

UK CIRCLE





**UK
CIRCLE**

Established in 1934, the British Council supports peace and prosperity by building connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and countries worldwide. Operating independently from the UK government, we are a charity that uniquely combines the UK's deep expertise in arts and culture, education and the English language, our global presence and relationships in over 100 countries, our connection with young people and influencers and our creative sparkle.

Working together we make a bigger difference, creating benefit for millions of people all over the world. Building international networks drives greater engagement with and favourability towards UK creative industries and enables us to connect UK arts and culture sectors with their international peers and audiences. These networks also create opportunities for people and organisations to work internationally, helping them to develop their own economic sustainability. Vibrant creative economies make a huge contribution to social and economic development worldwide, and we help other countries to grow and strengthen their cultural sectors for long-term prosperity.

The British Council has maintained relationships with key decision-makers, influencers, and the global public for 90 years, strengthening the UK's international standing and supporting prosperity by encouraging more trade, investment, and tourism. With government funding reduced in recent years, we must generate 85 per cent of our income. However, for every £1 received in government grants us we create £5, resulting in £1 billion worth of activity for the UK.

We are incredibly grateful to the UK Circle, whose generosity allows us to continue our important work, for their commitment to supporting peace and prosperity across the world.

Kind regards

**Scott
McDonald**
Chief Executive
British Council



ABOUT THE BRITISH COUNCIL

The British Council supports peace and prosperity by building connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and countries worldwide.

We uniquely combine the UK's deep expertise in arts and culture, education and the English language, our global presence, and relationships with young people and influencers. We share our values and explore ideas, have difficult discussions, find common ground, and create mutually beneficial relationships between the people of all four nations of the UK and other countries.

Working directly with individuals, we help them gain the skills, confidence, and connections to transform their lives and shape a better world in partnership with the UK. We support them to build networks and explore creative ideas, to learn English, to get a high-quality education and to gain internationally recognised qualifications.

Through the transformative power of arts and culture, we support the protection and promotion of cultural expression, diversity and heritage. We create inspiring opportunities for people, institutions and places to respond to challenges with local

impact and global relevance. Working together we make a bigger difference, creating benefit for millions of people all over the world. We work in partnership with governments, businesses and NGOs and nurture relationships with government leaders, policymakers, senior advisers, cultural leaders and the wider public, to help us achieve more than we could do alone.

In 2022, we worked in over 200 countries and territories reaching over 600 million people in total and have even greater ambitions for the future.



