

# India report 2021

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The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities.



# Year in review

The past year has been one of unprecedented change and unforeseen challenges meaning organisations worldwide have had to be thinking on their feet at the same time as finding meaningful ways to navigate change through innovation and real resilience.

Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdowns, we rapidly transitioned to digital delivery and focused on our four priorities in India

- **enabling an internationalised, high-quality education for improved learner outcomes**
- **setting standards in the quality of English teaching and learning**
- **partnerships to strengthen Higher Education systems through research, innovation and student mobility between India and UK**
- **and strengthening the arts and culture for creative expression, exchange and enterprise.**

The year was significant both in terms of the digital shift it necessitated and the reach and engagement of our programmes. Working with **13 states** and over **1,836 partners** we reached **39.5 million** people across India through our English, Education and Arts work.

Our work in English and Education engaged directly with almost **470,000** teachers, educators and students across the country. We engaged with more than **900** higher education institutions in India and UK, resulting in **2,200** research partnership publications and supported over **56,000** Indian students to access a UK education. In the Arts and creative industries, our work supported over **76,500** artists and professionals across both countries through capacity building, partnerships and knowledge sharing programmes.

The focus of our approach is to partner with India's knowledge ambitions and economic growth by creating opportunities for young people to succeed in a global environment. By co-creating and co-funding projects and interventions with Indian central and state governments

that focus on innovation and systemic change, we ensure sustainable impact across our programmes. This approach, coupled with meaningful, enduring and respectful relationships, underlines our strong commitment to **equality, diversity and inclusion** in everything that we do. And, we believe, ultimately, this can lead to more inclusive societies in today's ever more interconnected world.

The landmark **India-UK Roadmap 2030** aims to strengthen bilateral ties between our two countries. It sets out a shared commitment to addressing global challenges around Climate, and enhancing partnerships in Science, Education, Research and Innovation. And a **joint Cultural exchange programme** to celebrate India's 75th anniversary of Independence this coming year.

The climate emergency is one that affects us all; earlier this year, we launched **The Climate Connection** initiative, that brings people around the world together to meet the challenges of climate change. It focuses on the next generation of climate leaders and gives practical support to young people and communities most impacted by climate change, helping them share their perspectives globally and achieve real change.

As we look towards a post pandemic world, we are focused on building on the past year's digital innovation, creative collaborations, partnerships and insight, leading to continued strengthening of the long-standing relationship and vibrant cultural bonds between our countries. We will do this through the lens of digital innovation and deep-rooted networks, to deliver more equitable access to Education, English and Culture, while empowering young leaders of the future.

**Barbara Wickham OBE**  
Director India, British Council



# Enabling high quality education

We believe that education connects us all, making it more important than ever in these ongoing, challenging times. We are committed to ensuring that young people in India have access to educational resources and we hope, through new approaches, we can continue to provide opportunities to schools, teachers and educators.

Through our work, we strive to improve learner outcomes by setting standards in the quality of teaching and learning and introducing an international dimension to education. This includes professional development of teachers, competency-based education aligned to the NEP and integration of technology to equip learners with the future skills required to succeed.

We work with ministries and governments to enrich the quality of education and bring about systemic change in the school education ecosystem by delivering innovative, scalable and sustainable approaches that result in improved learning outcomes.

Our English learning interventions delivered digitally, in partnership with state governments, proved invaluable to learners during the Covid-19 pandemic.



**14.5m**  
overall reach



**49.5k**  
teachers trained, in turn,  
benefitting  
**1.47m**  
learners



**4.7m**  
learners in  
West Bengal benefitted  
through our  
Live TV modules



**466k**  
learners in Delhi state  
schools improved their  
Spoken English skills  
through our digital packs



## Case study

### Competency based Education project with Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) (2020-2022)

Aligned to the National Education Policy, this project's vision is for secondary students to experience deep learning in the classroom where they can acquire the skills they need to succeed in higher education and the global workplace. They can prove their capability through effective assessment that challenges them to demonstrate their skills.

The project is working at a systemic level to move from a content-based approach to a competency-based approach. We are doing this by building capacity and developing resources in a participatory and inclusive manner. It brings about a shift from rote memorisation and skills based assessment system to a more formative system, that promotes learning and development for Indian students, and tests higher-order skills like critical thinking and conceptual clarity.

