THE ART OF EXPORT

A GUIDE FOR CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS TO DEVELOP INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMING
Working internationally is vital for the UK culture sector. Not only will you develop new opportunities and audiences, you will create lasting relationships with artists and organisations around the world. I have seen first hand the great benefits that this provides, from new collaborations to innovation in artistic practice. I urge everyone to consider the opportunity that working globally can provide.

Graham Sheffield CBE, Director Arts, British Council
The London Symphony Orchestra was booked to sail on the Titanic in 1912 when it set off to become the first European orchestra to cross the Atlantic for a tour of North America. Luckily in a twist of fate their schedule was changed at the last minute and instead the 100-strong orchestra sailed on the Baltic, arriving safe and sound to embark on a landmark tour.

The 22-concert trip may have established the LSO as a pioneer in taking its work around the globe but over the past hundred years we have witnessed the UK become a world leader in exporting arts and culture worldwide. In the past year alone at least 1,000 British-produced shows and events have taken place. More and more organisations are realising the benefits of working internationally.

Taking work overseas can reap big rewards. Tapping into foreign markets is a great way of generating new sources of income. It also develops new business models. Working internationally raises our profile – both overseas and at home. It leads to new artistic partnerships. It also gives business partners more opportunities to support our work. Collaborating with other countries and international artists helps us to learn and innovate. These benefits go both ways. It often leads to international artists coming to work with us back in the UK. This improves our work and attracts new audiences. By so doing, we’re promoting the UK as a tourist destination and the UK as a world-leading destination for arts and culture.

The UK has an excellent reputation for culture and heritage. There is a great demand for British organisations at international festivals and venues. Taking our work overseas opens us up to new audiences, partnerships and even funding opportunities. The more our work is seen by a larger audience our profile, and reach, will grow.
Art and culture shape and define our nations.

Trading treasured ideas, knowledge, talents and goods between societies has created conversations, built ties, deepened understanding, influenced relationships and generated wealth.

From touring exhibitions to multinational theatre productions, international concerts to artist residencies, if we get the art of export right it can bring big benefits. We’re in challenging economic times with limited resources for culture. We must find new business models and income streams. Expanding internationally offers great potential.

Over 70 per cent of the income that both Akram Khan Company and Forced Entertainment generate has come from outside the UK.

More companies are seeing international touring as a growing income line in their budget. And it’s not just about a one-off tour. It’s about nurturing a long term relationship that will really bear fruit. It can often lead to co-producing further down the line, increasing the ambition of our artistic productions and securing the money to put them on.

Artistic collaboration enables us to discover new creative energy and develop different ways of working. It allows us to reach new audiences, raise our profile and boost our reputation. The more we are out there, the more people we meet and the more connections we make. Networking and sharing contacts are essential to develop successful international working and ensure our work in the UK continues to thrive.

In the past four years, the percentage of Arts Council England’s National Portfolio clients touring internationally has risen from 12 to 22 per cent.

Making export work takes time and preparation.

But others have gone before and have generously shared with us what they have learnt along the way – the challenges and the surprises!

There is also a whole landscape of services and networks available, but it can often be difficult to navigate the various government departments and agencies. So we’ve included a handy chart to show you where to go for help and advice.

When UK artists and organisations travel abroad we are powerful ambassadors for the UK. Our work increases the number of people who want to work with the UK and build new partnerships and connections. Exporting arts and culture overseas influences further trade with the UK, investment and encourages tourism. It also strengthens relations and builds trust in what can often be a challenging global context.

‘There is an urgency around the voices of artists in the Arab world, the Middle East, or Central Europe – and we need to listen, and find ways to create platforms that allow for meaningful dialogue that includes the non-white, non-English speaking world. Look at how developing those global conversations will shift the perspective of your own practice. Working with the British Council in Ukraine for six months, and then in Egypt, took me right outside my comfort zone.’

