



# International Cultural Relations

Perspectives and recommendations informed by the participants of the **Voices of Culture** Structured Dialogue on International Cultural Relations (2 - 9 February 2022), Moderation, rapporteurs, and compilation of the reports: **Else Christensen-Redzepovic, Nicole McNeilly** and **Gabrielle Bernoville**. Edited by **Sana Ouchtati**.



**VOICES OF CULTURE**

Structured Dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector



Funded by the  
European Union



**March  
2022**

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# What **abbreviations** are used in this catalogue?



**African Union**



**Civil society organisations**



**European Commission**



**European Union**



**European Union Networks of Institutes of Culture**



**International cultural relations**



**International Fund for Cultural Diversity**



**Intellectual Property Rights**



**Non-governmental organisation(s)**



**2030 Sustainable Development Goals**



**South-West Asia and North Africa**



**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**



**Voices of Culture**





# Executive summary

In a context informed by the increasing geopolitical tussle, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, experiences and traumas of the Covid-19 pandemic and broader economic, political, social and technological change, the practices and the very paradigm of global international cultural relations (ICR) must be constantly evaluated. The stakeholders of ICR, ranging from the state to the individual and including cultural and creative sector civil society organisations (CSOs) and cultural actors, have both a role to play and at the same time must hold themselves and others accountable for creating the space and time to develop more sustainable, accessible, equitable and inclusive ICR.

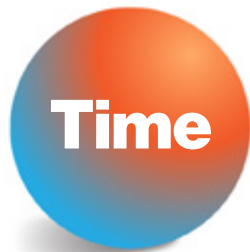
This document represents a collection of topics, recommendations, tangible steps and project ideas drawn from the Voices of Culture Structured Dialogue on ICR in February 2022. Four considerations - **equity, space, access and time** – have been used to address complex topics in ICR. They enhance, within this framework, a more inclusive approach and bring new voices into the co-design of ICR activities and the exploring of funding mechanisms. While avoiding reinventing the wheel, the discussions gave space to share knowledge, time to read and learn from others, and an understanding of the gaps in information, knowledge and perspectives.

**Recommended tangible next steps, addressed to all ICR Stakeholders, can be summarised as follows:**



- Support CSO and bottom-up involvement in ICR.
- Learn from what works in mobility programmes and increase mobility options and improvements to increase access.
- Facilitate easier travel and preferential treatment for global cultural sector workers in the Global South, taking stock of their own perceptions and challenges while thinking beyond Western perceptions of challenges to mobility.
- Address the inaccessibility of EU funding for the grassroots cultural sector and develop new global financing mechanisms to support transparent and bottom-up led approaches to ICR.

- Embrace experimentation, flexibility and a holistic vision of the cultural sector in order to empower cultural actors and find new, sustainable ICR approaches.
- Explore in a participatory way how technology can make language less of a barrier to accessing funding and participation in ICR.



- Invest for long-term change and partnership development.
- Facilitate and increase global knowledge sharing that is accessible to all.
- Invest in the impact that peer-to-peer discussion around ICR creates.



- Embrace the UN's SDGs to create a sustainable and inclusive approach to future ICR activities.
- Embrace Climate preservation and action to enhance sustainability.
- Take actions to improve global cultural frameworks, address wellbeing, and create the conditions for more equitable ICR.
- Address the long-term intersectional decolonialisation of ICR and acknowledge the bigger geopolitical challenges that stand in the way of inclusive and partnership based ICR and set up a dedicated working group.



- Generate more spaces for voices who want to deal with shared global issues and with those who want to embrace participatory methods in all aspects of ICR.
- Create mutually-rewarding spaces for cultural sector actors to build new connections outside of the sector and to further socially-relevant global dialogue.
- Support those who embrace best practice in inclusive and sustainable ICR, and learn from cultural entities that are transforming.
- Create a global ICR framework that responds to needs for funding not linked to political agendas nor to certain geopolitical regions.
- Improve European ICR with partners, at global level, that would have positive results for European citizens and global partners and publics.



2.

# Introduction

The first Voices of Culture (VoC) Structured Dialogue in 2022 was dedicated to [International Cultural Relations](#) (ICR). Participants were invited rather than selected after an open call, and the remit was global rather than just those based in the European Union (EU). In what can be considered a form of a generative research methodology, the structured dialogue group format used by VoC creates wide-ranging discussion amongst participants. The experience in the room and the interest in and passion for the topic goes some way towards explaining the depth of materials collected from participants and the challenge of summarising these without losing its richness. As VoC is the structured dialogue with non-state actors in the field of culture, the focus of the sessions was on generating actionable recommendations to support CSO and bottom-up inclusion in the field of global ICR. With that in mind, the recommendations are relevant to and could be taken forward by many different stakeholders, including the participants in the dialogue. They are therefore divided by topic and not intended audience.