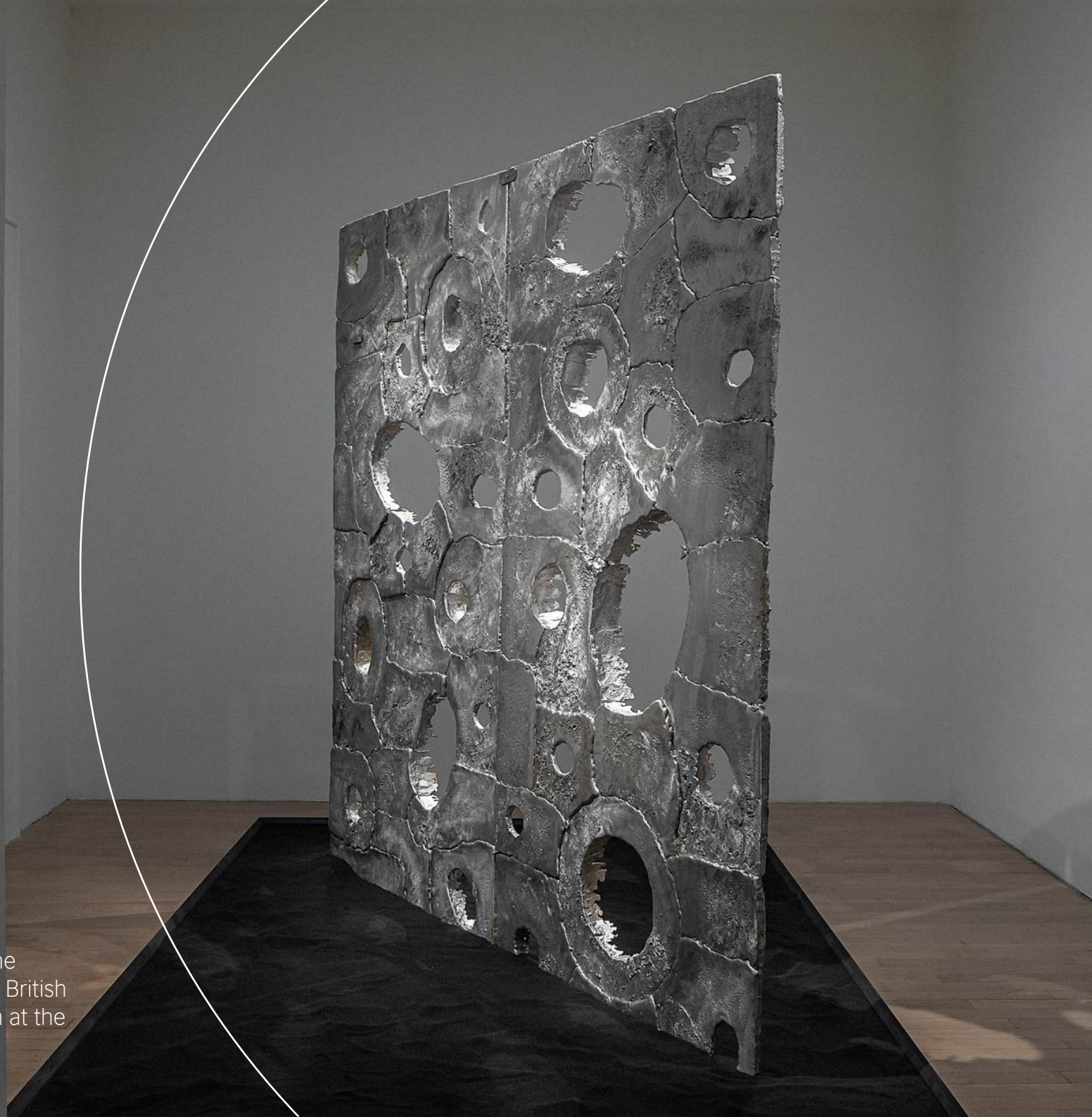
HOW WE WORK

We support in hundreds of projects around the globe, exploring a diverse array of subjects to promote mutual understanding, support social mobility and address the most crucial global challenges today. Much of our work is achieved in one of these three ways.

Fund: We provide grants, scholarships and funding to empower young people, educators, creative professionals and practitioners to foster artistic exploration, expand career prospects and facilitate cross-cultural learning and networking.

Research: We examine the impact of rapid change and global markets on national education and skills systems, generating valuable insights shared with institutions, policymakers and international governments to shape informed decision making.

Showcase: We offer a platform for talented creatives to showcase their abilities while addressing urgent global challenges on the world stage. Through these initiatives, we build connections between the UK's arts and culture sectors and their international counterparts, drawing attention to our work and enabling mutual learning.



Dancing Before the Moon is the 2023 British Pavilion exhibition at the Venice Biennale.



India/UK Together, a Season of Culture, celebrated the friendship between the UK and India. Marking the 75th anniversary of Indian independence, this cultural exchange showcased a vibrant programme of events across music, theatre, cinema, literature, fashion and visual arts.

With equality, diversity and inclusion at its heart, we celebrated artists, innovators and educators from India and the UK.

The season explored our cultures, our shared planet and our relationship with digital technologies that will shape our future together.