Liz Pugh, Creative Producer, Walk the Plank, and one of the British Council’s first “Canny Creatives” in Wider Europe.
Akram Khan Dance Company was set up 15 years ago and has developed its international work to such an extent that 72 per cent of its income now comes from international touring.

Leaving the office behind and going out on research trips to meet new potential partners has made a huge difference to the company. The point of investing in these encounters is that they can, and do, become mutual opportunities and collaborations that enhance both artistic and business interests.

Helped by British Council and local contacts they have developed partners in every continent. Having ‘big ears’—listening, showing an interest and building a connection all play a role in finding new people to work with. The company has realised that being adaptable and having to compromise sometimes can go a long way. They nurture the relationship and are sensitive to local challenges—friends first, business second. Taking a world view rather than a British view, being empathetic to other countries’ ways of working, also makes a difference.

They struggled to tour in India for several years. However, through partnering with the Prakriti Foundation, who had local intelligence, they have now found a gateway and will shortly embark on their second six city tour of India. Their work in Asia is also taking off. They’re considering setting up an offshoot company, Akram Khan Asia, and are talking with other UK companies to develop this.

HAVE BIG EARS, AN OPEN MIND AND INSATIABLE CURIOUSITY

CASE STUDY

Akram Khan Dance Company, iTMoi (in the mind of igor) at MC2 in Grenoble, France, 2013

®Jean-Louis Fernandez
WHERE WILL I GO?

Los Angeles, USA has 434 art galleries, 330 theatres, 250 live music venues, 1,630 dance performances a year, 257 festivals.

New York, USA has 721 art galleries, 420 theatres, 277 live music venues, 6,292 dance performances a year, 309 festivals.

Sao Paolo, Brazil has 58 art galleries, 116 theatres, 294 music venues, 5,200 dance performances a year, 368 festivals.

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil has 331 art galleries, 287 theatres, 95 festivals.

Nigeria is Africa’s most populous country. The British Council’s UK/NG season of cultural collaboration features 11 highlight events, the season kicks off in August 2015.

Johannesburg, South Africa has 76 art galleries, 24 theatres, 46 music venues, 250 dance performances a year, 82 festivals.

Sydney, Australia has 122 art galleries, 143 music venues, 283 dance performances a year, 312 festivals.

Berlin, Germany has 421 art galleries, 56 theatres, 250 live music venues, 111 dance performances a year, 85 festivals.

Istanbul, Turkey has 267 art galleries, 184 theatres, 91 live music venues, 154 dance performances a year, 156 festivals.

Seoul, South Korea has 228 art galleries, 251 theatres, 79 live music venues, 1,528 dance performances, 298 festivals.

Buenos Aires, Argentina has 331 art galleries, 287 theatres, 95 festivals.

Johannesburg, South Africa has 76 art galleries, 24 theatres, 46 music venues, 250 dance performances a year, 82 festivals.

Sydney, Australia has 122 art galleries, 143 music venues, 283 dance performances a year, 312 festivals.

Where Will I Go? The Art of Export
International touring has given Forced Entertainment’s small company the opportunity to see, meet and work with people developing performance in other contexts.

Those encounters, which have sometimes turned into long-running professional relationships, have helped them to be more inventive and raise their ambition.

They have developed significant producing and artistic partnerships outside of the UK – affecting the scale, distribution, nature and quality of their work.

When they began their journey three decades ago, they went to peers for advice – other companies, artists or project producers who already had experience working outside of the UK. This practical, often rather pragmatic advice was what they most needed.

Now, 70 per cent of Forced Entertainment’s earned income comes from outside the UK, either from international co-production or from touring, so it is a vital part of their business mix and sustains their work in the UK.

But they continue creating ground-breaking work in this way by kicking off a first encounter that turns into a dialogue that can last for years, even decades.

That’s the really exciting thing about taking a first trip to somewhere new.

Forced Entertainment, Bloody Mess at Kaaitheater in Brussels 2004
Photographer: Hugo Glendinning.
Whether you’re planning on making your international debut or a seasoned veteran of the world circuit, finding advice and help to set off on the right foot is often crucial to turning an idea into a reality.

