

# Creative Economy Roundtable on Global Cities of Culture

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# List of Abbreviations

<b>AI :</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AR :</b>	Augmented Reality
<b>AVGC :</b>	Audio, Visual, Gaming, Comics
<b>CCI :</b>	Cultural and Creative Industries
<b>FICCI :</b>	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
<b>G20 :</b>	Group of Twenty
<b>GDP :</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GI :</b>	Geographical Indication
<b>HEIs :</b>	Higher-educational Institutions
<b>MSME :</b>	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
<b>UK :</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UKRI :</b>	United Kingdom Research and Innovation
<b>UPI :</b>	Unified Payments Interface
<b>VR :</b>	Virtual Reality
<b>UNESCO :</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>WCCF :</b>	World Cities Culture Forum

# Executive Summary

The Creative Economy Roundtable on Global Cities of Culture brought to life the thoughts, ideas, and collective aspirations centred on developing resilient infrastructure, and public-private partnership networks for the creative economies of both countries as part of UK-India's living bridge<sup>1</sup>.

A focussed group of experts, researchers, policymakers and artists from both countries contributed towards envisioning a vibrant and inclusive space for city development and cultural entrepreneurship in the country. With India taking the lead on the global stage with the G20 presidency under the theme "One World, One Family, One Future<sup>2</sup>", the roundtable discussions aimed to create a common platform for optimising on India and the UK's expertise in the domain of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs).

The roundtable held on August 24, 2023, in New Delhi, is part of the larger dialogue and series of conversations hosted by the British Council and anchored around the creative economy to guide and support joint global cities of culture policy in India. In alignment with SDG 11<sup>3</sup>, the Creative Economy Roundtable on Global Cities of Culture was part of continuing efforts to accelerate the paradigm shift to create, develop, and nurture a model that strengthens cultural innovation, develops creative organisations, deepens networks, and nurtures the cultural and heritage economy of the country. The platform sought to explore innovative avenues to harness the potential of the orange economy for sustainable development in India.

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<sup>1</sup> (2030 Roadmap for India-UK Future Relations, 2021)

<sup>2</sup> (G 20, n.d.)

<sup>3</sup> (UNO, n.d.)

# Background

India and the UK have a unique relationship based on their common history and their shared commitment to democratic values and people-to-people ties. The India-UK Roadmap 2030 reflects their joint vision for a Comprehensive Strategic partnership that benefits both the nations and the world collectively. Art and culture are vital elements of this partnership, as they celebrate the diversity and creativity of both democracies. These cultural values also pave the way for further cooperation, research and exchange in the field of creative economy and cultural industries.

The India/UK Together Season of Culture<sup>4</sup> was a joint cultural exchange programme marking India's 75 years of Independence. The celebration involved 1945 artists, and 50+ partner organisations and was spread across 21 cities in India and the UK. The programme created a more cohesive ecosystem for Cultural and Creative Industries and entrepreneurs in both countries.

In a bid to study India's orange economy, the British Council, in collaboration with its partner organisations, mapped the scale of India's formal and informal creative sectors. Through its widely discussed Taking the Temperature Report<sup>5</sup>, the British Council assessed the contribution of cultural and creative industries to India's GDP, which stood at 1.5% at the valuation of around 30,000 crores in 2020-21 and experienced a contraction of 1% from the year 2019-20.

A separate study conducted by the Asian Bank Development Institute<sup>6</sup> estimated that India's creative economy, on average, accounted for 8.30% of total employment between 2017-18 and 2019-20.

It also found that India's creative workforce is mostly concentrated in urban areas, is younger, and less gender-biased as compared to the non-creative workforce.

The study observes a high wage differential of 88.42% in favour of a creative workforce, which signifies how structuring a creative and heritage economy can lead to higher productivity and income.

Over the last few years, the British Council and its partners have studied the Indian creative economy landscape through its reports like Mapping the Creative Economy around Durga Puja 2019<sup>7</sup> and Reimagining the Craft Economy Post COVID-19<sup>8</sup>. The roundtable provided a platform to discuss four culture-related priorities set forth by the Indian G20 presidency<sup>9</sup>.

- Protection and Restitution of Cultural Property.
- Harnessing Living Heritage for a Sustainable Future.
- Promotion of Cultural and Creative Industries and Creative Economy.
- Leveraging Digital Technologies for the Protection and Promotion of Culture Economy.

The Kashi Culture Pathway Outcome document agreed upon by all the members at the G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting at Varanasi acknowledged the transversality of culture across public policies and its multifaceted impact on forging more inclusive societies and sustaining peace and dialogue.

- It reaffirmed the role of culture as an enabler and driver of sustainable development and in fostering resilience and regeneration of economies.
- Further recognising the impact of climate change, it reiterated concern for conservation and safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage.
- It highlighted the culture workstream's deep connection to diversity, sustainability and inclusiveness<sup>10</sup>.

The United Kingdom, being a global leader in the creative economy space<sup>11</sup> is committed to India's initiatives to structure and enhance its art, heritage, and cultural offerings to a greater audience across geographies. Through the Department of Culture, Media and Sports, Department of Business and Trade, UKRI, and the British Council among others; the UK aims to partner to strengthen the dynamic, diverse, and future-facing creative economy in India<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> (British Council, n.d.)

<sup>5</sup> (British Council et al., n.d.)

<sup>6</sup> (Kukreja et al., 2022)

<sup>7</sup> (British Council & Department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal, n.d.)

<sup>8</sup> (British Council & Fashion Revolution India, 2021)

<sup>9</sup> (Ministry of Culture, n.d.)

<sup>10</sup> (G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting, 2023, #)

<sup>11</sup> (British Council, n.d.)

<sup>12</sup> (British Council, n.d.)

# Roundtable Overview

The Creative Economy Roundtable on Global Cities of Culture held in New Delhi included three sessions, each focussing on a different aspect of the creative economy and cultural cities.

- Arts and culture industries at the centre of sustainable economic development.
- MSME start-ups for inclusive creative economies.
- City destinations for sustainable growth and cultural tourism.

The moderator gave an overview of each session, followed by insightful discussion among speakers and Q&A from participants. Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay<sup>13</sup> gave his reflections and remarks after each session.

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<sup>13</sup> Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage and DCMS Lords Minister

# Opening Remarks

Opening remarks were made by Ms Alison Barrett MBE, Director, India, British Council. She welcomed dignitaries, speakers, and the audience for their participation and expressed gratitude towards Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay for his presence at the roundtable.

Speaking about creative industries in the 21st century, she underscored the global presence of India's creative offerings to the world. She noted the work done by the British Council in collaboration with its Indian counterpart in the UK, The Nehru Centre<sup>14</sup>, in enhancing and enriching the cultural corridors between the two countries.

She suggested the following key themes to the audience for their attention within the broader paradigm of the creative economy:

- role of the creative economy in transforming livelihoods, encouraging local entrepreneurs for the global stage, and curating priority platforms for artists, among others.
- the gendered perspective of the creative economy and its importance.
- inclusion of digital technologies for maximising the reach and impact of cultural products.
- exploration of the key links between arts, education, and curriculum and their interconnectedness.
- the critical role of languages in preserving and sustaining the work of art and heritage, and the importance of preserving languages themselves.

Concluding her remarks, she cited the key recommendations of the Taking the Temperature Report<sup>15</sup> in alignment with the India-UK 2030 Roadmap:

- establishment of a creative economy task force across government departments from 14 ministries with a mandate for creative industries.
- need for more organised and interconnected cultural and creative industries infrastructure.
- review the regulatory framework to strengthen the export and import market for creative goods and services and reduce barriers to entry.
- focus on structuring investments and nurturing creative and cultural innovations.

<sup>14</sup> The Nehru Centre acts as the cultural wing of The High Commission of India in the UK. Established in 1992, it is regarded by ICCR as its flagship cultural centre abroad, and has, over the years, emerged as a premier institution engaged in India's cultural interface with the UK.

<sup>15</sup> (British Council et al., n.d.)