1,945 artists
51+ partners
21 cities in India and the UK

India/UK Together had an exciting line up of arts and cultural events. This included cutting-edge live music events, projects using arts and technology, virtual reality and artificial intelligence, exhibitions that tackled global challenges, and diverse voices in literature and theatre. Plus much, much more throughout the year.

In 2024, the British Council in France will be leading the UK/France Spotlight on Culture, a celebration of Franco-British artistic co-creation and cultural partnerships followed by the UK Poland and UK Kenya Seasons in 2025.



UK/ INDIA

SEASON

*Concert of Friendship in Chennai,
a collaboration between the British
Council and KM Music Conservatory*



TAHAWER

Iraq's identity is defined by its history, politics, and ethnic and religious diversity with nearly 7,000 years of written history.

TAHAWER was an EU-funded programme that aimed to create safe spaces for young people from different backgrounds to engage in thoughtful debate and discussion, encouraging respect and tolerance, promoting social cohesion and fostering a positive sense of Iraqi identity.

TAHAWER brought together groups of young Iraqis from diverse backgrounds to better understand one another and find common ground to serve as a foundation for peacebuilding, tolerance and co-existence. The programme was focused on building the confidence of young people to have respectful, self-aware and tolerant debates on challenging topics. It provided young women and men with a platform for discussion on issues that are important to them, allowing them to voice their ideas, concerns and experiences to influential people who make decisions that impact upon their lives in a safe space.

Debates covered subjects such as cultural heritage, traditions and customs, citizenship and identity, gender/ social inequalities, education and opportunities, media, peacebuilding/co-existence, and the role of religion in peacebuilding and development in Iraq.

TAHAWER built a nationwide community of thousands of young men and women, which has brought together the voices of Iraqi Arabs, Kurds, Yazidis, Christians and other religious minorities like the Shabak and Yarsani people. As a result, TAHAWER participants have reported increased agency within their families, communities and public life.





WOMEN

The gender gap in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) is well documented. Not only do women make up a fraction of the workforce and research teams in STEM, but they are also published less, paid less and are less likely than their male counterparts to reach positions of leadership.

The British Council has established programmes to support women and girls in STEM around the world, designed with a lifecycle approach in mind, from inspiring young girls to stay in STEM to supporting women working in STEM fields to reach positions of leadership and network with their peers in their region and the UK. Access to education is a significant contributing factor leading to the under-representation of women in STEM, so we enable postgraduate education for women who can demonstrate their need for financial support and who wish to inspire future generations of women to pursue careers in STEM.

Now in its third year the British Council has launched our scholarship programme in partnership with 19 UK universities aimed at benefiting women from the Americas, wider Europe, MENA, South Asia and East Asia. In the long term, as alumni, we hope this group of scholars will take a key role in the advocacy of girls and women in STEM in their home country, leading to lasting impact.

IN STEM





CULTURAL PROTECTION FUND

Bedouin looking over Wadi Rum;
Cultural Corridors of Peace

© INHERIT

Cultural heritage is a valuable tool for exploring and celebrating complex pasts; it also helps to inform how we create a better future.

In partnership with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Cultural Protection Fund supports organisations to deliver dozens of projects that protect heritage at risk. These organisations are helping local people to identify and value cultural heritage, building skills so that local experts can protect their own cultural assets for future generations, and ensuring that heritage under threat is documented, conserved and restored. A few examples:

Withstanding change: heritage amongst climate uncertainty – in partnership with the International National Trusts Organisation, this project will restore six historic buildings in six countries across the Middle East, North Africa and East Africa, protecting them against the severe impacts of climate change and installing new exhibition spaces to engage local communities. The project will make connections between National Trust properties in the UK and the sites in each country, enabling knowledge sharing around safeguarding the heritage in the face of climate-induced threats.

On the Tracks of Music – this project will preserve and promote the disappearing traditional folk music and musical instruments of marginalised rural communities, in areas severely affected by conflict and climate change, across Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Syria. The rarely documented folk music is specific to each community's history and these traditions are thought to date back to 2500 BCE.