### LOGISTICS
- **Visas and Security – Where can I go for information?**
- **Shipping and Freight – Who can give me advice on transferring my work?**
- **Insurance Advice – Where can I get advice for international business?**

### FINANCE
- **International funds – Where can I find information?**
- **International business plan – Where can I get help?**

### LOCAL CULTURAL RELATIONS
- **Etiquette and customs – Where can I get advice?**
- **Doing business – Where can I get information?**

### ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT AND COLLABORATION
- **Development opportunities – Where can I find them?**
- **Local arts organisations – Where can I find a list of potential collaborators?**

### COMMERCIAL
- **Market Insights – Where can I find them?**
- **Trade events, markets and showcases for arts and culture – Where can I find this information?**
- **New business – Where can I find a list of potential partners?**

### PEER NETWORKING
- **Veteran touring arts organisations – Where can I make contact with organisations who’ve toured before?**
- **VIPs and existing networks by country – Where can I find lists to invite them to my events?**

### MARKETING, MEDIA AND PROMOTION
- **Marketing – Who can promote me through their company channels?**
- **Media and PR – who can put me in touch with local media outlets?**

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**LET’S MAKE A START...**

**WHAT DO I NEED? WHO CAN HELP?**
Manchester International Festival (MIF) is unique with its model of creating original, new work. It forges artistic collaborations from across the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture.

One of the highlights of the 2011 Festival was *The Life and Death of Marina Abramović*, an epic performance piece that was neither theatre, opera nor art, but a thrilling crossbreed of all three by Robert Wilson. The show was one of the earliest examples of a successful co-commissioning model working with venues in Spain, Holland, Switzerland and Belgium. This up-front investment in the project enabled MIF to deliver a visually stunning show with outstanding performances from Abramovic, Willem Dafoe and singer Antony Hegarty. The show went on to tour the USA and Canada and won the Diaghilev Festival award in 2012, further cementing their international reputation.

International co-commissioning is a vital part of MIF’s business model and without it, they would not have the finance nor the access to artists and producers to create productions like *The Old Woman* and *Trees of Codes*. The more collaboration MIF does the more new partnerships they forge. This in turn brings together artists and organisations from around the globe to powerful effect.
OPENING THE DOOR TO A NEW MARKET

If you don’t know where to start – help is at hand through the British Council and UK Trade & Investment teams in British Embassies overseas. They can help introduce you to new partners.

The British Council can open doors to organisations in your target market. Their extensive network on the ground means they can recommend people that you should be working with and who can support you to reach new audiences or develop new collaborations. They also produce helpful market insights on key territories, which will help you understand more about a country you’re looking to do business in.

UK Trade & Investment teams (usually found in British Embassies, Consulates and High Commissions) can help by giving local support and expertise: they can connect you with local partners to organise or promote events; give advice and introductions to potential local sponsors.

‘We greatly benefit from the British Council Edinburgh Showcase – this always has a massive impact on our international touring. The showcase attracts a large number of presenters from around the world and we are performing in New York following an introduction in 2013. We also met Oakland Festival from New Zealand who are now coming to see us perform in Prague which may lead to more opportunities’

Camille Beaumier, Producer, NoFit State

NoFit State
Bianco 2015
Photo © Seventh Wave
The Art of Export

MONEY TIPS

Making sure your international work pays financially is crucial – getting the deal right and checking your budget is water-tight with nothing missing is essential. Don’t forget currency fluctuations to help you manage any risk to your organisation.

Take the risk out of currency fluctuations.

If you are paying international artists - either do a deal in sterling or buy currency when you are making your deal to fix your budget.

If you are receiving a fee – either fix the deal in sterling, or agree the exchange rate in the contract. Otherwise you will need to put a lot of contingency in your budget so if the rate changes you won’t be out of pocket.