# Keynote Address



Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay<sup>16</sup> delivered the keynote address. He began his speech by commending India's G20 presidency as brilliant, ambitious and appreciated the role played by culture. He elaborated on the diverse creative economy ecosystem in the UK and described how even small towns and cities in the UK have found a new lease of life through creative activities and appreciated the creative economy's role in spurring economic activity.

He discussed the role of culture in shaping one's identity, nationhood and place in a globalised world, and how the UK emphasises the need for funding and creating a supportive environment for CCIs, including the support for emerging areas like gaming, Artificial Intelligence and film production. He cited his hometown Whitley Bay as an example of how culture-led regeneration transformed historic buildings and attracted new businesses.

He also mentioned the redevelopment of Battersea Power Station Development into a shopping and leisure space and the V&A Museum at Dundee, the first design museum in the region, which generated 75 Million GBP in economic impact across Scotland in its first year after opening.

He anticipated outcomes from the roundtable discussions and their role in shaping India's vision for the creative economy and policy formulation and action. He hoped for the development of an economic forum focussed on promoting inclusivity, enabling collaboration, and steering policy dialogue.

- Launch of UK-India Creative Economy Policy Development Forum allied to DCMS creative industries sector vision policy<sup>17</sup>.
- Production of a policy paper reflecting the culture section on India-UK Roadmap 2030 and G20 Culture Ministry's priorities.
- To be a platform to support policy exchanges and development for the creative economy and cultural industries to help facilitate sustainable and inclusive growth.

<sup>16</sup> Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage and DCMS Lords Minister

<sup>17</sup> (Department of Culture, Media and Sports, 2023)

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**Arts and culture are critical to our well-being and our sense of identity. They help shape our nationhood, build communities, and create a sense of place. Additionally, they contribute to employment and GDP growth.**

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay

# Special Address

Dr Jyotsna Suri<sup>18</sup> gave a special address to the audience. In her speech, Dr Suri spoke about the links between culture and tourism. She noted the significance of culture as a driving force for social change, preserving history, advancing economic prosperity, social cohesion and a sustainable future.

She drew attention towards the creative economy's role in achieving holistic and sustainable living. She concluded by appreciating the work done by the British Council, FICCI and ArtX Company through their reports like Taking the Temperature<sup>19</sup>; which helped in enhanced understanding of the sector.

- The sector needs to have existing policies revised and targeted policies enforced to create more economic opportunities.
- Promoting organisations like FICCI, aim to foster a supportive ecosystem for art and culture by bringing organisations together to find sustainable solutions.
- The interdependence of art, culture, creative industries and tourism should be explored further to establish a favourable environment for their holistic development.

<sup>18</sup> Dr Jyotsna Suri Past President, FICCI, CMD, The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group & Mentor, FICCI Tourism & Culture Committee  
<sup>19</sup> (British Council et al., n.d.)

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**Culture has a key role in determining the course of social change and history of a nation because it is transmitted from generation to generation.**

Dr Jyotsna Suri



# Policy Discussion

## Session 1 Topic: Arts and culture industries at the centre of sustainable economic development

### Brief Summary:

The session<sup>20</sup> focussed on the central role of arts and culture industries in enabling sustainable economic development. Compelling narratives of creative endeavours transforming their defined sectoral boundaries highlighted culture's permeable and cross-cutting nature.

Culture constitutes a crucial element of the identity of people and places. In places like Coventry and Liverpool in the UK, traditional heritage is deeply rooted in their historical narratives, with industrial legacies, music traditions, and architectural landmarks defining their unique character.

Similarly, countries like Spain showcase their cultural richness through flamenco, historic sites, and vibrant festivals, attracting visitors and fostering a sense of pride and belonging among their residents. These cultural elements not only preserve heritage but also drive tourism, creativity, and social cohesion, making culture an indispensable part of both personal and regional identity.

Depicting the importance of culture in urban planning and development, speakers spoke of the IKEA Initiative<sup>21</sup> at Coventry, India Habitat Centre<sup>22</sup> at New Delhi, and events like Serendipity Arts Festival<sup>23</sup> which demonstrate how thriving cultural and creative spaces bridge the gap between diverse communities and nurture a sense of connection and belonging. It helps in preserving tradition and cultural heritage while vitalising economic growth.

Similarly, creativity-oriented spatial arrangements or creative clusters can be pivotal to the region's growth. This necessitates an informed investment in the sector-relevant training of the workforce and the role of education in operationalising and sharing knowledge and skills.

Additionally, it requires the availability of industry-relevant infrastructure and amenities beyond urban centres for which investment partnerships along with private entities can be explored.

Clusters in Arts, MSMEs and arts startups help drive interconnected infrastructure and development of the cities. Sustained investments in sector training of the workforce and the role of education in operationalising and sharing knowledge and skills are integral to the 'Clusters Effect'.

Modelling of programmes like UKRI Creative Industries Clusters Programme<sup>24</sup> and the City of Culture<sup>25</sup> offer important lessons with regard to balancing cultural richness and economic development. Another example of culture-conscious planning has been encapsulated in the 2025 Bradford Initiative<sup>26</sup>. Overall, the session gave insights into the overt and covert interplay between art, culture and economy.

#### <sup>20</sup> Session One:

Topic: Arts and culture industries at the centre of sustainable economic development

#### Speakers:

1. Professor Judith Mossman Pro Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Humanities), Coventry University,
2. Ms. Vidyun Singh Creative Head - Programmes, Habitat World, India Habitat Centre
3. Professor Nicky Marsh Associate Dean of Research and Enterprise, Southampton Institute of Arts and Humanities
4. Ms Smriti Rajgarhia - Director, Serendipity Arts Foundation and Serendipity Arts Festival

Moderator: Jonathan Kennedy, Director Arts, India, British Council

<sup>21</sup> The IKEA Initiative at Coventry, stemming from its City of Culture legacy, aims to establish a diverse cultural hub, merging education, arts and community engagement to foster inclusivity and sustainability.

<sup>22</sup> India Habitat Centre at New Delhi was conceived to provide a physical environment, which would serve as a catalyst for a synergetic relationship between individuals and institutions working in diverse habitat-related areas and would therefore maximise their total effectiveness.

<sup>23</sup> Serendipity Arts Festival is one of the largest multi-disciplinary arts initiative in the South Asian region, encompassing visual, performing, culinary, film, literature, and fashion arts. The festival also has various layers of programming, in the form of educational initiatives, workshops and institutional engagements.

<sup>24</sup> Funded by the UKRI Challenge Fund and delivered by The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the Creative Industries Clusters Programme supports UK's creative businesses across nine research partnerships, accelerating growth in diverse creative sectors.

<sup>25</sup> The UK's City of Culture is a title awarded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport every four years to a city in the United Kingdom, with the winner hosting a year-long programme of cultural events and celebrations.

<sup>26</sup> Bradford was named UK City of Culture 2025, recognised for its rich history and young population. This accolade promises a year of culture with over 1,000 events and collaborations, marking a transformative milestone for the city.

## Session Details:

The session focussed on the policy level and institutional mechanisms that can contribute to the development of arts and culture industries as centres of pride and economic development. It delved into the case studies of partnership and collaboration between public and private entities, city planners, academia and communities and their role in driving forward new ways to reimagine, plan, build and develop the city more sustainably and inclusively.

The session discussed policies and institutional mechanisms to promote arts and culture as drivers of pride and economic growth. It showcased examples of successful partnerships between public and private entities, city planners, academia, and communities in creating sustainable and inclusive cities.

Professor Mossman<sup>27</sup> highlighted Coventry's transformation into a vibrant cultural destination by repurposing historic buildings. The IKEA initiative, in collaboration with organisations like Arts Council England<sup>28</sup> and Coventry University<sup>29</sup>, exemplifies how space can be used for cultural rejuvenation.

This initiative places culture at the city's core, fostering collaboration and ensuring long-term viability through a mixed economy model. The IKEA initiative aims to build a culture-oriented space from scratch, while the India Habitat Centre revitalised an existing space to make urban living relevant.