Turath Benghazi – the historic city centre of Benghazi in Libya hosts many important religious and cultural sites and has suffered significant damage due to civil war. In partnership with the World Monuments Fund, the project will provide local architects and officials with training in cultural heritage preservation and urban design, building capacity for conservation and restoration of this ancient city.

'I can't tell you how impressed I am by the Cultural Protection Fund... it is again of even greater importance to ensure we have something left in the face of all the challenges and disasters around the world.'

His Majesty King Charles III



LANGUAGE FOR RESILIENCE

There are now over 800 million young people without secondary-level education, equivalent to a global skills crisis. There are also 225 million young people whose education is interrupted or affected by crisis and 100 million displaced people (more than ever). The contribution of the climate crisis to displacement, as well as an interconnected set of conflicts, is worsening the situation.

Interrupted education and displacement always have a disproportionately negative effect on disabled children, girls, and children from disadvantaged communities. There is an increasing global understanding that resourcing and improving education in crisis is imperative to give individuals, communities and countries the resilience to recover and to fulfil their potential for prosperous lives in equitable communities.

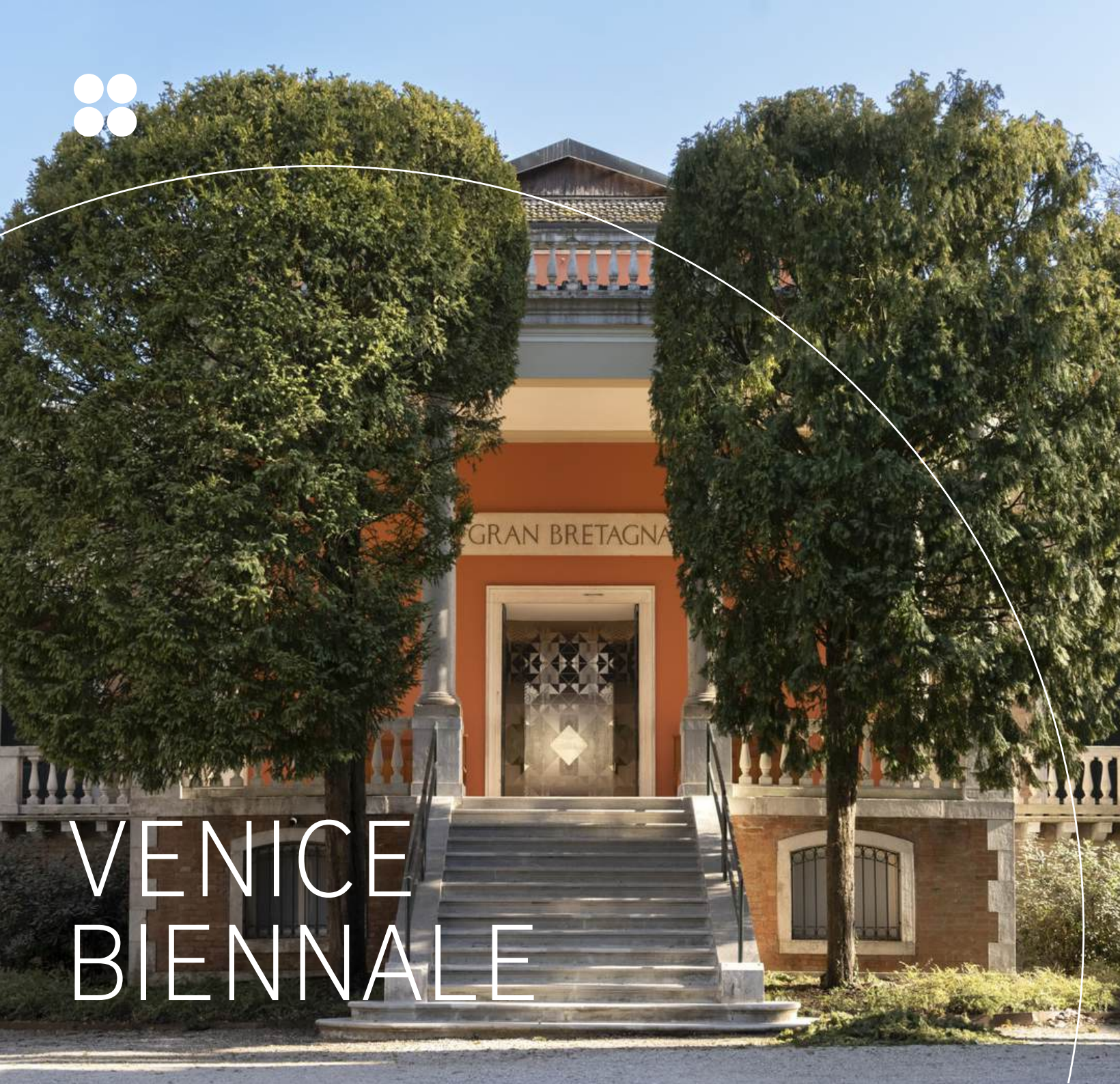
Language for Resilience began as part of the British Council's English Programmes work to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, during 2013-14.

