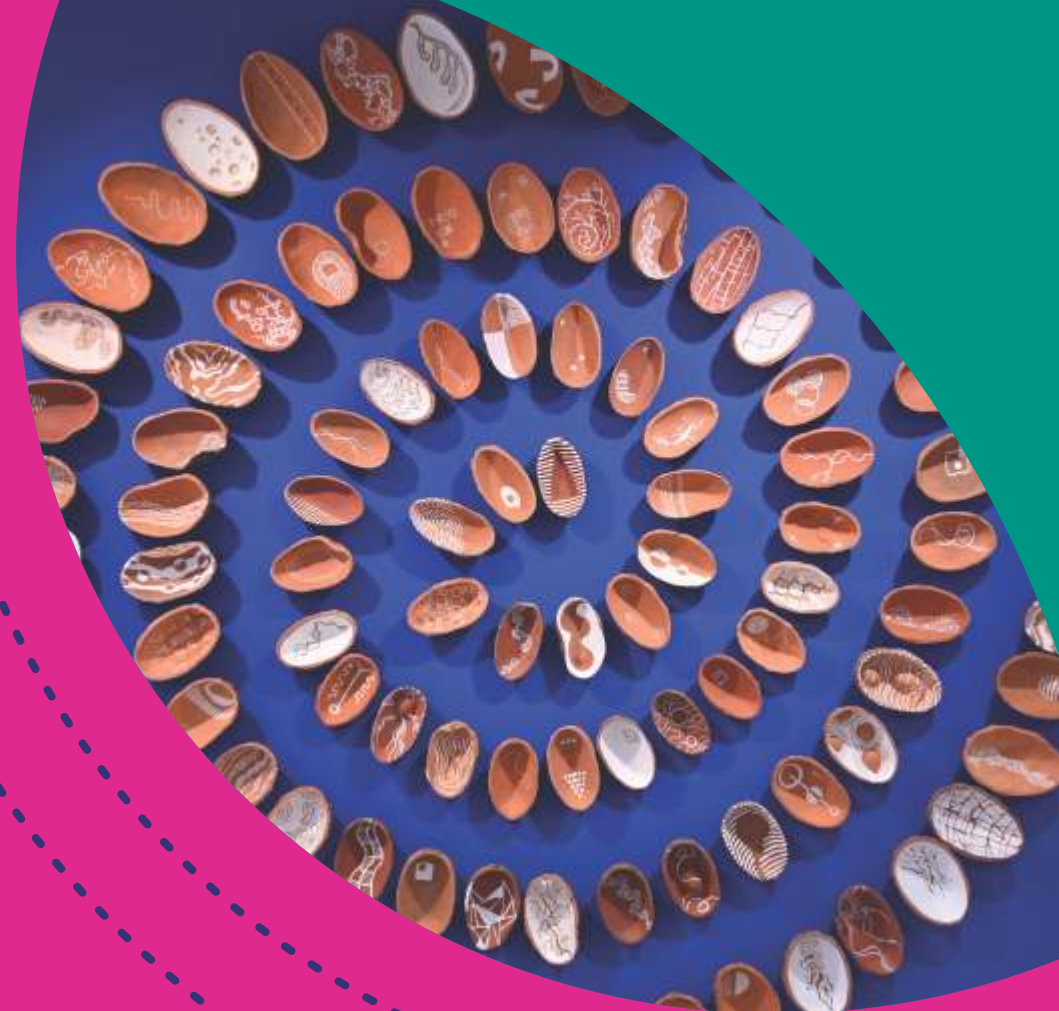




 BRITISH
COUNCIL

**Creative
Convergence**

Growth
Reimagined



Alison Barrett MBE,
Country Director India,
British Council

Foreword

We convene *Creative Convergence: Growth Reimagined* in Delhi, the second edition of a dialogue that's shaping the future of creativity and international collaboration, at a moment of immense global transition. In an increasingly fragmented world, the India–UK partnership stands out as one underpinned by shared values, that continues to inspire collaboration between India and the UK.

At the British Council, we have always believed in the power of discourse as a catalyst for long-term collaboration and viewed culture and creativity as strategic assets. The first edition, held in Bengaluru, affirmed that Creative Convergence is not a one-off event, but an evolving platform—one that nurtures relationships, surfaces shared ambitions, and creates the conditions for sustained partnership between India and the UK's creative ecosystems.