Ms Singh<sup>30</sup> explained how the inception of the India Habitat Centre (IHC) was an opposite story. IHC was an institutional space designed for institutions and then evolved to become the cultural hub of the city. It is a story of sustaining creative endeavours independently, fostering national and international collaborations that established it as a cultural hub in Delhi, fostering a sense of community and inclusivity.

Professor Marsh<sup>31</sup> highlighted the idea of supporting small creative clusters outside cities through policy interventions. Research supports the feasibility of these clusters with broad networks and areas of expertise. Proximity among clusters positively influences their growth, but challenges include skill shortages and limited networking.

Facilitating networking for creative professionals and enhancing amenities, socio-cultural heritage, and diversity within these clusters using blended finance models and arts education institutions can be key solutions. She advocated for small but specific approach towards developing creative space which may be intra or international in nature.

She added how the UKRI's Creative Clusters programme is a strategic policy investment that aims to promote national interests and resources by fostering regional identities for the creative clusters. The programme emphasises the place-based understanding of the local culture, values, networks and the role of the anchor organisation in facilitating a vibrant creative agglomeration. Through structured policy interventions, the programme supports culture-led regeneration that leverages social and cultural capital to enhance skills, pride and wellbeing among the participants.

<sup>27</sup> Professor Judith Mossman Pro Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Humanities), Coventry University

<sup>28</sup> (Arts Council England, n.d.)

<sup>29</sup> (Coventry University, n.d.)

<sup>30</sup> Ms. Vidyun Singh Creative Head - Programmes, Habitat World, India Habitat Centre

<sup>31</sup> Professor Nicky Marsh Associate Dean of Research and Enterprise, Southampton Institute of Arts and Humanities

Ms Rajgarhia<sup>32</sup> spoke about the importance of working with government agencies for the rejuvenation and redevelopment of public spaces. Additionally, she shared her vision for The BRIJ, an upcoming cutting-edge arts and cultural centre in New Delhi.

She explained how The BRIJ caters to the broader cultural and creative ecosystem by offering various opportunities such as writing, fellowships, pedagogy, academy, incubation, archives and exhibitions for the arts and arts managers.

Lord Parkinson gave the concluding comments by highlighting the City of Culture<sup>33</sup> Initiative launched by the UK government and how it helps cities improve their creative landscape by engaging in a competitive process.

He noted that the initiative also attracts private investments and stimulates wider collaboration among businesses, academia, cultural organisations and civil society around the city's culture and identity.

He cited the example of Coventry City, where a government-led cultural regeneration of 172 million GBP resulted in an additional investment of 500 million GBP into the city. The City of Culture initiative, inspired by the EU's European Capital has been instrumental in furthering fruitful conversations and connections among various stakeholders.

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<sup>32</sup> Ms Smriti Rajgarhia - Director, Serendipity Arts Foundation and Serendipity Arts Festival

<sup>33</sup> The UK's City of Culture is a title awarded by the the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport every four years to a city in the United Kingdom, with the winner hosting a year-long programme of cultural events and celebrations.

## Session 2 Topic: MSME start-ups for inclusive creative economies

### Brief Summary:

Session<sup>34</sup> two discussed the role of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises<sup>35</sup> (MSMEs) in giving impetus to creative economies that are inclusive. Smart Cities<sup>36</sup> like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Chennai have lately emerged as hubs of arts, creativity and innovation. A study of these cities allows an understanding of the effects and impact of technology on employment. Tech-based arts (Gaming, AR/VR experiences) are brilliant examples of the relationship between the sectors enabling greater reach. The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Indian Government's initiatives seek to expand this further.

The transformative nature of digital technologies like paperless Aadhaar<sup>37</sup> and UPI<sup>38</sup> have made recognition and online mobile payments easy, benefiting the creative economy.

The Ministry of MSME's Design and Incubation Programme<sup>39</sup> and revamped Udyam<sup>40</sup> registration process for MSMEs have enabled access to training and grant support to start-ups. UK's experience as a leading country in the creative economy, public funding, tax incentives and private partnerships can help in driving industry growth.

The role of women in driving creative growth forward and the recognition of local and indigenous artists on national and international platforms were highlighted for propelling employment.

### Session Details:

Ms Ambani<sup>41</sup> highlighted the growth and potential of the UK's creative industries, which expanded 1.5 times faster than any other sector in the UK from 2010 to 2019<sup>42</sup>. With a value of 108 billion GBP and employing 2.3 million people, the creative sector was one of the UK's top five priorities. She also emphasised the importance of MSMEs, which accounted for 88% of the creative sector, for fostering a thriving creative industry in India<sup>43</sup>.

Shri Singh<sup>44</sup> weighed in on the MSME landscape in the country. He discussed the recent changes in the definition of MSMEs, which now encompass more than 1,200 diverse business activities.

<sup>34</sup> Session Two:

Topic: MSME start-ups for inclusive creative economies

Speakers:

1. Shri Ateesh Kumar Singh IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India

2. Ms Archana Prasad Founder, Goovey.AI, BeFantastic.in & Jaaga.in

3. Ms Karishma Gupta Founder & CEO, Eslando Circular Fashion

4. Ms Swati Janu Founder, Social Design Collaborative

5. Ms Hasina Kharbhih Founder and Managing Director, Impulse Social Enterprises

6. Ms Shivangi Ambani Senior Sector Manager, Department for Business & Trade

Moderator: Dr Sanjoy Roy Managing Director, Teamwork Arts

<sup>35</sup> Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are small and medium sized startups vital to the economy, characterised by their limited workforce and revenue compared to larger corporations. The sector contributes around 33% of the country's total GDP and accounts for around 120 million jobs across industries and regions.

<sup>36</sup> The Indian government's Smart Cities Mission aims to enhance urban living standards through the application of best practices. Digital technologies, and increased collaboration between public and private sectors.

<sup>37</sup> Aadhaar is a 12 digit individual identification number which serves as proof of identity and proof of address for residents of India. India's Aadhaar's coverage stands at around 92.7%.

<sup>38</sup> Unified Payment Interface (UPI) is a indigenously developed mobile payment method that allows one to transfer funds from one bank account to the other, instantly and free of charge. India registered 89.5 million digital transactions in the year 2022 which is the highest in the world

<sup>39</sup> The objective is to promote and support untapped creativity and to promote adoption of latest technologies in MSMEs that seek the validation of their ideas at the proof-of-concept level.

<sup>40</sup> Udyam Registration is a broad certification enabling micro, small, and medium enterprises to officially register with the government. This process grants MSMEs a recognition certificate and a distinctive identification number. Presently, around 2.4 crore MSMEs are registered in India.

<sup>41</sup> Ms Shivangi Ambani, Senior Sector Manager, Department for Business & Trade (Govt. of UK, 2023)

<sup>42</sup> (British Council et al., n.d.)

<sup>43</sup> Shri Ateesh Kumar Singh IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India



He outlined the Government of India's initiatives to provide digital and paperless support to over 24 million MSMEs in various stages of development, from ideation to scaling up, through a network of about 600 technical institutes across the country.

He acknowledged the vital role of the knowledge economy and the need for market creation and innovation culture in India. He mentioned the government's plans to establish Centres of Excellence in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities to offer comprehensive assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs and organisations.

Ms Prasad<sup>45</sup> highlighted challenges faced by organisations in the creative sector, including limited resources for documenting and communicating their impact, a scarcity of research, and a lack of recognised success metrics. Ms Janu<sup>46</sup> emphasised the need for collaborative platforms to connect artists and professionals and raised the issue of pay parity among artists. This underscores the importance of considering a gendered perspective in policy formulation for both MSMEs and larger industry players.

Ms Kharbhih<sup>47</sup> stressed the importance of leveraging indigenous culture and creative endeavours to create value, promote awareness, and address social issues like unsafe migration and trafficking. Ms Gupta<sup>48</sup> highlighted the need for sustainability in practices, drawing parallels with recycling in the clothing and textile industries, as a key driver of green growth and planet-oriented progress in the cultural and creative sector.

In his concluding remarks, Lord Parkinson highlighted the vital role of open borders for the growth and development of the creative industries, especially for artisans and creative professionals. He also emphasised the need for basic amenities, such as space, and appreciated the British Libraries<sup>49</sup> Network as a hub of innovation and collaboration for both businesses and creative professionals to turn their ideas into reality.