The discussion paper commissioned by Voices of Culture authored by independent expert *Sana Ouchtati*, proposed four strands, namely: *(i) present the policy framework of EU international cultural relations;* *(ii) identify the role of civil society and non-state actors in strengthening a bottom-up approach to ICR;* *(iii) unfold the main trends and ingredients of sustainable ICR to make culture key to sustainability at the global level;* *(iv) and confirm areas of common interest and identify project ideas in light of the COVID-19 crisis and the context cultural stakeholders are operating in across the world.*

In twelve hours of digital discussion across three days, 43 participants representing 39 cultural sector organisations recommended that global and EU decision-makers, joined by the cultural sector itself should embrace the challenging areas of discussion and begin to plan for more inclusive, bottom-up ICR by taking ownership of the presented recommendations and proposals for actions.

The first step in this process was presented to the European Commission (EC) on 18 March 2022, after which point the output was edited, published and shared globally with ICR and cultural sector stakeholders.

As discussed among the groups, participants must hold VoC organisers, decision-makers and themselves accountable for the impact of the discussion by ensuring widespread dissemination and follow-up action.



**3.**

# Topics and recommendations

## Access

The discussion on Access in ICR tackled various topics such as mobility, support to CSOs, language barriers, bottom-up approach and the complexity of the CSOs sector, including their relationship with governments, inclusivity and diversity, as well as the importance of flexibility and innovation etc.



**Mobility and the facilitation of international networking remain key considerations in global ICR and in building connections and solidarity between global cultural stakeholders.**

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, it became clear that more and different mobility schemes for artists and cultural professionals were needed, not less. Meeting people or experiencing culture in real life remains critically important, though must be balanced with sustainability concerns.



**When considering a bottom-up approach to global ICR, the role of CSOs is important as they represent grassroots knowledge, and a source of verified information on local needs that needs to be connected to national policy agendas.**

Bottom-up approaches have proven to be difficult to achieve and implement when civil society actors have not been engaged in a systematic way. On the other hand,

relationships between the State, CSOs, private funders, individuals, can be fragmented and complex:

-There is often an issue of trust between the governments and CSOs, which intensity varies from one country to another. In some contexts, structural or other funding might be only given to those who support a regime or power structure. Examples were given of some countries, where only few CSOs are not state-funded or similar. CSOs might also not be trusted by the independent cultural sector in some contexts.



**Language is both a barrier and a gateway to inclusive and bottom-up ICR. English might be a requirement in multilateral programmes.**

While some CSOs may speak English, they may not speak or write the bureaucratic language that is sometimes needed to get access to funding, networks or mobility opportunities.

On another level, the EU's experience in translation and multilingualism is an asset to share with the world. Without translation, an effective and fair intercultural dialogue cannot be developed.



**Inclusivity, diversity and participation in ICR remain important for bottom-up and CSO-led ICR.**

Encountering some of the biggest social justice challenges of the last decades raised by the Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements during lockdown means that tools and mechanisms to improve inclusivity and diversity in ICR are very much needed. Participation in ICR means enhancing inclusivity in all aspects of relationship-building, from programme design, application selection committees, and funding.



**Innovation and flexibility in ICR are often undermined by financial systems that lock out smaller or local actors because of certain criteria, like the track record, location, number of years of operation, etc.**



Covid-19 forced innovation on cultural funders to build grants and partnerships that responded in a short time frame to the ongoing challenges. This flexibility, bold responses, and ability to adapt must be maintained in funding, but at the same time as prioritising long-term, structural funding which in any case will strengthen the cultural sector in times of crisis.

**Access recommendations:**

<p><b>Support CSO and bottom-up involvement in ICR</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge inequalities and act to reduce further harm.</li> <li>• Move beyond hierarchies, acknowledge power relationships, and open to learning from each other.</li> <li>• Open and support ICR opportunities to new voices and smaller organisations and stakeholders, often more flexible and connected to the grassroots.</li> <li>• Provide sustainable funding that goes beyond project-based funding for a bottom-up approach, involving CSOs in ICR.</li> <li>• Engage CSOs to shape, define and validate policy priorities in ICR and engage local actors and their partners in specifying and pre-defining bilateral collaboration.</li> <li>• Embrace fair and equal salaries, regardless of where the organisations or cultural professionals are from.</li> <li>• Be aware of and call out Eurocentricity and the ‘first world’ perspective that Covid-19 has made visible.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Facilitate easier travel and preferential treatment for global cultural sector workers while thinking beyond the Western perceptions of challenges to mobility.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the need for preferential treatment (2005 UNESCO Convention) that should be followed by policy change and change in practice.</li> <li>• Review the obstacles that the Schengen system places on mobility, including challenging economic stability requirements that may be challenging for CSOs and grassroots operators.</li> <li>• Investigate the possibility of exemptions to facilitate travel to the EU considering the need for preferential treatment for global South cultural actors (2005 UNESCO Convention).</li> <li>• Consider the motivations and obstacles to mobility</li> </ul>