‘Arts organisations aren’t currency dealers and we can’t afford to take risks with fluctuating exchange rates!’
Paul Clay, Executive Producer, Manchester International Festival.

UK Trade & Investment has a team of International Trade Advisors in the UK who can help you develop your export plan. They can also provide advice on guarantees, insurance and managing the risks associated with UK export contracts.

Take the risk out of currency fluctuations.

Be aware of taxation issues in other countries and find someone who can advise you on it. There are specific rules regarding international withholding tax and VAT so it’s worthwhile to get the right advice in the long run.

‘Keep the deal as simple as possible. Get the venue to pay a fee for the production plus all performer costs and set transport costs. Confirm it in a deal memo and make sure you have thought about every line in the budget - don’t get caught out. Talk to other companies who have toured and know the ropes, think about insurance, shipping, legal and taxation issues.’
Paul Crewes, Chief Executive, Kneehigh

FUNDING MATTERS

Funding opportunities for going into new markets are available. Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales, Wales Arts International, Arts Council Northern Ireland and British Council are useful places to start for guidance on what may be available. You can also contact a UK Trade & Investment International Trade Advisor to discuss potential funding through an Export Insight Visit.

Creative Europe Desk UK can also help you access funding streams for projects that involve several European partners. Support is available for the audio-visual, creative and cultural sectors with a Europe-wide budget of €1.46bn from 2014 – 2020. Key areas are audience development, skills, knowledge-sharing and developing business models.

LOST IN TRANSLATION?

Make sure that language, customs and etiquette don’t cause issues when you take your work overseas.

UK Trade & Investment can provide access to international postgraduates studying in the UK who can help you with free foreign language translation. They can offer interpretation at trade shows and run overseas trade visits. They’re increasingly looking to take cultural organisations on these trips covering supplier liaison, customer service and administrative support, interpreting at as well as providing cultural advice and support.

The British Council offer support to understand the context of working in a particular country.

‘Check your assumptions about meaning so that everyone understands what the ‘Production Manager’ is expected to do. That role might be something quite different in theatres in the former Soviet Union, for example. The British Council’s Arts team in the partner country will be great sources of advice in the early stages of building relationships.’
Liz Pugh, Creative Producer, Walk the Plank
The Art of Export

LOGISTICS

Planning is crucial – so set up a good timeline for your project with lots of contingency – don’t get caught out by visas which can take a lot of time and remember that customs and shipping issues vary from country to country.

Visas and immigration can provide practical challenges that shouldn’t be taken lightly or underestimated. British Embassies may be able to provide practical guidance about how to navigate complicated entry and exit processes.

Take the time with **customs and export documentation** and make sure you avoid any unnecessary hold-ups or penalties by declaring everything. Be aware of the carnet system, the international customs documentation that can help to simplify importing and exporting things like sets and costume. Use simple language when filling out forms.

‘I was caught out moving a show from a performance in China to Hong Kong for short term storage. My Chinese shippers didn’t communicate to me that to import from China to Hong Kong you have to get ‘A Chop’. I spent three days in demurrage before a lawyer was found who could sort it out!’

Paul Clay, Executive Director, Manchester International Festival

Contact the British Embassy or High Commission in a country, who can signpost you to practical support relating to visas, immigration and customs.
MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Making sure you get the message out about your overseas work is vital. The more people who hear about your work abroad the more potential partnerships you can develop and audiences you can reach. There are lots of resources available to help so make sure you take advantage of what’s on offer.

The British Council’s network of arts advisors working in country can suggest contacts to support promoting your events and, where appropriate, use British Council channels in country. To access these arts advisors and other government organisations make sure you use The Culture Diary Directory at www.theculturediary.com.

The 260 British Embassies and High Commissions around the world can help promote your activity through their websites, newsletters and social media. UK Trade & Investment works with international business postgraduate students who can help you with marketing support including social media in your international market. They can record voiceovers for videos, research the markets you are exploring to help you develop a strategy and help with website development.