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<sup>45</sup> Ms Archana Prasad, Founder, Goovey.AI, BeFantastic.in & Jaaga.in

<sup>46</sup> Ms Swati Janu Founder, Social Design Collaborative

<sup>47</sup> Ms Hasina Kharbhih, Founder and Managing Director, Impulse Social Enterprises

<sup>48</sup> Ms Karishma Gupta Founder & CEO, Eslando Circular Fashion

<sup>49</sup> (British Library, n.d.)

## Session 3 Topic: City destinations for sustainable growth & cultural tourism

### Brief Summary:

The final session<sup>50</sup> discussed interlinkages between cultural heritage and tourism. The discussions delved into the social significance of public festivals rooted in the region's history and tradition and their enormous economic potential for the local economies.

UNESCO's recognition<sup>51</sup> of Kolkata's Durga Puja<sup>52</sup> offers examples of culture transversing beyond geographic boundaries and developing global cultural identities. It demonstrates how public festivals offer huge economic dividends for the local state economies. Networks like the World Cities Culture Forum<sup>53</sup> (WCCF) are leading the way through cultural and tourism-related ideas and data sharing.

Global disruptors like the COVID-19 pandemic served as a reminder of the interdependence of creativity and tourism. The UKRI's Creative Cluster Programme's experience in stimulating economic growth, creating jobs, and nurturing innovative ecosystems contributes towards designing and planning such tourism culture. The session was concluded with a vision of building lively, resilient, and economically viable urban environments through collaboration, exchange of best practices, and investment in creative clusters.

### Session Details:

The Hon'ble Mayor of Kolkata<sup>54</sup> highlighted the cultural potential of Durga Puja for creating economic opportunities and urged cities to adopt a global outlook for learning and innovation. He also expressed interest in joining networks like the World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF) for sustainable urban development.

Ms Gasch<sup>55</sup> began her discussion by saying culture is the golden thread that connects the economy and social policy of cities. The World Cities Culture Forum facilitates the exchange of ideas, best practices and data on culture and tourism among cities without any intellectual property barriers.

Culture helped cities recover from the COVID-19 crisis by boosting both domestic and international tourism, which also benefited the creative and hospitality sectors.

However, she cautioned that cultural destinations need to be mindful from overuse and excessive tourism and stressed the importance of multilateral collaborations, technology, access to platforms, spaces and skills, and tailored solutions from governments to support the creative industry. She concluded by emphasising the need for sustained funding to reap the long-term benefits of the sector.

Ms Bhattacharya<sup>56</sup> highlighted the need for sustainability and resilience in the creative communities post COVID-19. One way to achieve this is to promote community art spaces that foster a regenerative economy and a cultural identity.

By professionalising traditional arts and developing the area as an experiential tourist destination, the value of both the art and the process of making it can be enhanced. A public/private partnership can provide the necessary amenities for such art villages to attract and satisfy tourists. Events like the Ripples Festival, supported by the British Council, offered an alternative income source for artisans through local tourism when the market was disrupted by the pandemic.

<sup>50</sup> Topic: City destinations for sustainable growth & cultural tourism  
Speakers:

1. Mr Firhad Hakim Mayor of Kolkata & Minister of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs

2. Professor Christopher Smith AHRC Executive Chair and UKRI International Champion

3. Mr V. Vishnu, I.A.S., Managing Director & CEO Guidance Tamil Nadu Industries, Investment Promotion & Commerce Department, Government of Tamil Nadu

4. Ms Laia Gasch, Director, World Cities Culture Forum

5. Ms Ananya Bhattacharya Co-Founder and Director, banglanatak dot com  
Moderator: Ms. Janaka Pushpanathan Director - South India, British Council and Education Lead, International Operations, South Asia Region

<sup>51</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) in its 16th session acknowledged 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' as intangible cultural heritage of humanity, recognising its global significance beyond West Bengal, with 492 elements preserving diverse cultural practices worldwide.

<sup>52</sup> Durga Puja is a 10 day Hindu festival celebrated in honor of goddess Durga, symbolising triumph of good over evil. The festival involves elaborate rituals, cultural performances, and the creation of clay idols of the goddess. Its most significant and vibrant celebration can be observed in the state of West Bengal, India

<sup>53</sup> World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF) facilitates collaboration among policy makers in 38 key cities across six continents, recognising culture's vital role in addressing complex urban challenges amid rapid global urbanisation. WCCF conducts research and hosts events, including the annual World Cities Culture Summit, to share knowledge and shape sustainable urban futures.

<sup>54</sup> Mr Firhad Hakim Mayor of Kolkata & Minister of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs

<sup>55</sup> Ms Laia Gasch, Director, World Cities Culture Forum



She emphasised the importance of reporting on SDG 11.4<sup>57</sup>, which aims to safeguard cultural and natural heritage for sustainable urban spaces. The creative economy and cultural tourism have a larger impact on places like Purulia<sup>58</sup>, where it has reduced poverty by almost 25%. However, this impact is obscured by the lack of research in the sector.

Appreciating the role of multi-regional collaborations and technology in facilitating learning and co-learning platforms, she acknowledged the British Council's contribution for initiating discussion forums and suggested scaling them up while highlighting the need for an arts council in the country that can formalise the discussions around the creative economy.

Professor Smith<sup>59</sup> spoke about the UKRI Creative Cluster programme which aims to foster the role of anchor institutions within the creative economy. The programme prioritises place-based and geographically diverse small and medium enterprises.

The policy and process formulation should nurture creative jobs that can attract other opportunities, as shown by the community art spaces model. The goal is to develop an innovative, regenerative and sustainable creative economy with sustained investments in specific sectors. He highlighted the potential for exploring parallels between UK and Indian cities, based on their unique characteristics and creative potential. The creative economy, according to Professor Smith, is part of a larger continuum that involves cultural and productive economy.

Mr Vishnu<sup>60</sup> proposed a three-step strategy for policy formulation on CCIs from the state's perspective. The strategy consists of segmenting, targeting and positioning the sectoral activities clearly, integrating and utilising emerging technologies such as generative AIs, and creating accessible platforms for industry professionals. He highlighted the role of the creative economy as a great economic leveller due to its high potential for employment generation.

However, this impact is obscured by the lack of research in the sector. Appreciating the role of multi-regional collaborations and technology in facilitating learning and co-learning platforms, she acknowledged the British Council's contribution for initiating discussion forums and suggested scaling them up while highlighting the need for an arts council in the country that can formalise the discussions around the creative economy.

Lord Parkinson reflected on how a single event can have a transformative impact on local economies by using technology and innovative advertising to showcase the creative potential to a wider audience. He emphasised the vital role of infrastructure for industry professionals and the opportunities of place-based cultural tourism and international networks like the UNESCO World Heritage Site<sup>61</sup> to drive economic growth and development.

He also commented on how infrastructure development enhances the city's identity and cultural assets in the long run. He called for a platform like the Creative Industries Council<sup>62</sup> where the government and industry can collaborate and address the needs of the sector for sustainable growth and development.

<sup>56</sup> Ms Ananya Bhattacharya, Co-Founder and Director, banglanatak dot com

<sup>57</sup> (UNO, n.d.)

<sup>58</sup> Purulia, a district in the state of West Bengal, India has seen percentage drop of population who are multidimensionally poor from 49.69% to 26.84%, as per the National Multidimensional Poverty Index: A Progress Review 2023 report by NITI Aayog.

<sup>59</sup> Professor Christopher Smith AHRC Executive Chair and UKRI International Champion

<sup>60</sup> Mr V. Vishnu, I.A.S, Managing Director & CEO Guidance Tamil Nadu Industries, Investment Promotion & Commerce Department, Government of Tamil Nadu

<sup>61</sup> (UNESCO, n.d.)

<sup>62</sup> (Creative Industries Council, n.d.)