**Access recommendations:**

	<p>beyond funding and travel (including for artists and culture professionals that are forced to be in mobility / relocated).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide advice and support to tackle mobility obstacles and enhance access to information.</li> <li>• Consider other eligibility criteria than nationality for support i.e., address issues of residence, being based in, being from or connected to, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Address the inaccessibility of EU funding for the grassroots cultural sector and develop new global financing mechanisms to support transparent and bottom-up led approaches to ICR.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore and create a forum for discussion between EU financing instruments, funding programmes and the cultural sector, in order to make EU financing instruments more inclusive and fit for purpose for their intended audience.</li> <li>• Create opportunities to link artists and CSOs across borders driven by shared topics and priorities and not political/national/soft power agendas.</li> <li>• Investigate the possibility of a transparent global funding programme to rebuild partnerships on universal principles such as the SDGs and that supports risk-taking. This should support recipients from capacity-building, conceptualisation and all the way through to implementation. Outcomes should be sustainable, accessible, building on existing good practices and beyond political agendas.</li> <li>• Learn from existing funds e.g., IFCD, Arts Collaboratory, Afield Fellowship, Mekong Cultural Hub, in how new and diverse voices are brought into the ecosystem.</li> <li>• Increase nation-state and private funding in the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) and the EU contribution as the only multi-state party that has ratified the UNESCO 2005 Convention.</li> <li>• Involve the private sector that could also mobilise a considerable financial contribution to ICR through transparent, effective, and sustainable innovative instruments.</li> </ul>

**Access recommendations:**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the independence of the local cultural scenes to be able to survive and be sustainable without international funding.</li> <li>• Invest in improving digital literacy to help support international (digital) exchange.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Embrace experimentation, flexibility in order to empower cultural actors and find new, sustainable ICR approaches.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in flexibility, risk-taking, and in experimental projects without a fixed idea of the methodology or outcome.</li> <li>• Embrace what can be learned when projects fail and aim towards fairer international cultural relations.</li> <li>• Unpack international connections and the role of diasporas and explore the many opportunities they could offer.</li> <li>• Work against ageism to include both the younger and the older in CSO-led and bottom-up ICR.</li> <li>• Train EU policymakers and programme designers (and cultural sector workers) in intercultural and fair cooperation if they wish to be successful and create equitable activities in the international context.</li> <li>• Learn lessons from the Covid-19 crisis response - flexibility, adaptability and listening in ICR.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Explore how technology can make language less of a barrier to accessing funding and participation in ICR.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the potentiality of AI to reduce barriers caused by language.</li> <li>• Embrace video applications, translations, interviews, so that those who do not speak 'bureaucratic' English or funding-speak can benefit from networks, funding programmes and more.</li> <li>• Create inclusive spaces such as sign language support, adapting websites for visually impaired people, and/or the possibility for people in need to have information / to apply for funding through other means than writing (recorded video etc.).</li> <li>• When needed, develop platforms and meeting spaces that are accessible for everyone, in terms of cost, language, location, etc.</li> <li>• Focus on strengthening local education infrastructures and curricula in a way that responds to the country or region's own history and culture and not only teach languages.</li> </ul>



# Time

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The discussions about Time focussed on long term partnership, cooperation and investment. It referred to the need of sustainable relationships, long-term sustainable knowledge sharing, time of maturation, of codesign and cocreation in the field of ICR.



**Create space and time for cultural programming, participation and co-design. Cultural programming must be supported to be authentic, to have time and space for co-design, learning and reflection, and be supported in experimentation and risk-taking**

Before getting to the point where ICR can be co-created and co-designed there has to be a common understanding of ICR, and conditions have to be set for this conversation. Indeed, too often presenting work has little impact and it is the process of co-creation and collaboration that is the most sustainable ICR partnership.



**There is a need to create a mechanism(s) for long-term sustainable knowledge-sharing to support CSOs and cultural actors to gain intercultural experience and competences.**

There is a need to increase knowledge in key areas, for example, around digital skills and data analysis; the understanding of how digital ICR impacts on global cultural connectivity, sustainability and the migration of cultural actors and on evaluation and monitoring (the cultural sector cannot yet talk about the impact of its work in the digital sphere because of the lack of data and research thus limiting its advocacy work).



**ICR needs a long-term perspective, even when political cycles are short. Long term support that responds to times of change, is based on trust, and avoids creating local competition.**

Short-term funding creates a lack of long-term planning and vision and hinders organisations from thriving.



**Trust is paramount in building inclusive international dialogue - and trust requires addressing delicate topics.**

Both top-down and bottom-up trust-building requires a recalibration of the partnership between, for instance, African countries and the EU beginning with co-designing a partnership that works in both cultural contexts. Whether renouncing decision-making or not, including broader views and participation is key and rethinking issues such as reparations, inclusivity in language and critically interrogating the role played by each actor in the ICR framework is necessary.