#### It will

Enable better learning outcomes for students through improved assessment in reading (English), science and maths, by way of **a new competency-based learning framework for classes 6 to 10** with competencies mapped to themes, knowledge and context.

Build system capacity by setting standards for test items and assessment tools, creating a bank of over **1,500 items samples** and training **40 assessment designers** and **180 master test item writers**.

Support **2,000 teachers** with training in competency-based pedagogy and **more than 14,000 teachers** will be supported through a bank of integrated lessons that map to the competencies and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

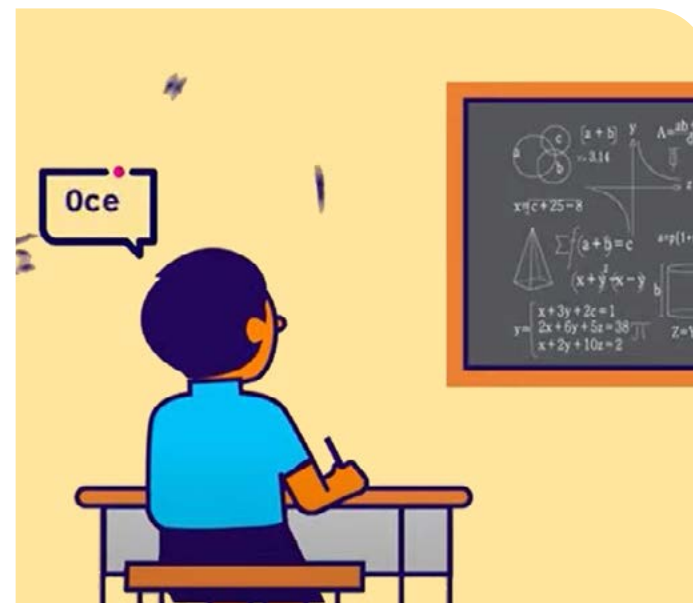
#### Impact

**25k**   
CBSE schools

**180**   
master test item writers to be trained

**2k**   
teachers to be trained in competency-based pedagogy

**14k**   
teachers will be supported through integrated lessons, mapped to the competencies and the SDGs



[Click here to watch the project film](#)

#### Partners

Central Board of Secondary Education  
Navodaya Vidyalayas  
Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan  
Department of Education, Union Territory of Chandigarh  
Network of CBSE affiliated schools  
UK NARIC  
Alphaplus  
Cambridge Partnership for Education



## Case study

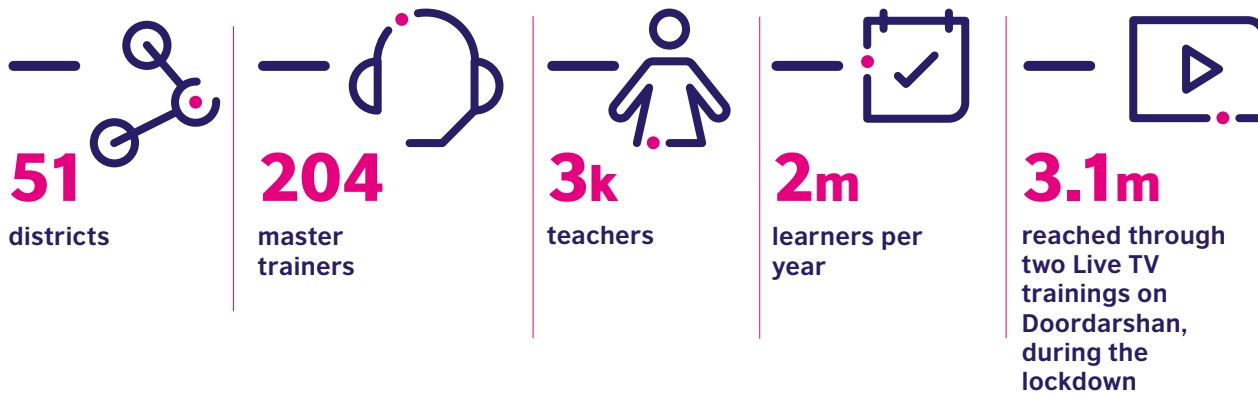
### Spoken English project with Madhya Pradesh Board of Secondary Education (MPBSE) (2018-2022)

The project aims to develop the spoken English communication skills of two million learners per year, in Classes 9 to 12 from all government High Schools and Higher Secondary schools across the state. The vision of the project is that by 2022, English language teaching and learning at secondary level will bring about systemic change and be of sufficient quality to enable improved life opportunities for learners.