## Closing Remarks

Ms Barrett<sup>63</sup> in her closing remarks highlighted the gap between the awareness and the practice of collaboration in the cultural and tourism sectors. She emphasised the mutual benefits of culture and tourism for sustainable urban development and the need for supportive policies such as facilitative visa mechanisms and capacity building. She also stressed the importance of education for fostering artistic creativity and innovation.

She shared her insights on the Cultural and Creative Economy, arguing that the size and scale of events do not matter as much as the place where they happen, implying that small and micro events can also very much contribute to the city's growth.

## Learning and Reflections

- Opportunities for city-to-city collaborations in the creative economy domain by leveraging mutual expertise in the creative economy sector to increase the visibility and reach of cities in India and their distinctive creative and cultural offerings.
- Capitalising on the overlaps between the cultural economy and tourism sector and the need to cultivate mutually enabling policy interventions.
- Recognising the value of MSME in the cycle of change in big-ticket events and performances in revitalising the economy of a city.
- Adopting a mixed economy approach to secure and sustain investments for the industry.
- Accelerating leadership and enterprise skills in Higher Education Institutions and avenues for continuous professional development for leveraging creativity-oriented spatial arrangements or creative clusters through informed investment in the sector-relevant training of the workforce.
- Facilitating skills, expertise, and knowledge exchange between the UK and India.

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<sup>63</sup> Ms Alison Barrett MBE, Director, India, British Council

# Recommendations

## 1. Creative Industries Infrastructure

- Establish a structured and strategic framework for collaboration to drive sustainable growth in the creative industries.
- Connect with inclusive bodies and networks to represent creative sectors.

## 2. City Development and Planning

- Innovations in infrastructure in terms of spaces for creative purposes, hotels, and transportation for the development and exhibition of the works of artists and professionals from creative industries.
- Creating a conducive end-to-end policy and programmatic environment for the professionals, organisations and services to thrive and prosper by ensuring convergence with city development and planning.

## 3. Role of HEIs and MSME Education in Operationalizing Skill-sharing for Startups to Scale-up

- Innovations in HEI's educational programmes that support the arts and creative sectors.
- Encourage skill sharing and expertise exchanges across geographies for accelerating growth.
- Incubate and consolidate the best practices and success to enable sectoral learning.

## 4. Embracing Small Initiatives

- Draw upon the power of small-scale initiatives and micro clusters in contributing to economic growth, cultural preservation, and community engagement.
- Identification and documentation of creative events irrespective of their size across geographies (for example, fetes, seasonal festivals, etc.) to study their impact on the local economies.
- Leverage global and indigenous knowledge to develop the identity of the city.

## 5. Projecting and Propagating Creativity

- Accelerate engagement with national and international networks, UNESCO's world heritage sites, and Geographic Indication (GI) tags to enhance the economic and social contributions of creative industries.
- Utilise the potential of digital technologies for new cultural and creative commodities, such as employing virtual and augmented reality for immersive festival experiences and innovative art forms.
- Enablement of artists and designers to upskill and showcase their work using cutting edge technologies can pave the way for accelerated innovation. This will address pressing societal issues and facilitate India to showcase culture led tech as both valuable and nuanced offering to reduce the potential to harm and enhance the potential to do good.

## Conclusion

Cities of Culture facilitated discussions and strategies to nurture cultural and economic growth within cities, resulting in more vibrant and thriving urban environments. It offered a platform for organizations, leading policymakers, arts institutions, and MSMEs, aligning with the City of Culture policy framework for infrastructural development and employment generation.



## Annexure A: Pictures



**Ms Alison Barrett MBE**

Director, India, British Council



**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage and DCMS Lords Minister



**Dr Jyotsna Suri**

Past President, FICCI,  
CMD, The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group &  
Mentor, FICCI Tourism & Culture Committee



From left: **Ms Shibi Jose** - Senior Programme Manager - UK Research and Innovation India; **Ms Hasina Kharbhih** - Founder and Managing Director - Impulse Social Enterprises; **Ms Paramita Chaudhuri** - Head-Arts, Creative Economy, India, British Council; **Ms Ananya Bhattacharya** - Co- Founder and Director - banglanatak dot com; **Ms Archana Prasad** - Founder - Goody.AI, BeFantastic.in & Jaaga.in; **Ms Leena Arora Kukreja** - Regional Managing Director - Coventry University India Hub; **Ms Hayley Raines** - Team lead Cultural Diplomacy -DCMS; **Prof. Judith Mossman** - Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts and Humanities) - Coventry University; **Ms Janaka Pushpanathan** - Director - South India, British Council and Education Lead, International Operations, South Asia Region; **Ms Delphine Pawlik** - Deputy Director Arts India British Council; (Back) **Mr Jack Matless** - Diary Secretary to the DCMS Lords Minister; (Front) **Ms Mangka Mayanglambam** - Manipuri Folk Artist; **Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay** - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage and DCMS Lords Minister; **Mr Jonathan Kennedy** - Director Arts - India British Council; **Dr Jyotsna Suri** - Past President, FICCI & CMD, The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group & Mentor, FICCI Tourism and Culture Committee; **Mr Bruce Guthrie** - Head of Theatre and Films - NCPA; **Dr. Sanjoy Roy** - Managing Director - Teamwork Arts; **Mr Sayantan Maitra Boka** - Vice President MassArt & Curator, Architect and Collaborative Artist; **Ms Smriti Rajgarhia** - Director, Serendipity Arts Foundation and Serendipity Arts Festival; **Ms Alison Barrett MBE** - Director, India, British Council; **Ms Swati Janu** - Founder Social Design Collaborative; **Ms Vidyun Singh** - Creative Head - Programmes - Habitat World, India Habitat Centre; **Ms Shivangi Ambani** - Senior Sector Manager, Department for Business & Trade.

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## Annexure C: Participants' Profile



**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage and DCMS Lords Minister

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State of Department for Culture, Media and Sport on 7 February 2023.

He previously was Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport from 30 October 2022 to 7 February 2023, and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Arts) at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport between 30 September 2021 and 20 September 2022.



**Ms Alison Barrett MBE**

Director India, British Council

Alison Barrett MBE is the Director of the British Council in India leading all operations across Arts & Culture, Education and English Programmes. Alison has worked for the British Council for over 25 years in a variety of country, regional and global level roles in our Teaching, Examinations and Cultural Engagement departments building cultural and educational connections between the UK and our network overseas. Most of her career has been spent in the Asia-Pacific region including in India where she was based for 20 years between 1997-2016 so returning as Country Director is a great honour. From 2020-2022, she led the British Council's Climate Connection – a global programme and platform for dialogue and action, connecting young people, policy makers and sector specialists from the UK and over 200 countries together to tackle the climate emergency through arts & culture, education and English. Alison is married with two teenage children.



**Dr Jyotsna Suri**

Past President, FICCI;  
CMD, The Lalit Suri Hospitality  
Group & Mentor, FICCI Tourism  
and Culture Committee

She is also the Chairperson & Managing Director of Bharat Hotels that runs the luxury hotels chain “The LaLiT” under The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group. She has vociferously promoted Indian tourism – both nationally and internationally. She believes that the economic benefits of tourism act as an economic multiplier in terms of jobs and livelihood and socially in terms of peace and prosperity. Dr Jyotsna Suri has been the Chairperson of the FICCI Tourism Committee for the last five years. Under Dr Suri’s leadership, FICCI introduced ‘The Great India Travel Bazaar’ in 2008 and ‘The Great Domestic Tourism Bazaar’ in 2011 – two keenly awaited events in the tourism sector facilitating tourism business interactions.

A multifaceted personality, Dr Suri is a patron of art, culture, sports and education. Jyotsna Suri’s social initiative – Project Disha – implemented under the overall CSR policy of Bharat Hotels seeks to assist school students and local youth to have access to quality ‘education leading to employment’. Jyotsana Suri’s other engagements include being a Member of the International Executive Committee of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and an Executive Member of the Hotel Association of India.

## Panel 1

### Arts and culture industries at the centre of sustainable economic development



**Prof Judith Mossman**  
Pro Vice-Chancellor  
(Arts and Humanities),  
Coventry University

After a Junior Research Fellowship at Christ Church, Oxford, Judith taught at Trinity College, Dublin from 1991 till 2003, becoming a Senior Lecturer and a Fellow. She was Professor of Classics at Nottingham University until 2017 when she was appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Arts and Humanities at Coventry University.