**Time recommendations:**

<p><b>Invest for long-term change and partnership development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project funding should be replaced by sustainable investment and short-term collaboration by long-term.</li> <li>• Invest in long-term residency or exchange programmes to build up a deep understanding of other countries and cultures, including rural settings.</li> <li>• Use local international cultural institutes when seeking expertise, for their experience, not just as ‘passing gates’.</li> <li>• Map networks, cultural actors, available funding - increase the knowledgebase of who to work with, where and how.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Facilitate global knowledge sharing that is accessible to all and that increases knowledge.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in the mapping of existing inclusive cultural (exchange) models that can be translated to the ICR context or expanded. Map the research and innovation which is being documented.</li> <li>• Coordinate knowledge exchange on one platform through multiple networks so as to avoid duplication and explore the potentiality of a multilingual knowledge base with materials available in all languages (with AI to support translation). A “one-stop-shop” is preferred, as long as this is based on clear needs and is managed by and for the sector.</li> <li>• Invest in and promote the use of (globally relevant) knowledge-sharing platforms including, for example,</li> </ul>

**Time recommendations:**

	<p>the forthcoming ICCRA knowledge base or the Cultural Relations Platform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in expanding to a global remit the Compendium of International Cultural Policies.</li> <li>• Assess the state of play in ICR through a consolidated and concise annual review/publication (which could for example be delivered through the Compendium of International Cultural Policies).</li> <li>• Invest in understanding the consequences of digital, how it can be best used, how the digital divide can be bridged, and how its dangers and negative consequences in the longer-term could be evaluated. Consider also the human impact, for example, on migration of cultural actors (e.g., remote working and trend of moving away from urban locations).</li> <li>• Invest in evaluation, reflection and learning in terms of the impact activities have on the broader policy and practice of ICR. This should include funding programmes (e.g. H2020, Creative Europe, etc that involve ICR components) and other programmes (e.g. Global Cultural Relations Programme).</li> <li>• Invest in making cultural archives and knowledge bases available. Digitise and ensure its mobility beyond borders.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Invest in the impact that peer-to-peer discussion around ICR creates.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue the dialogue after the Voices of Culture project. Build on the network created in the group dialogues.</li> <li>• Harness the Global Cultural Relations Programme<sup>1</sup> (GCRP) of the Cultural relations Platform<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Reinforce and improve mechanisms such as the EU/ UNESCO Expert Facility on the governance of culture, including its Peer-to-Peer learning process so that they focus ICR on the practice and design of cultural policies. EU support has been vital in facilitating the exchange of experiences. Other mechanisms such as the peer-to-peer-based twinning model are also relevant.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu/2022/05/03/what-is-the-story-behind-the-gcrp/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cultureinexternalrelations.eu>



# Equity

The discussions on equity in ICR tackled various topics ranging from fairness in cultural relations to the pressing needs to address unbalances in cooperation and partnerships. Equity was tackled also from the angle of climate change, sustainability, mobility of artists and cultural professionals, decoloniality, well-being, addressing trauma, etc.

The main topics brought up by the participants are the following:



**Addressing the sustainability of human existence and wellbeing is key in debates around equitable ICR. Basing an ICR framework on the SDGs has the potential to address the main challenges around discussions of equity, human rights, fairness, etc., which dominate ICR.**



**Addressing the trauma and wellbeing of both the cultural audience, wider public and artists themselves is an important task ahead. There is a shift in some countries / regions in terms of what audiences and artists feel is important in their lives to include care and mental health as important priorities of a holistic and balanced life.**



**Climate change is a matter of equity, both to current and future generations but also as a matter of mobility, inclusion in ICR and the right to decent work.**

Addressing the ecological crisis within ICR is inseparable from the need to address widespread inequalities in the cultural sector, acknowledge privileges and strive for equity in ICR. Few cultural stakeholders globally are in a position to take 'green' transportation options and many countries are yet to embrace climate action in ways that are in line with Western standards and to set related targets



**Intersectional decolonialisation must and can be addressed by embracing decoloniality and through genuine ICR partnerships and cultural action. In Europe, both at the EU and Member state level, there is a pressing need to transparently address the colonial framework.**

This is to build trust and progress towards partnerships and co-operation that redress past and current imbalances of power and resources. Intersectionality provides the framework of connecting past colonial discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, race, gender- and abilities-based exclusions with current forms of discrimination on the same basis and other emerging forms of discrimination such as passport apartheid and other mobility barriers for cultural actors and cultural goods.

**Equity recommendations:**

<p><b>Embrace the UN’s SDGs to create a sustainable and inclusive approach to future ICR activities.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-create a data-driven roadmap to innovation in ICR where ICR interventions are not seen as the end of the process but as a means and catalyst to address the SDGs, global human rights and injustices, intersectional decoloniality, etc.</li> <li>• A results-based approach (including climate-related SDG indicators for ICR) could solve the challenges of project-oriented planning in favour of more sustainable action and outcomes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Embrace Climate preservation and action to enhance sustainability.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote new partnerships between artists and climate specialists, cross-sectoral networks.</li> <li>• Develop new tools to understand artists’ digital and broader carbon footprint, and to be empowered to make necessary changes.</li> <li>• Balance decent living (economic pressures) with sustainability demands that includes climate preservation and action.</li> <li>• Develop regional or local green solutions with progress measured using indicators linked to the UN’s 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Africa’s 2063 Agenda, and the EU’s 5 development priorities where the cultural sector and ICR are most polluting.</li> </ul>