Since then, Language for Resilience programming has been applied in almost 20 countries, sometimes in partnership with ministries of education, more often in partnership with International NGOs which deliver

and co-ordinate education in crisis contexts. These include UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, IOM, UNRWA, DAAD, Care International, Relief International and Save the Children.

Recent examples of the success of these partnerships include:

- the Conference in a Camp, in Zaatari, Jordan, the world's first teacher conference in a refugee camp, with attendees from around the region
- the LASER project in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, teaching English language and academic skills to 3,000 refugees and young people in host communities, preparing them for higher Education.
- Language for Resilience in Uganda, where 2,000 teachers of refugee children are receiving professional development, in particular in the language supportive strategies necessary for classrooms with multiple languages.
- Teaching and Learning in Difficult Times, in Ukraine, Poland and Romania, providing over 15,000 Ukrainian English teachers with the skills to teach children in conflict zones.

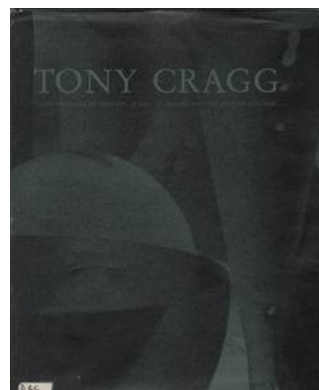
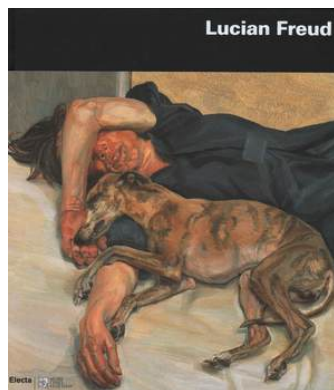
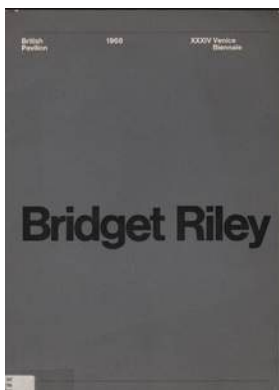
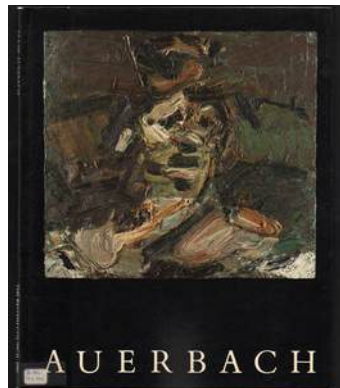
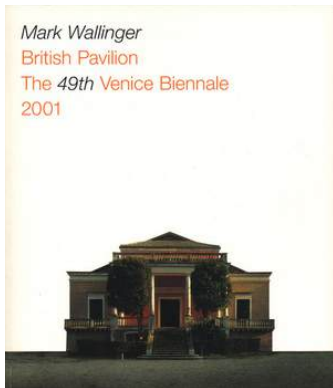
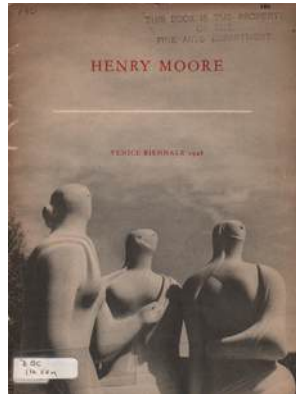
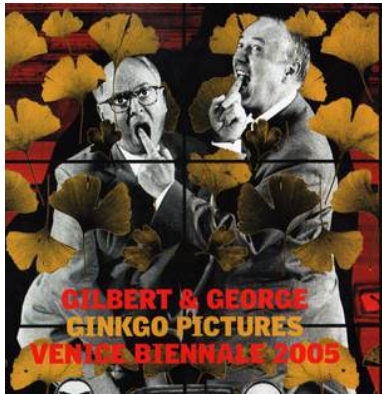