She works on Greek tragedy, mostly Euripides, and Greek literature under the Roman Empire, mostly Plutarch. She believes strongly in the power of the arts and humanities to change lives for the better.



**Ms Vidyun Singh**  
Creative Head - Programmes,  
Habitat World, India Habitat Centre

Vidyun Singh, a pioneering fashion choreographer, has shaped and elevated the presentation of Indian design and living heritage globally. A juror on various design panels, she advised on the National Design Policy panel and Handloom board. She has written frequently for publications and authored a chapter on Indian textiles in "Aadi Anant." As Director of Programmes at Habitat World since 1997, she has led performing arts at India Habitat Centre.

She currently serves as Creative Head - Programmes at I.H.C. as well as of Future Collective L.L.P, co-founded in 2019 to promote sustainable design and conscious culture.



**Prof Nicky Marsh**  
Associate Dean of Research and  
Enterprise, Southampton Institute  
of Arts and Humanities

Professor Nicky Marsh is based at the University of Southampton and is the Associate Dean of Research and Enterprise at the Southampton Institute of Arts and Humanities. She was the Principal Investigator on an AHRC-funded grant called Towns and the Cultural Economies of Recovery which examined how local authorities were using heritage and culture as a lever for economic and social regeneration.

**Ms Smriti Rajgarhia**

Director, Serendipity Arts  
Foundation and Serendipity  
Arts Festival

Smriti Rajgarhia is Director of the Serendipity Arts Foundation and the Serendipity Arts Festival. Trained as an architect with a Master's in Design, Smriti began her career in arts fourteen years ago working with a private archive in New Delhi, where she eventually created a museum space and archive for the collection.

Currently, Smriti is leading the Foundation and working on the Serendipity Arts Festival to bring her passion for art and design to the forefront by creating unique opportunities for creative individuals. With these two platforms, she endeavours to explore newer forms of representation and re-contextualize the kind of programming institutions need to engage with, to widen the demographic of the audience for the arts in India. Her interest also lies in adapting urban spaces to the presentation of the arts, reclaiming the urban and questioning the impact of art and cultural interventions for a city/state/country.

**Moderator****Mr Jonathan Kennedy**

Director Arts, India  
British Council

Jonathan joined the British Council in February 2019. As the Director of Arts for the British Council in India, Jonathan is responsible for developing national strategy, managing stakeholder relationships across governments and the creative industries; and conceptualising programmes to promote and strengthen India-UK cultural relations through collaboration, connections, and creative partnerships.

Jonathan has substantial experience in theatre producing, arts management and international cultural exchange. From 2007 – 2019 he was Executive Director of Tara Arts, contributing especially to the major 2.8 million GBP capital re-development of Tara Theatre and the launch of the Black Theatre Live national touring consortium.

Before Tara Arts, he was the Arts Programmes Manager of Croydon Clocktower and Head of Studio and Programme Development at Wimbledon Theatre. In the UK he was a regular guest lecturer in all aspects of theatre producing, leadership and arts management at Birkbeck College, South Bank University, Goldsmiths, King's College London and St Mary's University of Minnesota.

## Panel 2

### MSME start-ups for inclusive creative economies



**Shri Ateesh Kumar Singh**  
**IAS,**

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro,  
Small and Medium Enterprises,  
Government of India

Shri Ateesh Kumar Singh is Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India. He has over 25 Years of experience in civil administration, policy formulation and implementation, institutional regulation and product development (1997 - 2021).

In the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, he is responsible for policy formulation and execution for MSME credit, negotiations with World Bank, KfW and National Development Bank for financial assistance in the MSME sector in 4 Externally Aided Projects (EAP). He has rolled out the CHAMPIONS portal for grievance redressal/resolution and handholding, Development and execution of reformulated MSME Scheme on ZED Certification, LEAN processes, Incubation, IPR and Design. He has led the establishment of 20 new Technology Centres and 100 Extension Centres on PPP mode across the country. He has coordinated with the Finance Ministry and RBI to develop blockchain processes on Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS), Innovative product development in fintech bodies in coordination with RBI, State Governments, private sector and Finance Ministry. He is responsible for matters related to General Administration, Vigilance and Establishment in the Ministry. He also leads the Perationalization and management of covidwarriors.gov.in, a portal to provide resources in COVID management to medical service providers across all states and Union Territories.

During his tenure in Ministry of Finance, Government of India he has led policy formulation and execution, coordination with Provincial Administration, coordination with various regulators in the Financial space, monitoring government schemes and plans.

Shri Ateesh Kumar Singh has authored 'My Derailments With Truth'. It is a spoof on bureaucracy and 'Thou Stickest a Dagger in Me'; a satire, set in the storyline of 'The Merchant of Venice'.



**Ms Karishma Gupta**

Founder & CEO,  
Eslando Circular Fashion

Karishma Gupta is a fashion technologist and founder of Eslando (formerly known as Satatland), a London-based circular fashion tech company accelerating textile recycling. With 10 years of experience in the fashion industry, she has worked with textile and apparel manufacturers in the East and retailers in the West. Karishma has witnessed firsthand the devastating effect of producing more clothes than we consume on our environment, including our land and rivers. While working with sustainable brands, she realised that even the most sustainable garment would end up in a landfill one day. Eslando is backed by Innovate UK and was recognised as Financial Times' Retail Tech Champion 2022; Ranked #2 Sustainable Fashion Startup to watch by TechRound 2022. Karishma holds a Bachelor's degree in Fashion Technology from NIFT India, and an MA in Fashion Entrepreneurship and Innovations from London College of Fashion.



### Ms Archana Prasad

Founder, Gooley.AI,  
BeFantastic.in & Jaaga.in

Archana Prasad is a Creative Entrepreneur based in Seattle, USA & Bangalore, India. Her work is at the intersection of art, technology and society, steeped in design and research methodologies.

Archana is the Founder of Gooley. AI. Previously, she founded Dara.network, a messaging app to enhance social capital among artists and alumni groups. She's also the founder of Jaaga.in – co-working community and cultural practice incubator and BeFantastic.in – India's first TechArt festival platform.

Archana has a unique artist-activist take in her creative process. She works towards building a stronger arts community and positively impacting public perception of art and design practices in Bangalore. She also fosters an international network of creators focussed on TechArt for socio-environmental change-making.

Archana has a deep love for documentation and creating public awareness of Bangalore's socio-cultural heritage, and many of her projects over the last two decades do so using a combination of digital, high and low-tech with social research, design and art processes.

Archana holds a Bachelor's in Painting and a Master's in Art History from CKP and a Master's Diploma in Animation from NID. She is a Clore & Chevening 2017 Fellow and an ATSA 2010 Fellow and was an Artist-in-Residence at Kanoria Center for the Arts. Archana worked at Microsoft Research India in Design Research and Advanced Prototyping and holds 3 global technology patents.



### Ms Hasina Kharbhih

Founder and Managing Director,  
Impulse Social Enterprises

Hasina's work stands on two pillars: Impulse NGO Network conceptualised in 1987 as a significant force that helps prevent unsafe migration of refugees which often leads to human trafficking. The second pillar is Impulse Social Enterprises, promoting a resilient market to indigenous artisans and creating sustainable economic upliftment. Hasina developed the Impulse Model, a Global Award Innovation from GDN under JSDF of the World Bank, a single window approach and comprehensive strategy in addressing unsafe migration and human trafficking globally.