**Equity recommendations:**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the frequency of some in-person activities (making them digital and removing unnecessary travel) while maintaining in-person interaction and real-life events and encounters.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Take actions to improve global cultural frameworks and create the conditions for more equitable ICR.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in data collection and analysis skills to monitor and improve the diversity of representation in the cultural sector and in ICR.</li> <li>• Support the creation of a fair funding label for cultural funders (e.g., Manifesto of Fairness).</li> <li>• Investigate the potential of a solidarity tax e.g., in Creative Europe programmes where a percentage is given to artists in countries not eligible as programme countries keeping in mind that such a tax might restrict opportunities in an already precarious sector.</li> <li>• Embrace preferential treatment for developing countries as defined by the 2005 UNESCO Convention for the promotion and the protection of the diversity of cultural expressions to create an equitable global cultural sector and call on signatories to the 2005 Convention to put this into practice.</li> <li>• Explore more widely opportunities for the fair remuneration of artists, e.g., learning from pilots exploring the provision of universal basic income for artists, to strengthen local infrastructures and support the cultural sector.</li> <li>• Expand (international) Covid-19 support programmes where nation-states are lacking.</li> <li>• Create measures to hold global actors (including the EU) accountable in a more transparent way for diversity and fairness in ICR instruments and programmes.</li> </ul>



### Equity recommendations:

**Address the long-term intersectional decolonialisation of ICR and acknowledge the bigger geopolitical challenges that stand in the way of inclusive and partnership based ICR and set up a dedicated working group.**

- Create an interdisciplinary independent working group with a long-term remit, e.g., five years, on decoloniality and reparations in ICR. This global group should be intergenerational and learn from other networks. The working group must incorporate diverse (including critical, radical and fringe) perspectives on partnerships, decolonialisation and intersectional neo-coloniality as well as discrimination based on the grounds of ethnicity, religion, race or gender.
- Explore and deliver a cross-sector (non-art and art forms) forum for the discussion of decoloniality in ICR. This is an opportunity to bring new voices into the debate on innovation in CSO engagement in ICR.
- Create equal opportunities where everyone, especially indigenous populations but also relocated communities (such as South-West Asia and North African [SWANA] artists and culture professionals in Europe), can share their knowledge and principles that can be drawn into global ICR. Ensure that these structures are not exploitative and ensure that what is learned is communicated widely.
- Train and empower individuals (both in policy, CSOs, national cultural institutes and the independent cultural sector) to recognise issues in governance e.g., relating to decolonial perspectives and to take appropriate action.
- Reimagine assessment processes in general benchmarking to reinforce indigenous sovereignty and context specificity which can be best articulated and understood better locally, and by making space for diverse voices and identity.

# Space

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Several topics and needs brought up to the fore as a consequence of Covid-19 on the sector at global level had been addressed by the participants. The latter tackled issues such as sustainable investment in local cultural infrastructures, digitalisation in cultural presentation, the strengthening of South-South networks, participatory methods in ICR, the need for global funding mechanisms, etc.



**Truly equitable cultural relations are only possible when each actor is engaging on an equal playing field.**

Therefore, it is a priority to invest in strengthening local cultural infrastructures. Partnerships can't be equal if local actors are compelled to accept international funding because of a lack of available state or other funding resources for culture. Similarly, this dependence has consequences: states may be able to restrict a cultural organisation's ability to secure international funding, effectively closing it down.



**Global ICR must move beyond Western-centrism to include and strengthen global South-South networks and diverse actors in ICR.**

The impact of Covid-19 on some cultural sectors highlighted the need to ensure South-South networks, market opportunities and opportunities for exchange. Western society has a lot to learn from seeking out non-Western perspectives, governance models and expertise to create the conditions for more reflective partnerships, innovation, etc.



**The necessary move to digital cultural presentation and exchange had inevitable (and now increasingly documented) impacts on ICR, the cultural sector and broader society.**

Work has still to be done to understand the limits and opportunities - and risks - of the inclusivity of digital in ICR, including understanding its potential for different art forms and quality of interaction. Digital is not a replacement but a new way of connecting, not competing with physical interaction but supplementing or enhancing it. It enabled new ways and depths of connection; brought new cultural actors into the centre stage i.e., from digitally connected rural locations; brought together a much more globally-dispersed audience (though combining time zones online is an ongoing challenge for inclusive cultural exchange and dialogue); shifted the global ICR debate from state to the grassroots; and created new economic models. On the other hand, the digital acceleration that occurred during Covid, exacerbated existing inequalities, such as the global digital divide, both for the general public and cultural actors. It could not replace models like touring for performing artists; redirected money that would normally go to artists to digital platforms or production companies; and while some well-equipped organisations could adapt, others could not. Digital opportunities (and risks) need to be explored in more detail for what works in different art forms and in terms of research into digital security; funding; digital privacy and safety, digital carbon footprint, etc.

Skills and knowledge in the digital sphere remain an issue. IPR in the digital context brings cultural content to some new markets but may also restrict it from others, and many cultural actors do not know enough about IPR.

### Space recommendations:

**Give the space to voices who want to deal with shared global issues and embrace participatory methods in all aspects of ICR.**

- Investigate cultural exchange models that could harness specific issues on political precarity, inequalities, climate and its impact, migration, etc. Ask and financially support the artists to unpack the issues and take them forward.
- Embrace participatory processes and ensure that the necessary competences and views are brought in. Participatory processes are likely to lead to new ideas for innovation in ICR and should financially support those that are freelancers or from smaller entities.
- Funding should be directed to those that are putting in practice globally acknowledged good practice principles (from existing research, for example), and that demonstrate inclusive and fair ICR in practice.