**204 Master Trainers and 3,000 teachers of English across 51 districts of Madhya Pradesh** will use learner centred approaches and English more confidently in the classroom. They will take greater responsibility for their own Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and build capacity and capability that is sustainable.

With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, lockdown and school closures, the project has moved online, with master trainers and teachers being trained through webinars and self-learning tasks, also designed to equip teachers with remote teaching skills in contexts where connectivity and internet access is often limited, thus preparing them for future uncertainties.

#### Impact



# Investing in research and innovation

Our work in higher education and science drives and deepens the connections between India and UK education sectors, and with governments and institutions. It is motivated by the belief that international collaboration produces research which is more effective in addressing shared problems, supports policy and system changes, enhances teaching and learning and, in turn produces graduates with skills which are valuable to the economy.

The work that we do in facilitating partnerships at an institutional and a systemic level empowers internationalised higher education systems.

## Impact

3.5m

reached



280

UK-India HE  
partnerships and  
research projects



## New projects launched in 2020-21

### Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI)

Will result in a gender equality framework, focussed on building competencies of HE institutions, to enable an environment for equal participation of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics (STEMM) at all levels.

### Telangana – British Council and Wales partnership for internationalisation in higher education

By 2023, **800,000 students** in the state will benefit from a curriculum reform project in Arts and Commerce subjects.

## Case study

### UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI)

UKIERI, co-funded by the UK and India, is one of India's first bilateral initiatives in education to drive research partnerships and academic linkages. Running successfully for 15 years, the initiative continues to strengthen education and research collaboration between our two countries.

UKIERI plays a unique role in fostering institutional partnerships and people-to-people links between our two countries' education, science and innovation sectors – through education and training, and research innovation.

#### Key initiatives in 2020-21

**181 Research partnerships** between academics and institutions in the UK and India, led to innovation in mutual areas of interest like climate research, data science, human health, environmental science, advanced manufacturing, humanities and social sciences, waste management etc.

Academic leadership training programmes aimed at faculty development in HE institutions (HEI) in India, trained over **700 senior faculty members**. Partners - University Grants Commission (UGC) and All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

The Study in India mobility scheme led to **241 UK students** pursuing undergraduate education with Indian HE institutions (virtually), thus supporting the NEP 2020 vision of promoting student mobility to India.

#### Impact

**21.9k**  
trainers,  
teachers and  
researchers  
engaged



**576**  
institutions in  
Phase 3



**241**  
UK students  
enrolled in  
Study in India  
scheme



© Image credit: Picture by Andrew Parsons / No 10 Downing Street



Hon'ble Prime Ministers from both countries emphasised shared commitment towards the continuation of UKIERI, during the India-UK virtual summit (4 May 2021)

#### Funders

##### UK

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Scottish Government  
Department for the Economy

##### India

Ministry of Education  
Department for Science and Technology  
Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship  
University Grants Commission  
All India Council for Technical Education



## Case study

### Newton Bhabha Fund

The Newton Bhabha Fund brings together UK and Indian researchers and institutions to find joint solutions to global challenges, and enhances research and innovation capacity for long term sustainable growth and social welfare. It supports PhD scholars mobility, advanced training for early career researchers, faculty training in STEM education and empowers women scientists through professional development.

#### India partners

Department of Science and Technology (DST)  
Department of Biotechnology (DBT)  
Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)  
Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR)  
Science and Engineering Board (SERB)  
Indian Institute for Science Education and Research, (IISER) Pune  
Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), India office



### Impact

PhD Placements for UK and Indian scholars to spend a period of their study (2 to 6 months) in Indian and UK higher education institutions.

**43**  
scholars



**60%**  
are women



**280**  
early career  
researchers  
engaged across  
India and the  
UK



*My PhD research work focused on the preparation and application of low valent main group compounds. From the esteemed Newton Bhabha PhD programme 2019-2020, I have achieved an opportunity to explore Indian and international level of scientific research. Through this international program, I was able to interact and work with other researchers around the world working on the allied topic. Also, it is a prospect for me to establish my early career contacts, which may eventually help me in long run as I am eager to pursue my career in academics.*

**Sanjukta Pahar, recipient of Newton Bhabha PhD Placement (funded jointly by DST)**

# Accelerating student mobility

Our work supports and enables students, researchers and academics to realise their dreams of education at world renowned institutions and build careers by gaining work experience in the UK. We engage with thousands of young people in India through significant interventions at pivotal moments in their lives.