She has received numerous recognitions, among a few being the Rising Talent Award from the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society (France, 2007), the International Visitor Leadership Program (2013), Gold Star from the US State Department (2018), Asia Iclif Leadership Energy Award. In 2019, she won the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice from the Harmony Foundation for her relentless and passionate work and ongoing efforts towards freeing the world from modern-day slavery practices. She was listed in 2019 for Celebrating ChangemakHERS: How Women Social Entrepreneurs Lead and Innovate, where out of 5000 women entrepreneurs that were reviewed she was selected under the category 'Innovation of Leadership'. Her leadership style has been listed as scaling deep, scaling up and scaling out. In 2023, she was a recipient of the Women Transforming India Awards (WTI) by the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog, Government of India, which recognizes 75 other women from across the country who have transformed India and celebrates the dynamic efforts of women by sharing their exemplary stories and exceptional work marking 75 years of Indian Independence. She was also the winner of the Global Inclusive Growth Spark Grant, by As Aspen Fellow Global Leadership, supported by Mastercard Centre, in addressing system issues across a range of topics including financial security and uplifting collaborative efforts.



**Ms Swati Janu**

Founder, Social Design Collaborative

Awarded the Moira Gemmill Prize for Emerging Architecture 2022 by the Architectural Review, Swati is the founder of the interdisciplinary practice Social Design Collaborative. Her work has been exhibited at the Design Museum and Southbank (London), Maison De L'Architecture Rhône-Alpes (Lyon), Nieuwe Instituut (Rotterdam) and Museum of Architecture and Design (Ljubljana), amongst others.

She has been a resident artist at Khoj International Artists' Association (Delhi), Canadian Centre for Architecture (Montreal), and Omi Art (New York) and in 2022, she co-curated an Indo-French public art festival on gender and public space across 7 cities. She teaches and also writes regularly on public spaces and participatory planning.



**Ms Shivangi Ambani**

Senior Sector Manager,  
Department for Business & Trade

Shivangi Ambani heads the creative industries, sports and retail sectors for the UK Government's Department for Business and Trade in India. Her team's mandate is to help British companies in these sectors to expand their footprint in the Indian market. Her team also helps resolve trade policy and market access issues through Government-to-Government engagements, such as the Free Trade Agreement.

Prior to this role, Shivangi has worked in the cultural sector for over 10 years. She has led the Arts division of the British Council for Western India, launched the Outreach Department of the National Centre for Performing Arts in Mumbai, researched for exhibitions at the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore and published writings about Asian arts and culture in Australia.

Shivangi holds a Master's in Arts Administration from the University of New South Wales, Sydney.

### Moderator



**Dr Sanjoy Roy**

Managing Director,  
Teamwork Arts

Sanjoy K. Roy, an entrepreneur of the arts, is Managing Director of Teamwork Arts, which produces over 33 festivals in 42 cities and 17 countries, including the world's largest literary gathering — the Jaipur Literature Festival and international editions of JLF. He is a founder-trustee of Salaam Baalak Trust, working to provide support services for street and working children in the inner city of Delhi where over 1,30,000 children have benefited from education, training and residential services.

Roy is the Co-chair of the Art and Culture Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and former President of Event and Entertainment Management Association. He lectures at and works in collaboration with leading universities across the world and has been conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of the University honoris causa by University of York, UK, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the arts and society.

## Panel 3

### City destinations for sustainable growth & cultural tourism



**Mr Firhad Hakim**  
Mayor of Kolkata & Minister of Urban  
Development and Municipal Affairs

Firhad Hakim is the 38th Mayor of Kolkata and Minister of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs. He is the elected MLA from Kolkata Port Assembly Constituency & the Chairman of HIDCO.

He began his political journey in the year 1977 as a student activist and continues to be a foot-soldier for the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal, Smt Mamata Banerjee even today.

Mr Hakim became the 38th Mayor of Kolkata on 22nd November 2018 and has since reshaped how the Kolkata Municipal Corporation functions. Mr Hakim's initiative of Talk To Mayor has transformed how citizens can connect with the Kolkata Municipal Corporation.

A doting husband, a caring father and adoring grandfather, Mr Hakim juggles his professional & personal life with the perfect balance.



**Prof Christopher Smith**  
AHRC Executive Chair and UKRI  
International Champion

Christopher was previously Professor of Ancient History at the University of St Andrews where he was also Dean of Arts (2002 to 2006), Provost of St Leonard's College and Dean of Graduate Studies (2006 to 2009), and Proctor and Vice-Principal (2007 to 2009), before being seconded as Director of the British School at Rome, the UK's leading humanities and creative arts research institute overseas, from 2009 to 2017. From 2017 to 2020 he has held a Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship on 'The Roman kings: a study in power' and held visiting positions in Erfurt, Princeton, Otago, Pavia, Milan, Siena, Aarhus and Paris Panthéon-Sorbonne.

Professor Smith's research explores constitutionalism and state formation, with particular emphasis on the development of Rome as a political and social community and how this was represented in ancient historical writing and subsequent political thought. He is the author/editor of over 20 books and in 2017 was awarded the prestigious Premio 'Cultori di Roma'. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland, the Royal Historical Society, the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Royal Society of Arts and a Member of the Academia Europaea.



**Mr V. Vishnu, IAS**  
Managing Director & CEO  
Guidance Tamil Nadu Industries,  
Investment Promotion & Commerce  
Department, Government of  
Tamil Nadu

V. Vishnu currently serves as the MD & CEO of 'Guidance', the Government of Tamil Nadu's Nodal Agency for Investment Promotion and Single-Window Facilitation. Prior to heading Guidance, he was the District Collector of Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu. He has had a storied career spanning over a decade serving in various key roles in the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Government of India.

He has also served as the Executive Director at Chennai Metro and was the Managing Director at TN Skill Mission and Officer on Special Duty (OSD) with the Ministry of Shipping, Government of India. He has to his credit, the National Award for 'Best Electoral Practices - 2022' from the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the National Award for 'Best Performing District (Tirunelveli) in Anti-Drug Abuse' from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) - 2022. The Government of Tamil Nadu has also bestowed the prestigious Chief Minister's 'Good Governance Award - 2022' for his work in reducing maternal deaths.





**Ms Laia Gasch,**  
Director, World Cities  
Culture Forum

Laia is the Director of World Cities Culture Forum, the leading global network of civic leaders from over 40 creative cities across six continents who share ideas and solutions to build a world where culture is at the heart of thriving cities.

She was previously Senior Advisor for Culture at the Mayor of London's office, where she played a central role in creating innovative policies including the world's first Creative Enterprise Zones, a new Culture at Risk Office protecting grassroots venues and London's most pro-culture urban plan with the first-ever Cultural Infrastructure Plan. Laia shaped the development of the East Bank in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the most ambitious culture and education district in London for over 150 years. She led the establishment of the UK's first Night Czar and a new London Borough of Culture Award. Previously, Laia led high-profile and award-winning creating programmes for the BBC, the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Tate Modern.



**Ms Ananya Bhattacharya**  
Co-Founder and Director,  
banglanatak dot com

Ananya Bhattacharya is Co-Founder and Director of banglanatak dot com - a social enterprise headquartered at Kolkata and working across India for fostering inclusive and sustainable development using culture-based approaches. Ananya heads the projects division and leads research, communication for development and community-based creative enterprise development initiatives of the organization. Ananya is an engineer from Jadavpur University (1989) and a Commonwealth Scholar with Master's in Sustainable Development from Staffordshire University. Ananya specializes in Gender, Culture and Sustainability.

She is actively involved in global advocacy for greater recognition of the contribution of culture in achieving sustainable development goals. The "Art for Life" initiative of her organization has led to the socio-economic empowerment of 50,000+ families in India through the revival and revitalization of traditional folk art and culture. Ananya is also actively involved in promoting gender equity, social and creative entrepreneurship in South Asia. Ananya is a Bureau member of the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Cultural Tourism. She is a member of the ICOMOS working groups on Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Heritage, and Gender and Heritage.

### Moderator



**Ms Janaka Pushpanathan**  
Director - South India,  
British Council and Education Lead,  
International Operations,  
South Asia Region

Janaka Pushpanathan currently leads British Council's work in South India, and she has over 20 years of experience in the Arts, Education & Enterprise sectors. Prior to this, she has co-founded education, learning & development, and Ed tech start-ups, which have won the Red Herring Top 100 and the NASSCOM Top 50 Awards in the Innovation category. An alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore and Project Zero at Harvard University, Janaka is among the top 100 most influential in building UK-India relations and she's part of the India Inc. 2019 list, which is the first-ever all women's power list to celebrate the immense contribution of women from all walks of life driving a glorious future relationship between UK and India.