**Space recommendations:**

**Create mutually rewarding spaces for cultural sector actors to build new connections outside of the sector and to further socially relevant global dialogue.**

- Artists must be encouraged to reach out beyond the art world to form cross-sector partnerships (psychology, ecology, social justice, disability) to think about key topics like the trauma of the Covid pandemic and the impact on the human, something which will be experienced globally.
- Engage with creators and distributors of mass content such as national broadcasters and independent production companies, with recommendations of how to further fair ICR and trust between civil societies by creating respectful, diverse content.

**Extend bilateral to multilateral perspectives. Cultural programming should be based on local needs.**

- Support those who embrace best practice in inclusive and sustainable ICR, and learn from those who are transforming.
- Support the transformation of organisations working in ICR, that is to say, institutional innovation processes towards more sustainable ICR. This would map, promote and invest in capacity-building while linking to other policy agendas/global trends.
- Address the fact that arts and culture are often not supported from other funding pots relating to innovation.
- Coordinate advocacy at a nation-state or other level (for ex philanthropists) and create professional ties and networks between the arts sector and non-arts funders, businesses, venture capitalists, etc.
- Embed the principles of equitable and fair ICR as a priority in funding programmes that are international, cultural, but not explicitly related to ICR.



**Space recommendations:**

**Create a global ICR framework that responds to needs for funding not linked to political agendas nor to certain geopolitical regions**

- Respond to emerging new values and threats that have to be responded to on a global level, facilitated by programmes that help the arts sector to jointly identify and create strategies and responses.
- Respond to precarity and the fragility experienced by most cultural sector workers globally, and the needs of the public.
- Consider hyperlocality, translocality and moves towards global communities of interest (accelerated by the pandemic) in ICR practices.
- Build a genuine relationship, partnership and trust and go beyond conflicting rhetoric (soft power, cultural diplomacy vs cultural relations, for example)
- Based on universal principles, create agenda-less funding mechanisms for ICR dialogue for, with and by the global South.
- Strengthen or create funding to support non-EU-led projects in ICR, building South-South networks and projects.
- Move beyond Western-centrism to include and strengthen global South-South networks and actors in ICR.

**Improve European ICR with partners, at global level, that would have positive results for European citizens and global partners and publics.**

- Clarify the EU response to globally universal policy topics e.g., the climate, migration.
- Continue to engage through global ICR on universal principles such as human rights and democracy. Yet it has to be inclusive on all sides.
- Do not instrumentalise the culture discourse and export it to other cultural contexts.
- Enhance the visibility and the Unity of European actors on the ground.
- Enhance the partnership dimension to ICR rather than the donor one.

### Space recommendations:

- Strengthen the flexibility of EU instruments and increase trust in local partners and genuine partnerships.
- Be aware of the perceptions of its actions as an important player in global ICR,
- Avoid parachuting (showcasing) EU ICR projects into contexts where the culture is not contextualised or needed. At the same time embrace culture coming into Europe, where Europe is listening and learning.
- Invest in having cultural specialists in EU Delegations but at the same time, recognise that short-term assignments of EU professionals are likely to be secondary in impact when compared to genuine engagement with CSOs. Positioning culture as part of the communications department weakens the sector.
- Empower EUNIC clusters-they have no legal existence, and their level of activities depend instead on goodwill and patchwork support.



**4.**

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# 5.

## International Cultural Relations

PERSPECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS INFORMED BY THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE **VOICES OF CULTURE** BRAINSTORMING MEETINGS ON INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL RELATIONS.

# Combined list of resources and good practice shared by the participants

## Reports, guides, research, commentary

- AECID guide for the mainstreaming of cultural diversity (Spanish), [GUÍA DE LAAECID PARA LA TRANSVERSALIZACIÓN DE LA DIVERSIDAD CULTURAL](#)
- [Challenges and opportunities for creative entrepreneurs revealed in IDB study | IADB](#)
- Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples (CKS), by Steven Loft, first director of CKS
- [composing trust \(2020\)](#), culture Solutions
- [Creativity, culture & capital](#) essay collection - Impact investing in the global creative economy, January 2021 (English) and Collection 2: Impact investing in the global creative economy, September 2021 (English)
- [Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice: Summit Report and Launch event](#) About cultural diplomacy as a multi-directional, inclusive and potentially activist practice that encompasses a diverse range of actors, here is an interesting report by NACDI the North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative.
- [Digital game on Intercultural Citizenship Education | Anna Lindh Foundation](#)
- Dutch Culture event reports on fair international cultural collaboration (environment/ climate; language; international funding)
  - [Equal exchange while working abroad](#)
- EUNIC, [Not a toolkit! Fair collaboration in cultural relations: a reflAction, Fair Collaboration resources](#)
- [Flanders Arts Institute: A fair new world?!](#)
- Goethe-Institut, [Culture Works](#)
- [Handbook on Tolerance & Cultural Diversity In Europe](#) - Anna Triandafyllidou (2012)