What emerged most strongly from these early conversations was a collective appetite for continuity. Participants engaged deeply across disciplines and both geographies, recognising that meaningful collaboration in the creative economy requires trust, time, and repeated exchange.

Creative Convergence successfully created a space where ideas could be tested, perspectives challenged, and new alliances imagined—laying the groundwork for future cooperation that extends well beyond the convening itself.

At its core, Creative Convergence is about people. It is about the artists, creative practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and cultural leaders who shape the creative economy and whose work sits at the intersection of culture, innovation, and social impact. By bringing these voices together, this platform looks to strengthen people-to-people links, enabling shared learning and opening pathways for collaboration that are both locally grounded and internationally connected.

Our arts programmes are guided by a commitment to cultural exchange, mutual understanding, and sustainable, inclusive growth. In the context of the Programme of Cultural Cooperation and the India–UK Vision 2035 signed between India and the UK in 2025, Creative Convergence serve as a practical expression of these shared ambitions. It provides a space to move from intent to action—exploring tangible initiatives that support innovation, entrepreneurship, and resilient creative ecosystems in both countries.

The stage is set. On 29 and 30 January 2026, we bring together voices from the UK and India across policy, research, live events, festivals, media and entertainment, documentary film, and sustainable fashion. We invite you to engage in this dialogue—to share insights, nurture talent, and forge partnerships that support inclusive growth, resilient creative ecosystems, and international exchange.

Together, we can strengthen the creative economies of India and the UK and contribute meaningfully to a shared global future shaped by creativity, collaboration, and cultural leadership. The future of the India–UK creative relationship will be shaped not only by policy and programmes, but by the connections you build here and the actions you carry forward together.

Alison Barrett MBE,
Country Director India, British Council



A two-day gathering for cultural leaders, changemakers, and creative visionaries.

Our Work in the Arts in India

The British Council has strengthened vibrant cultural ties between India and the UK by partnering with leading cultural organisations and government bodies in both countries. These collaborations have brought to life dynamic co-curated exhibitions, inspiring performances, creative residencies, and engaging public programmes, each designed to spark meaningful dialogue and celebrate our shared creativity and rich cultural heritage. Together, these initiatives are building inclusive, future-focused cultural exchanges that connect communities and open new pathways for collaboration and cross-cultural learning.

In 2024–25, British Council India engaged 454,000 people—including community members, arts leaders, artists, and creative sector organisations—through its arts and culture programmes. During this period, 71 projects were delivered in collaboration with 78 partners, engaging 2,856 artists, arts leaders, and community leaders, both digitally and in person.

Complementing this work, the British Council's Creative Economy initiatives in India have focused on research and advocacy, evidenced through multiple reports such as *Mapping the Creative Economy around Durga Puja*, *Music Education Policy Report*, *Women Focus: Gender Dynamics in India's Arts and Culture Sector*, *Arts and Technologies in India: Reimagining the Future* and the *Global Cities Culture Report*. These efforts significantly contributed to the G20 Culture Corridor and informed engagements with select state governments.

To further strengthen dialogue and policy engagement, a series of pan-India roundtables were hosted in collaboration with FICCI, creating an important platform for exchange at the government, institutional, and individual levels.

In 2024, the British Council also partnered with the United Nations and Sustainable Revolution (SU.RE) to create a unique opportunity for fashion practitioners to forge international connections, fostering a dynamic exchange of knowledge and collaboration. Additionally, the partnership with 200 Million Artisans at the Kula Conclave 2024 has inspired and informed the British Council's broader cultural relations work in India and across South Asia.

Regional capacity-building efforts were advanced through the South Asia Festival and Culture Academy (SAFCA), which supported policy and skills development while deepening understanding of sustainability among a cohort of emerging festival practitioners from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. As part of its legacy programme, eight alumni led roundtables at the first-ever Serendipity Exchange for Arts in December 2024, inspiring a shared commitment to making festivals models of sustainable, inclusive, and socially responsible practice.

Professional development for Indian technicians, designers, and managers in the performing arts and live events sector has also been strengthened through *The Art of the Possible* programme, developed by the National Centre for the Performing Arts and supported by the British Council.

Looking ahead, these platforms will not only enable continued learning, research, and lived experiences, but will also open new opportunities to engage wider and more diverse audiences, helping to shape the future of arts and culture.

The British Council and the Creative Economy

The British Council is at the forefront of championing the international creative economy. We work across the world to build peace, prosperity and trust, and the arts are central in helping us to achieve this mission. We have a 20-year track record of collaborating with partners globally in the creative economy.