Janaka is a STEM major and is passionate about equality, girls' education and the environment and is on the advisory board of women - led non-profits, early to mid-stage education & ed tech start-ups, and the State of Tamil Nadu's skills and education sectors. Janaka is also the UK lead for the G20 Education track under India's presidency and is working closely with UK Government departments and MoE (Ministry of Education), Govt of India, on further strengthening bilateral connections between UK and India, in education, research, innovation and skills. In her free time, Janaka re-learns Indian classical music and works towards her goal to sight 50 tigers in the wild, in India, by 2030.





**Ms Shibi Jose**

Senior Programme Manager,  
UK Research and Innovation,  
India

Shibi Jose works as Senior Programme Manager at UK Research and Innovation. Based in Delhi, her role involves building strong stakeholder relationships to shape UKRI's research and innovation policy and contributing to advancing UKRI's global objectives. Shibi leads UKRI India's programmes on Creative Industries and engagement with Catapult Network and Research England.

She brings with her 15 years of experience in programme management, stakeholder relationship and communications. Previously, she worked with the Embassy of United States as an Education Specialist, advising the senior management and leadership on educational cooperation between the U.S. and India and providing strategic and operational guidance to partner organisations to drive social impact innovations.



**Ms Leena Arora Kukreja**

Regional Managing Director,  
Coventry University, India Hub

Leena is the Regional Managing Director of the India hub responsible for delivering core strategic goals of the Coventry University Group in India. She has extensive experience in facilitating bilateral and multilateral higher education, science and innovation collaboration. Prior to joining Coventry University Group, she was working as Senior Advisor at the Office of Science and Innovation based at Embassy of Sweden in New Delhi.

She successfully managed the Australia India Strategic Research Fund from 2015-2018 working as a Senior Advisor to the Australian Department of Industry, Innovation and Science. Before her stint with the Australian Government, Leena worked extensively with the UK Science and Innovation community.

During her tenure as Head - Newton Fund at British Council India, she established the Newton-Bhabha PhD placements and Newton-Bhabha Researcher Links Workshops. She also worked at the British High Commission as Senior Advisor to the UK Science and Innovation Network where she led various innovation projects including the launch of India-UK Industrial R&D programme.

A biotechnologist by training, Leena is passionate about supporting 'Women in STEM' and has supported various workshops, policy dialogues and reports on the subject including the flagship program SHE STEM delivered by Atal Innovation Mission, Government of India.



**Mr Sayantan Maitra Boka**

Vice President, MassArt,  
Curator, Architect and  
Collaborative artist

Born in Kolkata, an architect by qualification, and a career in art by choice. Sayantan is a graduate from School of Planning & Architecture, New Delhi. As an architect, he has explored the realm of public art doing site specific interventions with LAYOUT Collective.

He is the Chief Coordinator of NGO, Shelter Promotion Council (India) through which he has curated and produced public art festivals in Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya and West Bengal as the first of its kind which comprised a melange of new media art and contemporary art addressing issues of socio-political and environmental nature. He is Vice President of NGO, MassArt which is promoting Bengal art and architecture into newer frontiers.



**Mr Dhrubajyoti Bose Suvo**  
Secretary, MassArt

Dhrubajyoti Bose Suvo is the Founder Director of Third Line Creation, one of the fastest growing event management companies in West Bengal. Suvo and his team of artists, visualisers and young marketing professionals have created a new benchmark in the event management industry in Bengal and beyond. With his dynamism and leadership, Suvo has successfully curated hundreds of public and private sector events in the last few years.

Suvo is also an art enthusiast and has played an important role in popularising theme-based Durga Pujas in Kolkata. This initiative has not only made myriad art experiments an integral part of the celebrations, it has also thrown open livelihood opportunities for tens of thousands of artisans, both men and women, from rural Bengal. Suvo believes that the multiplier effects of the creative economy has the potential to ensure a better life for rural artisans and performers across Bengal. That's why he has set a goal to take Bengal's art and culture to the global audience.



**Dr Jaideep Gupte**  
Director of Research,  
Strategy and Innovation, AHRC

Jaideep is the Director of Research, Strategy, and Innovation at AHRC. He leads inclusive research strategies, emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration for societal good. With extensive urban development research, he champions justice and equity. His expertise informs evidence-based policies globally. He holds degrees from Oxford, Sussex, and Simon Fraser University. He also serves as Challenge Leader for Cities and Sustainable Infrastructure at UK Research and Innovation. Find him on Twitter as @JaiGupte.



**Ms Mangka Mayanglambam**  
Manipuri Folk Artiste

Mangka acquired the knowledge of Manipuri folk music from her father Guru Mangangsana since childhood. She trained on various Manipuri Folk and other art forms; Moirang, Sai and Basok from Guru Langathel Thoinu in 2002, Pena from Padmashri Guru Khangembam, Mangi in 2006, Khongjom Parva from Guru Khumanthem Sundari in 2009, Hindustani Music from late Guru Mairembam Jiten Singh in 2013, Theatre from Kalakshetra Manipur in 2016, Moirang Sai from Kumbi Inakhunbi in 2019, and Khunung Eshei from Guru Lourembam Bedabati in 2020. She have been invited and presented her performances at many prestigious occasions.

# Annexure D: List of Participants

## Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Arts and Heritage and DCMS Lords Minister

## Prof Judith Mossman

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Humanities), Coventry University

## Ms Vidyun Singh

Creative Head - Programmes, Habitat World, India Habitat Centre

## Ms Janaka Pushpanathan

Director - South India, British Council and Education Lead, International Operations, South Asia Region

## Prof Nicky Marsh

Associate Dean of Research and Enterprise, Southampton Institute of Arts and Humanities

## Ms Shivangi Ambani

Senior Sector Manager, Department for Business & Trade

## Ms Archana Prasad

Founder, Gooley.AI, BeFantastic.in & Jaaga.in

## Ms Karishma Gupta

Founder & CEO, Eslando Circular Fashion

## Ms Swati Janu

Founder, Social Design Collaborative

## Ms Hasina Kharbhih

Founder and Managing Director, Impulse Social Enterprises

## Mr Sayantan Maitra Boka

Vice President, MassArt, Curator, Architect and Collaborative artist

## Ms Alison Barrett MBE

Director, India, British Council

## Shri Ateesh Kumar Singh IAS

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India

## Mr Jonathan Kennedy,

Director Arts, India, British Council

## Mr Firhad Hakim

Mayor of Kolkata & Minister of Urban Development and Municipal Affairs

## Prof Christopher Smith

AHRC Executive Chair and UKRI International Champion

## Ms Mangka Mayanglambam

Manipuri Folk Artiste

## Dr Jaideep Gupte

Director of Research, Strategy and Innovation, AHRC

## Ms Ananya Bhattacharya

Co-Founder and Director, banglanatak dot com

## Ms Smriti Rajgarhia

Director, Serendipity Arts Foundation and Serendipity Arts Festival

## Ms Shibi Jose

Senior Programme Manager, UK Research and Innovation, India

## Ms Leena Arora Kukreja

Regional Managing Director, Coventry University, India Hub

## Dr Jyotsna Suri

Past President, FICCI, CMD, The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group & Mentor, FICCI Tourism & Culture Committee

## Mr V Vishnu, IAS

Managing Director & CEO Guidance Tamil Nadu Industries, Investment Promotion & Commerce Department, Government of Tamil Nadu

## Dr Sanjoy Roy

Managing Director, Teamwork Arts

## Ms Delphine Pawlik

Deputy Director, Arts, India, British Council

## Ms Laia Gasch,

Director, World Cities Culture Forum

## Ms Paramita Chaudhuri

Head- Arts, Creative Economy, India, British Council

## Ms Hayley Raines

Team lead, Cultural Diplomacy, DCMS

## Mr Jack Matless

Diary Secretary to the DCMS Lords Minister

## Mr Bruce Guthrie

Head of Theatre and Films - NCPA

## Mr Dhrubajyoti Bose Suvo

Secretary, MassArt

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## **Designed By**

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