countries you would like to focus and conduct your research
 - State how your research proposal aligns with or addresses at least two of the 'Art Connects Us objectives' (see Notes section on page 6).
 - State what you hope to gain from the experience and outline some of the potential practical applications of the research into a tangible programme or project.
- Activity plan; identify the main stages of your activity during the research visit.
- CV (up to 2 pages)

Submissions should be in a single PDF file and not to exceed 2MB in size. These should be emailed to Mabel.Kebirungi@britishcouncil.or.ug by **18:00 (GMT) on 8 March 2019**.

If you're disabled or have a physical or mental health condition that makes it difficult for you travel on your own, a separate grant for a Personal Access Assistant will be discussed on a case by case basis.

This application is available in large print upon request and reasonable adjustments will be made for applicants who may need to make a submission in a different format to the one listed above.

For further information or enquiries please contact Mabel.Kebirungi@britishcouncil.or.ug

8. Selection

Applications will be assessed against the criteria in point 7. and against the project aims in point 2. They will be reviewed by a selection panel, including representatives from the British Council Arts team, external partners and previous research grant recipients.

Successful applicants will be notified by Monday 25th March 2019

NOTES

We work in the following Clusters:

West Africa (WA): <https://www.britishcouncil.org/ng/arts>

Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone

East Africa (EA): <https://www.britishcouncil.org/east-africa-arts>

Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan

Southern Africa (SA): <https://connectza.tumblr.com/>

Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe

A) Our values

The British Council is strongly committed to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda. We work to promote the United Kingdom's achievements in this area.

Equality and Inclusion is focused on legislating against unjustified discrimination and the fair treatment of specific groups. It's about treating people fairly, identifying and removing barriers that get in the way of this and redressing existing imbalances, so that groups which continue to be disadvantaged gain access to opportunities for full participation in the arts and in wider society.

When we talk about equal opportunity and diversity in the British Council, we focus on six main areas:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity/race
- Gender (which includes transgender)
- Religion/belief
- Sexual orientation

B) Art Connects Us objectives:

- Increase of UK audiences with better access and understanding of young Africans through the African creative sectors
- New networks and relationships are formed and others strengthened between practitioners in Africa and the UK
- Positive change in the perception and understanding of African and UK creative sectors
- Exposure to new creative practice supports innovation and growth in the sector in Africa and the UK
- Relationships between practitioners in Africa and the UK are activated to support professional and economic growth

C) Useful links and resources:

For more information on our work in the Arts please visit: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts>

Examples of previous research trips supported:

MUSIC

[Emily Dust, DJ](#)

Listen to Emily's Soho Radio show which showcased the Ghanaian musicians she met on her trip to West Africa <https://www.mixcloud.com/sohoradio/emily-dust-31052018/>

ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN, FASHION

Owen Wainhouse, Deputy Director of the [London Festival of Architecture \(LFA\)](#), reports on his travels to Kenya, Ethiopia and Rwanda which will contribute to his research project, focusing on East African countries. <https://design.britishcouncil.org/blog/2018/may/22/art-connects-us-travelogue-owen-wainhouse/>

THEATRE & DANCE

MAYK (Bristol) built on an initial research and exchange with young artists in Kigali, Rwanda with a reciprocal visit to Mayfest, Bristol <http://mayfestbristol.co.uk/news/interview-hope-azeda-director-of-mashirika-performing-arts-and-media-company>

ARCHITECTURE, DESIGN & FASHION

Andrew Kelly, director of the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, which runs the [Bristol Festival of Ideas](#) and the Festival of the Future City, reports on his research trip to Nigeria where he connected with African writers and literature professionals at the Ake Arts and Book Festival <https://literature.britishcouncil.org/blog/2018/andrew-kelly-at-the-ake-festival-nigeria/>

FILM

Tega Okiti, independent programmer and writer, reports on her travels to West Africa on her blog <https://www.tegaokiti.com/> and profiles Surreal16 a West African based filmmaking collective trying to forge a new identity for Nigerian cinema <https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/interviews/surreal16-collective-nigerian-arthouse-cinema-nollywood>