Among our core objectives is the creation of platforms for knowledge exchange that inform both global and national policy, recognising the vital role cultural and creative sectors play in shaping resilient, future-ready societies. This work also supports the UK's ambition to grow its creative industries by strengthening international collaboration, unlocking new markets, and showcasing the UK's leadership and expertise in cultural policy and practice.

UK and India

Combining pioneering expertise with local insight, we champion the global creative economy as a key driver of inclusive and sustainable growth, positioning the UK as an innovative and trusted collaborator.

In May 2025, a Programme of Cultural Cooperation (2025–2030) was signed by Lisa Nandy, the UK's Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, India's Minister of Culture and Tourism. The agreement aims to deepen mutual understanding between the people of India and the UK by fostering collaboration across the arts and culture, while strengthening the diasporic ties that connect our two nations. The key areas of focus include digital technologies, exhibitions and collections, performances and events, cultural property, and sustainability.

Furthermore, this momentum is further reinforced by the landmark UK–India trade deal and the India–UK Vision 2035, which together marks a new era of cooperation between two of the world's largest and most innovative economies. These frameworks will redefine the partnership for the next generation by strengthening trade links, supporting jobs, and delivering shared prosperity. They build on the legacy of India's G20 presidency, which highlighted cultural exchange as a unifying force for global good.

Bridging Creative Opportunities

As part of its ongoing commitment to strengthening cultural relations and unlocking shared creative potential between India and the UK, the British Council works to create platforms that connect practitioners, policymakers, and institutions across both countries. To bridge creative opportunities between India and the UK, the British Council India is delighted to present Creative Convergence in Bengaluru and Delhi.

These two-day convergences will deliberate on opportunities for future India–UK partnerships, drawing on the growth of India's creative economy, findings from recent commissioned research, and the wider legacy of cultural collaboration between the two countries.

Inspired by the UK's strength in supporting creative industries, the convergences will provide a space for art and culture practitioners to engage in dialogue and connect across fashion, film, music, design, visual arts, and the performing arts.

The programme will include curated, innovative events that foreground collaboration and participatory exchange, highlighting their role in fostering sustainable and inclusive growth. This initiative is dedicated to showcasing India's rich cultural heritage and its growing contribution to the global creative economy.



Programme Scope

Collaborative Networks: By encouraging partnerships among creators, businesses, and policymakers, the relevant sectors can leverage shared knowledge, resources, and advocacy efforts to drive systemic change. We aim to strengthen networks and ecosystems in the creative and cultural sectors that support collaboration, long-term impact, mutual benefit, and greater international understanding.

Cross cutting themes, values, and strategic imperatives through focus on Sustainable Economic Models. This also includes discourse on creating environments that enable creative entrepreneurs and young creative people to thrive and develop economically viable and internationally connected businesses and contribute sustainably to the growth of the creative sectors.

India UK Synergy: India and the UK share a rich and enduring artistic legacy spanning centuries, laying the foundation for powerful collaborations that hold the potential to shape a dynamic future, through a modern partnership informed by tradition and technology. Creative Convergence will offer discussions and networking opportunities around the enormous potential for inclusive growth, community engagement and international exchange. It aims to strengthen the creative ecosystem in India and the UK by sharing experiences, developing talent, and building India - UK international partnerships which contribute to creative and economic growth.

The Indian diaspora in the UK plays a vital role in the creative economy of both India and the UK by fostering cross-cultural collaborations, investing in film, fashion, music, and art, and promoting Indian culture globally. Many diaspora-led initiatives and enterprises serve as cultural bridges, driving innovation, market access, and the global visibility of Indian creative industries.

Elements

- **Supporting the Creative Economy-Online Policy training:** November 2025 to January 2026.

- **Creative Convergence in Bengaluru:** November 5 - 6, 2025
- **Creative Convergence in New Delhi:** January 29 - 30, 2026

Supporting the Creative Economy-Online Policy training: November 2025 to January 2026: This training programme has been developed by the **British Council**, in partnership with **Cultural Associates Oxford**, and is being delivered in collaboration with the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)**.

The ongoing programme brings together cultural leaders, creative entrepreneurs, academics, and researchers, with the aim of strengthening understanding and practice in shaping India's creative economy.

At its core, the programme comprises a series of learning modules featuring case studies, presentations, and interviews with experts and practitioners. These offer both critical insight and practical tools, enabling participants to deepen their understanding of how to design and implement policies and initiatives that support the creative economy at city, regional, and national levels.