From offering a range of scholarships to orchestrating partnerships between UK and Indian higher education institutions for research and academic exchange; our work creates opportunities for young people to succeed in a globalised world.

The British Council works closely with Indian students to:

- provide information and insight on studying and gaining post study work experience in the UK
- offer a variety of scholarships for UK education from STEM scholarships for women to creative economy scholarships
- enable professional UK alumni networks and celebrate the outstanding achievements of those who make a positive contribution to their communities, professions and countries.

## Impact



**73**

virtual events  
and activities



**172m**

reached



**500**

agents



**100**

UK HE Institutions  
engaged

**5.5k**

Indian students  
connected directly  
with **57 UK universities**  
through our  
Study UK Virtual Fairs



**56k**

UK student visas  
issued to Indians;  
**13% more** than the  
previous year





# Innovation in the creative sector

Our work in Arts is a catalyst to strengthen cultural and social development through innovation in the creative sectors with trusted partnerships between India and the UK. We focus on creative innovation and entrepreneurship as the engine for systemic change with women's empowerment, diversity and inclusion at the core.

In 2020-21, we switched to digital platforms:

- **Research** assessing the impact of Covid-19 on the creative economy enabling policy makers and sector leaders to take informed decisions that can support the creative sectors
- **partnering with emerging and established festivals** on major platforms for creative exchange between both countries. Strengthening skills of future leaders in the creative industry to achieve sustainable impact
- **strengthening innovation** in craft with design excellence, entrepreneurship, and technology, for improved livelihoods.

—  
**7.3m**  
engaged






## Research and Insight: mapping the creative economy

### Taking The Temperature Reports

We partnered with FICCI and The Art X Company to launch the Taking the Temperature survey, to track the impact of Covid-19 on India's creative economy, gathering responses from creative professionals, arts companies, sector support organisations, policy-makers and funders.

**The Taking The Temperature Reports** also respond to the UN Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development by providing opportunities, supporting inclusive growth, and promoting innovation.

### Key findings

<p>Creative economy in India is contracting and the creative sector is facing permanent closure</p> <p><b>16%</b></p>	 <p>Creative businesses are contending with difficult choices to cut staff and overheads</p>	<p>Organisations are closing permanently to avoid bankruptcy</p> <p><b>22%</b></p> <p>of the sector is forecast to lose more than</p>
 <p>Individual professionals and artisans are facing short-term hand-to-mouth existence</p>	<p><b>60%</b> of the sector believes it will take nine months to over a year for early signs of recovery for the creative economy</p>	<p><b>75%</b></p> <p>of annual income</p>
<p><b>90%</b></p> <p>of the sector fears the long-term impact of social distancing on the creative economy</p>	 <p>Gender inequality likely to increase.</p>	<p><b>26%</b></p> <p>of arts businesses fear they will not be able to continue in the last two quarters of 2020-2021</p>

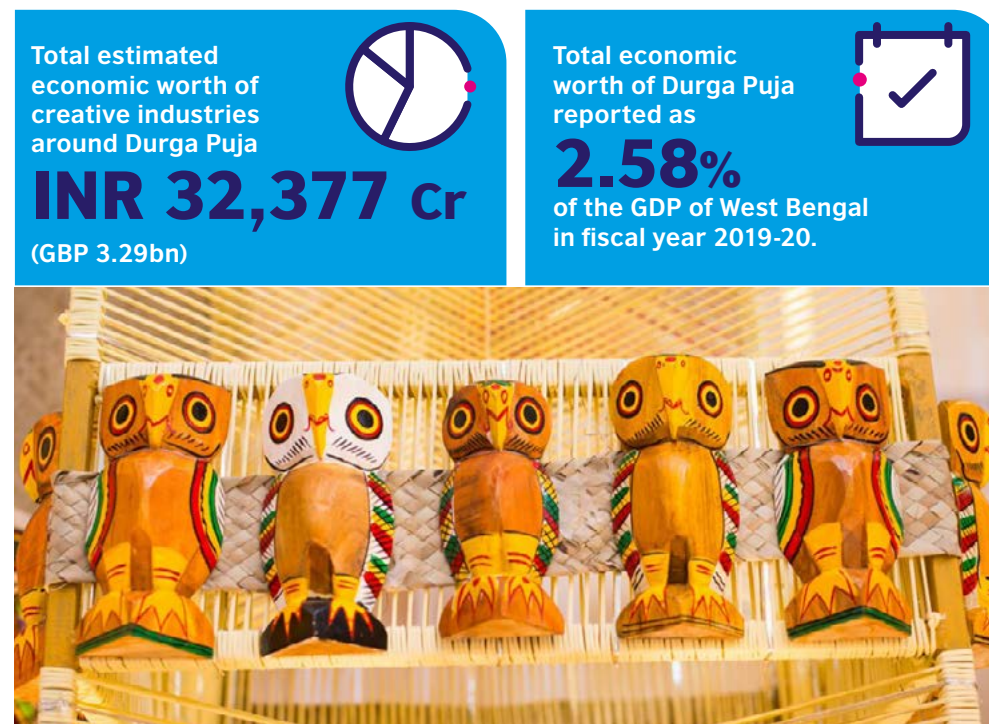
*The report (Taking the Temperature) emphasises the importance of digital entrepreneurship within the creative economy and its vital role in reorganising and rebuilding creative endeavours which were limited to the offline space before.*