- [Handbook: Cultural Relations in the New Normal](#) Toolkit on the impact of Covid-19 on projects (2021)
- IETM reports
  - [Research on inclusive, fair and flexible arts funding](#)
  - IETM, On the Move and DutchCulture [toolkit](#) “Beyond Curiosity and Desire: Towards Fairer International Collaborations in the Arts” (2018)
  - [Perform Europe Insights: Sustainability through innovation](#)
  - [LIVE ARTS IN THE VIRTUALISING WORLD](#)
  - [Live vs digital: the new old debate](#)
- [Netflix, Amazon, Apple et Disney devront investir 250 millions à 300 millions d’euros par an en France](#)
- [Online course on decolonising evaluation](#)
- [On the Move:](#)
  - [Co-produced mobility funding guides \(Europe, Latin America, Africa, MENA region, Asia etc.\)](#)
  - [GALA Funding Guide for Arts and Culture Projects Related to Environmental Sustainability](#)
  - [Mobility Info Points - as a way to tackle administrative mobility challenges](#)
  - [Cultural Mobility Yearbook 2022 - with a focus on Digital Mobility](#)
  - [In Search of Equal Partners: On Being a SWANA Artist and Cultural Worker in the EU](#). Coordinated by Culture Action Europe with the support of the Open Society Foundations and to which On the Move has contributed.
- [Open Letter](#) (from Lázaro Gabino Rodríguez) to Jérôme Bel | Etcetera
- [Panamanian National Strategy for Cultural Diplomacy](#), first of its kind in linking cultural diplomacy to the 2030 Agenda, from a few years ago.
- [Publication on inclusive, fair and flexible arts funding](#)
- Red Iberoamericana de Diplomacia Cultural, [Encuentro de la Red Iberoamericana de Diplomacia Cultural - SEGIB](#)
- [Report](#) on innovation and resilience in the arts in Canada (2022)
- [Supporting Relevance: Ideas and strategies for inclusive, fair and flexible arts funding | IETM Equal exchange when working abroad – roundtable on fair mobility and reciprocity | DutchCulture](#) - Equal exchange when working abroad, fair mobility and reciprocity in international cultural exchange
- World Cities Forum report on sustainability: [The Green World Cities of Tomorrow: Culture and Sustainability](#)



### Policy documentation

- [African Cultural Policy Network - Resources](#), Towards an EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (European Parliament Resolution of 5 July 2017 (2016/2240 (INI) - A Critique from an African perspective)
- Canada Council for the Arts [2021–26 Strategic Plan](#) (addresses questions such as decolonization, innovation, cooperation, etc).
- Canada Council for the [Arts Strategic Innovation Fund](#)
- [Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Co-operation - UN Documents](#): Gathering a body of global agreements (UN)
- UNESCO resources
  - [Article 16 on Preferential Treatment | Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#)
  - [Core concepts | Intercultural Dialogue](#)
  - [Declaration of Principles of International Cultural Co-operation](#) (UNESCO)
  - [EU / UNESCO Peer to Peer Learning](#)
  - [Governance for Culture | Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#) (UNESCO)
  - [Intercultural competences: conceptual and operational framework](#)
  - [Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#) (UNESCO committee report, February 2022)
  - [Manual for developing intercultural competencies: story circles](#)
  - [Periodic Reports on the 2005 Convention](#) (UNESCO)
  - [Re|Shaping Policies for Creativity Report](#) (UNESCO Global Report)
  - [Strengthening the System of Governance for Culture in Developing Countries | Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#) (UNESCO)
  - The UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – [MONDIACULT 2022](#), in Mexico
  - [UNESCO Transparency Portal - Promoting the diversity of cultural expressions by increasing the national capacities and effective implementation of the 2005 Convention](#)
- [European Commission Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations, 2016](#)

### Projects, pilots and initiatives responding to themes of the catalogue

- [Al Mawrad: support to local infrastructures among others](#)
- [Arab Fund for Arts and Culture](#)