As part of the programme, Cultural Associates Oxford led a live online reflective session that enabled participants to share learning and practical insights from the course, while also surfacing emerging themes and reflections that will inform and shape future programme development.

Highlights:

- UK facilitator for one online session
- Medium: Online
- In person networking in New Delhi
- Participants: cultural leaders, creative entrepreneurs, academics, and researchers

Creative Convergence New Delhi | 29 - 30 January 2026

Following Creative Convergence Bengaluru in November, where high levels of engagement, participatory formats, and hands-on workshops fostered meaningful relationships and a clear intent for continued collaboration, the Delhi edition builds on these learnings to deepen dialogue, expand networks, and translate shared insights into action. Bringing together cultural leaders, practitioners, and policymakers, Creative Convergence Delhi will explore new opportunities for collaboration across the India-UK creative ecosystem. With a strong emphasis on interactive exchange across fashion, film, music, design, visual arts, and the performing arts, the convening aims to strengthen long-term partnerships, advance cultural policy dialogue, and help shape the next phase of India's creative economy.

29 January, 2026

I. Plenary and Keynote Creative Convergence: Where Bold Ideas and Future-Ready Ecosystems Meet

Curator: British Council

The session focuses on setting the strategic vision for Creative Convergence, framing the role of the creative economy in policy, innovation, and international collaboration between India and the UK.

Speakers: Vivek Aggarwal, Secretary Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Lindy Cameron CB OBE, British High Commissioner to India, Tim Curtis, Director, UNESCO India, Ruth Mackenzie CBE, Global Director Arts, British Council. Moderated by Alison Barrett MBE, Country Director India, British Council.

II. Immersive Pop-Up Space: Char by Char, An Exposition of Correlated Creatives

Curator: The Design Village Foundation

An immersive participatory pop up and exhibition, celebrating intersections and juxtaposed nuances of the UK - India creative economy, within the region and beyond. Borrowing from the Charbagh - the

courtyard at the iconic British Council building, the immersion strings together four sub themes of contextually responsive voices, the aspect of afterlife, collective concerns around inclusivity and multidisciplinaryness in the creative realm. It brings together artists, designers, architects & built environment professionals, discipline agnostic creatives, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and cultural practitioners to a collaborative forum.

Highlighting Practices and Contributions:

Centre for Urban Commons, Council on Energy, Environment and Water, Dharavi Rocks and ACORN Foundation, Kattaikkuttu Sangam, HCL Foundation, Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design - Royal College of Art, London, Royal Enfield Social Mission (Eicher Motor Limited), Studio Archohm, Superflux, The Design Village Foundation, University of Westminster.

Workshop facilitators:

Of Tints and Play - Natural dyeing Workshop
Facilitated by Jhanvi Tiwari - Textile and Fashion practitioner (alumni of The Design Village & Loughborough University London), Saijal Choudhary - Fashion Entrepreneur and Manager International mobility at The Design Village, (alumni of University of Westminster)

Power OF Space: Ecosystems

Facilitated by Prachi - Museum Designer & Independent Practitioner, Mudita Pasari, Policy & Impact Practitioner and Academic Dean at The Design Village

III. Policy Conference Greater Together: India-UK Creative Dialogue

Curator: Supriya Suri, Founder, Creative Economy Forum, India, Film Maker and Producer

The session focuses on strengthening India-UK cooperation in the creative economy through policy alignment, institutional frameworks, and market-led collaboration. It aims to identify actionable pathways to unlock bilateral growth and co-created cultural ecosystems.

Segment 1: Live Entertainment and Festival Economy

Speakers: Graham Hitchen, Director Loughborough University Policy Unit, Sanjoy K Roy, Managing Director of Teamwork Arts, Thomas Varghese, CEO, Kochi Biennale Foundation, Bidisha Dey, Executive Director, Eicher Group Foundation, Priyanka Sarkar, Lead of Audience Development & Partnership MassArt. Moderated by Ruth Mackenzie, Global Director Arts, British Council

Segment 2: Media and Entertainment Ecosystem

Speakers: C. Senthil Rajan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Graham Hitchen, Director Loughborough University Policy Unit, Prakash Magdum, Managing Director, NFDC, Shibasish Sarkar, President Producers Guild of India and Group CEO, Reliance Entertainment, Shivangi Ambani, Department for Business and Trade, UK Government, Mitesh Shah, Writer, Screen Writers Association. Moderated by Supriya Suri, Founder, Creative Economy Forum, India, Film Maker and Producer.