Rashmi Dhanwani, Founder-Director, The Art X Company

### Creative economy report: The Durga Puja Festival

We partnered with the Department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal, to map the economic worth of 10 specific creative industries in the state around the Durga Puja festival, one of India's largest cultural festivals. This effort to estimate the value of this one festival chalks out a possible roadmap for states across the country – be it Diwali, Pongal, Ganesh Puja or Bihu - to fully appreciate the economic as well as the cultural benefits these glorious festivals bring to their communities. With measurable evidence of the impact arts and culture organisations, businesses and government will be able to make effective decisions about public and private investment in the creative sector.

### Key findings



Partners - Queen Mary University of London and supported by IIT Kharagpur Kolkata and The Smart Cube

## Our work in Festivals

- Festival Connections: online events in partnership with Arts & Culture Resource India (ACRI) supported the festivals' ecosystem through up-skilling, networking and knowledge transfer between UK and India for festival leaders and professionals
- Festivals Academy: an 8-week online arts management training course piloted in collaboration with Edinburgh Napier University, in January 2021. Expert trainers and festival directors in the UK and India, train young festival managers through this academy
- Connections Through Culture: India-Wales grant scheme, hosted by the British Council, brought artists and creative organisations, in both India and Wales, on a common platform to co-create digital art pieces.

## Impact



### Reviving artist incomes

We organised the day-long **Classic Bagh Festival** in Delhi, a special UK-India creative collaboration between musicians and festival professionals. The festival was designed as an exemplar of future creative events in the post Covid world – sustainable and inclusive, enabling a safe physical platform for artists to perform and revive their incomes.

#### Partners

Jodhpur RIFF and Aga Khan Trust for Culture



## Celebrating inclusivity

With Pride events being cancelled or postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we pivoted to virtual mediums to celebrate LGBTQ+ rights, and foster safe and enabling spaces for creative expression.

During the global Pride Month June 2020, we curated the Digital Pride Festival #prideathome, bringing together extraordinary voices from the queer art and cultural scene in India and the UK, through film, dance, music and theatre to celebrate the spirit of inclusion.

We also brought *More Films for Freedom* and *Five Films for Freedom*; global selections of diverse queer-themed short films broadcasted online, to audiences across the country.

#### Partners

The Queer Muslim Project, British Film Institute and Jio Cinema

Digital  
Pride Festival  
reached

169k



Films  
garnered

805k

views from India





## Strengthening innovation in Crafts

Through our **Crafting Futures programme**, we are working with **six Indian and UK partners** to co-develop projects and explore new futures for craft in India.

The projects were originally planned for physical execution; however, during the pandemic artisans in rural areas had limited access to digital technology and the internet. We worked with partners to break these barriers by developing: guides for artisans to use tech in project development, resources and guidance for photography for online sale of products, product designs for local and UK market requirements, utilising local raw materials in developing crafts, etc. This enabled the Crafting Futures grantees to continue their work.

Benefitted nearly

**10k**

artists and their community artisans



### Projects enabled through Crafting Futures

Khamir and Fieldwork collaborated on 'Desi Unn' reviving the local economy around wool in the Kutch region.

Cultural Aangan and Applied Arts Scotland, are working with Pinguli puppetry artisans from Maharashtra.