- [Artists Changing the World sessions with global speakers \(the Festivals Academy\)](#)
- [Arts Collaboratory](#)
- [Asia-Europe Foundation](#) (Afield fellowship)
- Council - Afield fellowship; <http://www.council.art/fellowship/>
- Connecting South: South-South Arts Fellowships; <https://www.connectingsouth.org/>
- [Carte Blanche | Activities | European Dancehouse Network](#) (peer to peer exchange)
- [Creative Visa - Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi](#)
- [Cultural Relations Platform](#)
- [Culture Bridges programme](#) (EU-Ukraine, led by British Council)
- [Culture Fund of Zimbabwe](#) has been a Sweden (Sida) partner since 2006. Co-founded it with Zimbabwean arts, culture, heritage stakeholder (1m US\$ budget)
- Culture Action Europe, [In search of equal partners: On being a SWANA artist and cultural worker in the EU](#)
- [Culture of Solidarity Fund](#) (multiple-partner funding programme set-up in response to Covid-19)
- [Digital Leap](#) – digital skills capacity development for circus/dance professionals
- [Emergencies, Emergences, Engagement: Cultural Relations and Climate Action](#) (British Council)
- [EMX: Call for Hosts for International Delegation Tour | On the Move](#)
  - [Trade mission - EMEE](#)
  - [International delegation tour: open call for applications - host - EMEE](#)
- EUNIC
  - [Finding new models for doing cultural exchange](#) (article relating to selection of European Spaces of Culture programme pilots)
- [IKS Cultural Consulting - Digital Mobility Fund Application Form - ConcertsSA](#)
- [International Cultural Relations Research Alliance \(ICRRA\) – ifa](#) (initiative led by British Council and ifa - Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)
- International Festivals Declare Emergency (forthcoming initiative, The Festivals Academy are a partner)
- [i-Portunus](#)
- Long-term collaborations/projects between Japanese artists and cultural actors in the European Capitals of Culture. Some examples in performing arts are;
  - [Divadlo Kjógen - Nagomi Kyogen, Japanese traditional performing arts being played by Czech artists \(ECoC Prague 2000\).](#)
  - [started from ECoC Galway 2020, with Japanese dancer/choreographer Akiko](#)

[Kitamura. They have continued their Echoes of Calling - collaboration even under the pandemic.](#)

- The collaboration between [Sibiu International Festival/ The Radu Stanca National Theatre](#) (Romania) and Japanese theatres ([Coproductions](#), [volunteer exchanges](#) since ECoC Sibiu 2007)
- [The Alfa Theatre](#) (Czech Republic) and [the Puppet Theatre PUK](#) (Japan) has collaborated since ECoC Plzen 2015. It leads to the creation of the new [NPO DEKU Artforum in 2021.](#)
- [Julie's Bicycle](#)
  - [Creative Climate Leadership | Julie's Bicycle | Climate Training Programme](#)
- [Lift Festival Concept Touring](#): open for submissions
- [Making Tracks Music Exchange Programme \(UK / Online\) | On the Move](#)
- [Mekong Cultural Hub](#)
- [More Europe](#)
- [Mophradat](#) (different funding available)
- [Museum of Human Emotions](#) project, with participants from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Italy and France ([see more](#))
- [North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative](#), Event on Decentering the Nature-Culture Divide in Diplomacy
- [On the Move: Mobility Info Points \(MIP\), Mobility funders' group and \(en\)forced mobility working group](#)
- [On the Move: Series Mobilities Africa / The World](#) (in partnership with Cité internationale des arts and Art Moves Africa)
- [Perform Europe](#)
- [Perform Europe selects Springback Ringside!](#) - Aerowaves Springback Ringside is Aerowaves' new Virtual Reality project, it gathers groups of spectators to watch emerging European choreographers' new works in virtual reality, to connect and dialogue with the dance makers with the facilitation of experts from the Aerowaves Springback magazine. With a team of specialists, Aerowaves has also started researching the possibilities of filming dance in Virtual Reality as a way of documenting work – as opposed to creating work especially for this technology. Being expanded through More Europe. [Open Call for Dance Artists for Aerowaves Twenty | On the Move](#)
- [Perform Europe: Touring and Distribution Grants | On the Move](#)
- [The Prince Claus Awards](#)

- [Programme Archipel](#) - coordinated by Institut français. Focus on ultra peripheral countries and regions (with a focus on mobility, cooperation etc.)
- [Reconnect Performance Festival](#)
- [RESHAPE Network](#)
  - [Solidarity Tax](#)
- [SHIFT Culture](#) (EU-funded project developing training for cultural leaders)
- [SocietyinMotion](#) (Netherlands organisation working with newcomers, specifically within festivals and culture)
- [Taliban, Western officials meet in Oslo to discuss Afghanistan](#)
- [The Wellbeing Summit 2022](#) - Canada Council is supporting an indigenous-led delegation to this Summit to discuss the healing process and wellbeing in the arts in the context of decolonization and intergenerational trauma
- [Transcultura programme](#) - creative twinning scheme between the Caribbean and Europe
- [House of Europe \(Ukraine\)](#)
- Project ideas as good practice where eligibility criteria goes beyond nationality, e.g. based in, resident in, connected to, etc
  - [VV Foundation: Pair Residency for Art, Culture and Humanities Professionals from Nordic-Baltic States \(Latvia\) | On the Move](#)
  - [Tashweesh Festival: Open Call for Feminist Artists and Activists for an Online Retreat | On the Move](#)
  - [The Nature of Us: Open Call for Movement or Body-based Performance Projects \(Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary\) | On the Move](#)
  - [Stanley Greene Legacy Prize and Fellowship for Early Career Visual Storytellers | On the Move](#)





# International Cultural Relations

The content of this paper reflects the discussions by participants at the **Voices of Culture** Brainstorming meetings on International Cultural Relations 2-9 February 2022 - compiled by rapporteurs **Nicole McNeilly** and **Gabrielle Bernoville**

**March 2022**

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*The European Commission project VOICES OF CULTURE is implemented by the Goethe-Institut, Brussels.*



# VOICES OF CULTURE

Structured Dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector



Funded by the  
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