IV. Doc-Exchange: Indo-UK Opportunities with the Documentary

Curator: Aparna Sanyal, Director, Public Service Broadcasting Trust

The session focuses on highlighting synergies between the Indian and UK documentary ecosystems, examining the inherent potential for meaningful collaborations between creators in the two economies. It looks at the creative and market depth that each country brings, with selected projects pitching for mentorship and funding support.

Speakers: Agnieszka Moody, Head, International Relations, British Film Institute, Jane Mote, Editorial Consultant, The Whickers, Luke W. Moody, Head, BFI Doc Society Fund, Patrizia Mancini, Head of Industry, Sheffield DocFest, Aparna Purohit, CEO, Aamir Khan Productions, Nilotpal Majumdar, Founder, Documentary Resource Initiative, Shahnaab Alam, Producer & Artistic Consultant.

Moderator: Aparna Sanyal, Director, Public Service Broadcasting Trust.

Jury: Jane Mote, Editorial Consultant, The Whickers, Luke W. Moody, Head, BFI Doc Society Fund, Patrizia Mancini, Head of Industry, Sheffield DocFest, Aparna Purohit, CEO, Aamir Khan Productions, Shaunak Sen, Independent Filmmaker, Bex Hopkins, Head of Production, National Film & Television School, Ruth Mackenzie, Global Director Arts, British Council.

Moderator: Aparna Sanyal, Director, Public Service Broadcasting Trust.

V. Networking Tea

30 January, 2026

VI. Researching our Creative Futures: How data, insight, and evidence shape cultural change

Curator: Rashmi Dhanwani, Founder-Director, Art X Company, Festivals from India, Culture Con

The session focuses on how evidence-based research in culture and the arts is shaping policy, education, and inclusive development. It highlights the role of data and insight in driving societal impact across India and the UK.

Case study Leads: Dr Debanjan Chakrabarti, Director, British Council, East and Northeast India; Nayanika Rungta, Impact Consultant, Social Lens (Delhi); Graham Hitchen, Director, Loughborough University Policy Unit; Megha Balani, Executive Director, Global Music Institute (GMI); Shilpi Gupta, Culture Strategist & Curator; Someswara Koundinya, Director – Sports & Tourism Practice, KPMG India.

Panel Speakers: Dr Debanjan Chakrabarti, Director, British Council, East and Northeast India; Graham Hitchen, Director, Loughborough University Policy Unit; Rashmi Dhanwani, Art X Company & Festivals From India; Shilpi Gupta, Culture Strategist & Curator; Someswara Koundinya, Director – Sports & Tourism Practice, KPMG India.

Moderator: Valentina Amuso, Associate Professor of Political Economy, University College London (UCL, UK).

VII. Dress Code: Sustainable! Co Creating Fashion's Future

Curator: Aanchal Sodhani, Culture and Crafts Consultant

This session brings together policy, industry, grassroots leaders and creative practitioners to examine how the creative economy can drive sustainable transformation in fashion through UK-India collaboration. It builds on the British Council's legacy in the space of textiles, fashion and craft centric initiatives to connect research, entrepreneurship, and systemic change.

Presentations by: Drishti Modi, Lafaani; Nitya Amarnath, Botto Labs; Ritwik Khanna, Rkivecity; Rahul Noble Singh, Here We Are/ Centre for Pastoralism; Juhi Pandey for Royal Enfield Social Mission X The Voice Of Fashion.

Speakers: Safia Minney MBE, Founder, Indilisi Artisanal Fashion/ Fashion Declares, Dr M Beena Development Commissioner (Handlooms) Ministry of Textiles, Government of India; Darshana Gajare, Lead Sustainability at IMG Reliance - Lakme Fashion Week; Karishma Shahani, Director, Ka-Sha/ Fashion Revolution; Shamji Vankar, Master Weaver;

Moderator: Aanchal Sodhani

VIII. Performance Modulated Movements

Curator: W.I.P Labs (Work in Progress Labs)

The curation focuses on an experimental live performance where technology, sound, movement, and voice intersect—exploring new forms of artistic expression and public engagement.

IX. Networking Dinner

Invite only



Day 1

Thursday | 29 Jan 2026
British Council New Delhi

10.30–11.30
Plenary and Keynote
Where Bold Ideas and Future-Ready Ecosystems Meet.