Design Innovation and Craft Resource Centre, CEPT University and the British Ceramics Biennale, UK are working on contemporary ceramic practices with Muslim potter families from Gundiyali district in Gujarat.

Pearl Academy and Manchester Metropolitan University are collaborating with Qasab Kutch craftswomen to develop trademarked embroidered products and quilts.

Swami Sivananda Memorial Institute and Goldsmiths, University of London, are training artisans in design and natural dyeing processes for a women-inspired clothing collection.

Unbox Cultural Futures and Future Everything are co-designing urban 'living' crafts, to be showcased at Unbox Festival.



We also supported partners like India Craft Week and Ripples festival by banglanatak.com, in enabling platforms for tribal artisans to market their products – on physical and digital platforms, thus reviving crafts sale and income.

***The Ripples Festival paved the way for revival for many artists as this was the first public interface for many since lockdown. The Bauls and women making Kantha are happy with the new development of people coming to their villages. They also appreciated that the online programs gave them a chance to share about their village and Akhras with the world.***

**Ananya Bhattacharya, Director, Contact Base: about The Ripples festival**



# Creating opportunities for young people

As an international organisation for educational and cultural exchange, our global experience, expertise and inclusive values, underpin everything we do. We are passionate about enabling young people to develop new skills, become better qualified, introduce an international dimension to their learning or experience, and enable understanding of diverse cultures, so they can succeed in an increasingly interconnected world.

We connect with millions of young people in India providing access to a range of learning resources – from offering UK educational and skill-based resources through our libraries, English language courses that improve employment and life opportunities, to hosting a range of scholarships that support studying in the UK. We also support a long-term global network of emerging policy leaders who are working to make substantial change through policy-making, campaigns and leadership to tackle some of the most pressing issues we face today.



—   
**£1.36m**

worth of scholarships  
for Indian students to  
pursue education  
in the UK

—  
*The programme added immense value to my experience. British Council has equipped me with the tools and skills to transform my community. It allowed me to learn from global leaders and made me aware of the limitless opportunities to bring about a positive change.*

Dr Shambhavi Singh, Public Health Scientist, British Council Future Leaders Connect Alumna (Uttar Pradesh, India)

*Studying in the UK gave me a sense of empowerment. It made me feel that I have the power to bring change.*

*Having been in the STEM field for some years, I have observed that women face confidence issues, especially in the early stages of their career, and bringing women in STEM together was an immense value add from the British Council.*

**Sivaranjani Subramanian, British Council STEM scholarship winner (Tamil Nadu, India)**

## Connecting young Indians to UK opportunities



**4.6m**

students reached through GREAT talks, a lecture series of celebrated UK professionals, artists, scientists, etc. focussing on niche topics



**~230k**

candidates took examinations for internationally recognised UK qualifications to pursue overseas study or work

## English language learning

**9,100+ young students** enrolled in Summer School'21, developing 21st century skills through English language and themed content based on India's rich cultural heritage.

Overall, **26,570+ Indians** benefitted through our English Teaching courses.

**84 corporate** partnerships for employee training.



## Google Story-A-Thon 2020

We partnered with Google India on the International Literacy Day, to promote reading habits and creative writing amongst young students. Stories curated by the British Council were hosted on the Google Readalong app, for children's reading. And, we hosted a contest to encourage 5-11 year-olds to write and submit their stories on the theme of 'making the world a better place'.

**1.18m**  
reach  
across  
42 countries



**10k**  
entries  
received  
by Google



*The campaign's social reach was about 5m in the first three days itself and around 50+ articles coming from across the world. We received more than 10,000 entries in the span of 3 weeks.*

Google India

## Online Library



**6k**

attended our online skills workshops



**4.4k**

online library members



**1.1k**

children participated in Reading for Life programme



# Audience reach

Total reach in India

**39.54m**

Virtually engaged

**1.5m**

Reached through digital initiatives  
websites, social media

**17.41m**

Reached through mass media

**25.4m**

UK student visas issued to Indians

**56,090+**

Organisations engaged across the  
country

**1,836**

Schools engaged

**545**

School leaders engaged

**487**

Teachers, educators, students  
benefitted

**~470,000**

Artists, creative sector professionals  
and leaders  
reached

**76,503**

Community members and leaders

**75,330**

Teachers engaged

**70,520**

Researchers engaged

**12,333**

Higher/Further education leaders  
engaged

**1,331**

NGO leaders engaged

**634**





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