You may be able to gain access to the GREAT Britain campaign to give your international activity a boost. Talk to the British Embassy or High Commission in the country you’re visiting.

VisitBritain has teams in many countries around the world who create campaigns to promote British culture both as a great export and as a reason to travel to Britain to see more of what’s fantastic about British culture. There are opportunities to work with them to highlight your work both overseas and in the UK.

Make sure your website is helping to develop your international work by using UK Trade & Investment’s Export Communications Review Service including search engine optimisation, competition analysis and analytics.

Valery Gergiev conducting the LSO in St Petersburg, as part of a major tour of Russia in 2006. © Alberto Venzago
The British Council and UK Trade & Investment employees in British Embassies help develop new connections between the UK and countries around the world. They always want to know which UK cultural organisations are visiting. Make sure you get your information on The Culture Diary a good time in advance, so that you can be involved in their future plans.

If you contact the British Council in good time, they may help by suggesting partners to work with, integrating your work into their wider programme, supporting receptions and wraparound events.

The British Embassies and High Commissions abroad may be able to help raise the profile of your event through introductions and promotion on social media where appropriate.

‘Signal your intention to work internationally by attending conferences and events where you will mix with international delegates. Invest in your own professional development by building relationships that extend your networks. Go to the places you want to work ... meet people in the organisations you want to work with ... be prepared to invest your time and your money in reaching out to people beyond the relative safe confines of Western Europe and North America.’

Liz Pugh, Creative Producer, Walk the Plank.
A LONG LASTING RELATIONSHIP?

We all want to find and nurture long term partnerships. How do we make sure it’s not just a one hit wonder?

‘You have to get up from your desk and go out to countries to start looking for friends with common interests. You need to understand and appreciate the local challenges. It’s friends first, business second. And these relationships need constant nurturing.’

Faroq Chaudhry, Producer, Akram Khan Company

‘Don’t think about it as touring. Think about it as starting conversations and creative relationships that will sustain you, interest you and challenge you in future years. Touring is just putting things on a supermarket shelf. That’s not a good place to start. The idea that it will become a regular thing – kicking off a dialogue that can last for years, even decades – is the really exciting thing about a first trip to somewhere new.’

Eileen Evans, Executive Director, Forced Entertainment

‘Invest the time in going to meet your new partner in person – it really helps if there are issues further down the line as you build up a rapport when you have met someone and it’s easier to work through problems together. Think about how they view the relationship too and the benefits of a longer term partnership versus short term gain. Kneehigh now have a number of key partners in the US and are co-producing their latest production 946 with the Berkeley Rep in California.’

Paul Crewes, Chief Executive, Kneehigh
In April 2014, Shakespeare’s Globe set off on an ambitious voyage to perform *Hamlet* in every single country in the world.

The Globe to Globe tour involves a troupe of eight actors travelling by automobile, boat, train and plane who perform in town squares, on beaches and in jungle clearings as well as the odd theatre.

This two-year project will conclude with a performance at Kronborg Castle, Denmark, the model for *Hamlet*’s Elsinore on 21 April 2016 before returning to the Globe for a final performance on 23 April 2016 – the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare’s birth.

With the aim to make sure that theatre could be experienced anywhere in the world, an absence of a touring circuit for this kind of project didn’t hold them back.

The British Embassy provided practical advice in both the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Sudan about security in unsafe areas as well as visas and immigration.

The British Council in Kazakhstan introduced Shakespeare’s Globe to a funder, provided etiquette support, briefings on the socio-political status and marketing support. This helped to deliver a successful show that even included a red carpet welcome from the Ambassador when they arrived!

The challenges of this tour have led the team to adopt an intrepid but pragmatic approach, to understand the context in which each country is situated and adapt the project from country to country.
Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA) in Manchester have been changing the way they work with their potential business partners in commercial and public galleries in East Asia.