11.30–12.00
Inauguration and Walkthrough
Immersive Pop-Up Space: Char by Char, an exposition of correlated creatives

Curator: The Design Village Foundation

12.00–13.00
Immersive Pop-Up workshop: Of Tints and Play

Curator: The Design Village Foundation

13.00–14.00
Lunch

14.00–15.45
Policy Conference
Greater Together: India-UK Creative Dialogue

Curator: Supriya Suri, Founder, Maison Su Entertainment, Cinedarbaar and Creative Economy Forum, India

16.00–18.30
Doc-Exchange
Indo-UK Opportunities with the Documentary

Curator: Aparna Sanyal, Director, Public Service Broadcasting Trust

18.30–19.30
Networking High Tea

Day 2

Friday | 30 Jan 2026
British Council New Delhi

All day
Immersive Pop-Up: Char by Char, an exposition of correlated creatives

Curator: The Design Village Foundation

10.30–12.45
Researching our Creative Futures: How Data, Insight, and Evidence Shape Cultural Change.

Curator: Rashmi Dhanwani, Founder-Director, Art X Company, Festivals from India, and Culture Con

12.45–14.00
Lunch

14.00–16.45
Dress Code: Sustainable! Co Creating Fashion's Future

Curator: Aanchal Sodhani, Culture and Crafts Consultant

17.00–18.00
Immersive Pop-Up workshop
Power OF Space: Ecosystems

Curator: The Design Village Foundation

18.30–19.30
Performance
Modulated Movements

Curator: W.I.P Labs (Work In Progress Labs), an artist-run platform supporting alternative, experimental, and critical art practices across India.

19.45 onwards
Networking Reception
(By invite only)



Annex 1

Curator profiles

New Delhi

1. Aanchal Sodhani

Culture and Crafts Consultant

Aanchal is an independent consultant based in India, working at the intersection of culture, sustainability, and creative enterprise. With over a decade of experience across international cultural strategy, festival curation, design-led development, and research, she has led and supported initiatives with organisations such as the Goethe-Institut, British Council, UNESCO, UnBox Cultural Futures and Creative Dignity. Her work focuses on enabling cross-border collaborations, particularly in sustainable fashion and craft innovation. She has contributed to sectoral research including the Routledge Handbook of Crafts and Sustainability in India.

2. Aparna Sanyal

Director, Public Service Broadcasting Trust

Aparna is a multiple award-winning documentary filmmaker and cultural leader. As Director at the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), and Managing Trustee at the India Chapter of IAWRT, she leads various initiatives to strengthen documentary ecosystems through mentoring, commissioning, and cross-border collaborations.

3. Rashmi Dhanwani

Founder-Director, Art X Company, Festivals from India, and Culture Con

Rashmi leads multidisciplinary teams in arts, research, and creative industries. Founder of Art X Company and Festivals from India, she strengthens India's creative economy through cultural policy, entrepreneurship and audience engagement, bridging strategy with hands-on execution across institutions, conferences, and policy platforms.

4. Supriya Suri

Founder, Maison Su Entertainment, Cinedarbaar and Creative Economy Forum, India

Supriya completed her Film Direction from CLCF, Paris with Egide Scholarship and was nominated for IVLP by the US Govt. For more than 17 years, she has curated multiple festivals, served on international film juries and champions creative industries through influential industry panels and Creative Global Voice of India Awards.

5. The Design Village Foundation

An educational ecosystem for discerning learners, built by globally acknowledged academicians and industry experts, the design village nurtures future-oriented design education that prepares leaders who design to transform the world. The village is a metaphor for the design village both in its physicality and philosophy. The village educates designers the world actually needs and ones that the world didn't know it needed.

6. W.I.P Labs (Work in Progress Labs)

Work In Progress Labs is a New Delhi-based artist-run collective and creative studio for experimental, interdisciplinary, and critical art practices. From festivals and residencies to original commissions and space design, we collaborate with artists, collectives, and institutions to imagine and build new cultural futures - that push the limits of form, media, and public engagement.



Event Partner: Linear Festivals

Venues:

Bangalore International Centre, Bengaluru

The BIC platform fosters intellectual activity, dialogue, cultural enterprise, and innovation. Over 3,000 quality BIC programs including talks, discussions, performances, film screenings and explorations on varied subjects have been held since inception.
<https://bangaloreinternationalcentre.org/>

British Council, New Delhi

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries, building trust worldwide.
<https://www.britishcouncil.in/>