VENICE BIENNALE

Since 1937, the British Council has been the commissioner of the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, presenting work by groundbreaking artists and pioneering architects.

Running from May to November each year and alternating between art and architecture, the Venice Biennale is the longest running international art biennial in the world, founded in 1895. A celebration of art and architecture, the Biennale explores themes of politics and contemporary cultural and social issues through performance, sculpture and installations. The Venice Biennale is one of the most prestigious cultural festivals in the world, attracting half a million visitors each year.

In 2022, Sonia Boyce, OBE RA was selected to represent the UK and was awarded the prestigious Golden Lion for Best National Participation. Sir John Akomfrah has been commissioned for the British Pavilion at the 60th La Biennale di Venezia in 2024.





WELCOME TO THE UK **CIRCLE**

The UK Circle is a vibrant community of culturally engaged philanthropists, connected by their passion for art, film, design, education, architecture and fashion and belief in the work of the British Council.

Through their generous support, we are able to continue our important work that improves the lives of millions of people each year. Whether we're commissioning the next artist to represent the UK at the Venice Biennale or highlighting the struggles of LGBTQ+ people in locations where homosexuality continues to be criminalised, or helping creative practitioners to develop their professional networks at Edinburgh Fringe Festival – the UK Circle helps to bring these projects to life.



YOUR
UK
CIRCLE

In return for their generous support, UK Circle members receive an exciting programme of UK events and trips, curated by Skinder Hundal MBE, Global Arts Director for the British Council, and our esteemed UK Circle Co-Chairs Dr Paul Ettlinger and Raimund Berthold.

The UK Circle will gain insights into the British Council's unique perspective, with members encouraged to discover new passions and connections in an enlivening and sociable environment. Covering the breadth of the British Council's work, events will explore art, theatre, music, education, architecture, fashion and design, and include visits to the homes of private collectors, celebratory dinners with pioneering creatives, trips to significant artists' studios, film screenings and so much more.



Benefits include:

- an exciting programme featuring two events per month, exploring the cultural highlights of the UK.
- exclusive invitations to celebrate the opening of the British Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.
- passes for major international art fairs and Preview Day at the Venice Biennale
- unparalleled access to the British Council, with opportunities to connect with international networks and delegates.

UK Circle membership is £10,000 a year. To apply or for more information, please contact

Catharine Thompson
Head of Individual Giving
catharine.thompson@britishcouncil.org



A Healing is Coming

Small text block providing information about the exhibition, including the title 'A Healing is Coming' and details about the artist and the exhibition's theme.