In 2014, CFCCA partnered with Tang Contemporary in China to create the Harmonious Society exhibition. This showcase of 30 exceptional Chinese artists toured six galleries across Manchester. A show of such scale wouldn’t have happened without Tang Contemporary’s support. They introduced CFCCA to a huge network of talented Chinese artists and also helped get the finances to support it.

Meeting the artists, gallerists, and venue managers face-to-face at the beginning of the creative journey was eye-opening and helped CFCCA to understand just how different the approaches to creating art exhibitions were in these two countries.

In China, there’s an expectation to turn things around in a very tight timeframe. This isn’t always achievable within the UK arts infrastructure. Also, management standards regarding the care, display, shipping, and other logistics for art collections are hugely different and it was difficult for CFCCA to get contracts and agreements drawn up in writing that worked for both countries.

In order to achieve their vision, CFCCA had to consider how much they were willing to change the way they worked. The Harmonious Society project struck the right balance between bending the rules and not exposing them to too much risk.
What is the GREAT Britain Campaign?

The GREAT Britain campaign is the government’s most ambitious international marketing campaign ever. It showcases the very best of what Britain has to offer in order to encourage the world to visit, study and do business with the UK.

Independent research shows that overseas audiences are 12-15 per cent more likely to consider the UK when they have seen the GREAT brand.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

When your organisation tours or exhibits abroad, or runs promotions overseas, then you might benefit from using the GREAT brand.

- Sign up to use the Culture Diary to access a global network and build new relationships with GREAT’s partners inside and outside government. theculturediary.com
- Visit greatbritaincampaign.com for more details about the GREAT Britain campaign.
- Register to access the GREAT brand library at greatbritaincampaign.com to see how other organisations are using GREAT and to read the brand guidelines.
- Send suggestions for how you would like to use the GREAT brand in your overseas promotional activity to greatbritaincampaign@gmail.com or contact the Culture Diary.

Look out for programmes run by GREAT which could complement your own activity. Shakespeare Lives is a major worldwide programme to mark Shakespeare’s 400th anniversary in 2016. Shakespearelives.org

The UK is home to many of the world’s best-loved theatre performances, like the National Theatre’s War Horse. For a live theatre experience that thrills and entertains, visit Britain.

War Horse
New London Theatre, London
In July 2015, the English National Ballet toured to Teatro Mayor Julio Santo Domingo, Colombia, supported in part by the British Council. This was the first time the Company had performed in the country in 55 years. Presenting its production of what is arguably one of the most popular ballets, *Swan Lake*, this was the first time the full work had been performed in Colombia.

Alongside its performances, English National Ballet held a series of workshops and masterclasses for young Colombian dancers as part of the theatre’s long-term dance training project, and held a backstage tour for Colombian media that offered unique access to the Company. Continuing its commitment to creative learning and engagement practice, the Company also held an open rehearsal for underprivileged Colombian school children.

Working with the British Embassy and British Council, English National Ballet transformed one of their performances into an exclusive gala reception, funded in part by the GREAT campaign. Guests at the gala included senior members of the Colombian government that the British Embassy officials were keen to meet. The event was a way of opening up channels to new discussions that would have taken much longer to organise through the usual diplomatic routes.
HARNESS THE POTENTIAL

Making export work for your business is within your grasp. It’s time to be courageous and creative. That means galvanising your teams and your artists to think beyond our borders and what they aspire to on the international stage. Empower them to take the first steps towards international working and grasp the opportunity to take to the world stage. The reward will be investment back into the work you do closer to home.

CONTACTS

Looking to talk to someone about getting started on exporting? Go to The Culture Diary to find an up-to-date directory of contacts and more tips and advice from those who have done international work.

www.theculturediary.com

‘The Culture Diary connects arts and culture organisations working internationally with British Council offices and Embassies across the world. It’s a brilliant, simple, virtual means of promoting cultural exchange and export growth. I would encourage anyone working internationally to register today.’

Peter Bazalgette, Chair, Arts Council England

THANK YOU TO


Kneehigh's Brief Encounter company at Wallis Annenberg Centre for the Performing Arts, LA. 2014