

UK/Ukraine Season of Culture

Evaluation Report for
the British Council

Prepared by Impact Stories
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UK/Ukraine
Season



About the Authors

Impact Stories works in the education, arts and culture sectors in the UK and internationally to help sector organisations, government agencies, universities, schools and NGOs understand their customers and markets and to plan, monitor and evaluate the impact of their programmes and services.

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List of abbreviations

DCMS – Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, UK

FCDO – Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, UK

Season – UK/Ukraine Season of Culture

ToC – Theory of Change

hcmf// – Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival

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1. Introduction

- This document is a report on the evaluation of the UK/Ukraine Season of Culture which ran between June 2022 and May 2023.
- The UK/Ukraine Season of Culture was conceived as a bilateral cultural programme initially developed to celebrate the 30-year anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and the UK.
- The Season was organised by the British Council team in Ukraine working with the British Embassy and in collaboration with the Ukrainian Institute.
- Immediately prior to the original launch date of the Season, Russia initiated its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Since then, Russia has continued to shell and bomb cities, communities, infrastructure and facilities across the country, including arts and cultural venues of which the most infamous is the Mariupol Theatre. Millions of people have been displaced within and outside Ukraine's borders. The destruction and devastation to lives, livelihoods, the environment and economy has been enormous and remains ongoing.
- As a direct consequence of the invasion, many practical aspects of the Season had to be reassessed. Initially, most activities had been planned to take place in cities across Ukraine but this focus had to change and the Season's activities were reorientated to take place either in the UK or virtually.
- The Season was redefined under the theme of, *Future Reimagined*. While it aimed to remain true to its original objectives of facilitating exchange and collaboration and sharing perspectives internationally, it necessarily took on a wider and more urgent purpose of supporting the narrative for an international audience that an independent and vibrant Ukrainian culture exists and that the resilience of its arts and cultural sector deserves and needs to be supported.
- In his address on the opening of the Lviv BookForum streamed by the Hay Festival as part of the Season in October, 2022, President Volodymyr Zelensky crystallised the existential nature for Ukraine of Russia's invasion. He, along with many other observers, sees Russia's aim as the delegitimisation and ultimate extinction of the independent concept of Ukraine and Ukrainian as a shared identity, culture, history and language. He highlights the vital role of artists and writers in expressing and sharing Ukrainian identity and culture internationally to ensure its very survival:

The world has witnessed how Russian aggression has been destroying our territories, Ukrainian culture, language and books as a symbol of freedom and indomitability of our people. Today, when the Armed Forces of Ukraine are courageously defending their native country from the enemy invasion, it is vitally important for us to preserve our national culture and identity.

President Volodymyr Zelensky, Opening Statement, Lviv BookForum 2022

- The revised Season was formally launched during the Sheffield DocFest in the UK in June, 2022 and ended with a formal closing ceremony at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in London on 1st June 2023.



© Image credit: British Council Ukraine

2. Executive Summary

The UK/Ukraine Season of Culture

The UK/Ukraine Season of Culture was a bilateral cultural programme initially planned to celebrate the 30-year anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and the UK.

In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the original programme was postponed. The Season ran between June 2022 and May 2023 with almost all in-person events and activities moved to the UK and other events and activities taking place largely online. The two goals and overarching ambition for the Season were adapted to reflect the new reality although the spirit and focus of the Season as originally planned remained intact.

Overarching ambition:

To showcase and celebrate Ukrainian culture and identity, to increase international awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by the Ukrainian people and to support the resilience and contribution of arts and culture in Ukraine in helping to shape a more positive future



Long-term goal 1:

Celebrate and support Ukrainian identity through enhanced opportunities to showcase, share and increase appreciation internationally of Ukrainian arts, culture and heritage.



Long-term goal 2:

Increase awareness and understanding internationally about shared global challenges, especially the war in Ukraine and its consequences for the Ukrainian people in order to support resilience and help to shape a more positive future.

In his address on the opening of the Lviv BookForum which was streamed by the Hay Festival as part of the Season in October, 2022, President Volodymyr Zelensky highlighted the vital role artists, writers and creative professionals can play in ensuring the very survival of Ukraine.

The world has witnessed how Russian aggression has been destroying our territories, Ukrainian culture, language and books as a symbol of freedom and indomitability of our people. Today, when the Armed Forces of Ukraine are courageously defending their native country from the enemy invasion, it is vitally important for us to preserve our national culture and identity.

President Volodymyr Zelensky, Opening Statement, Lviv BookForum 2022

The evaluation of the season

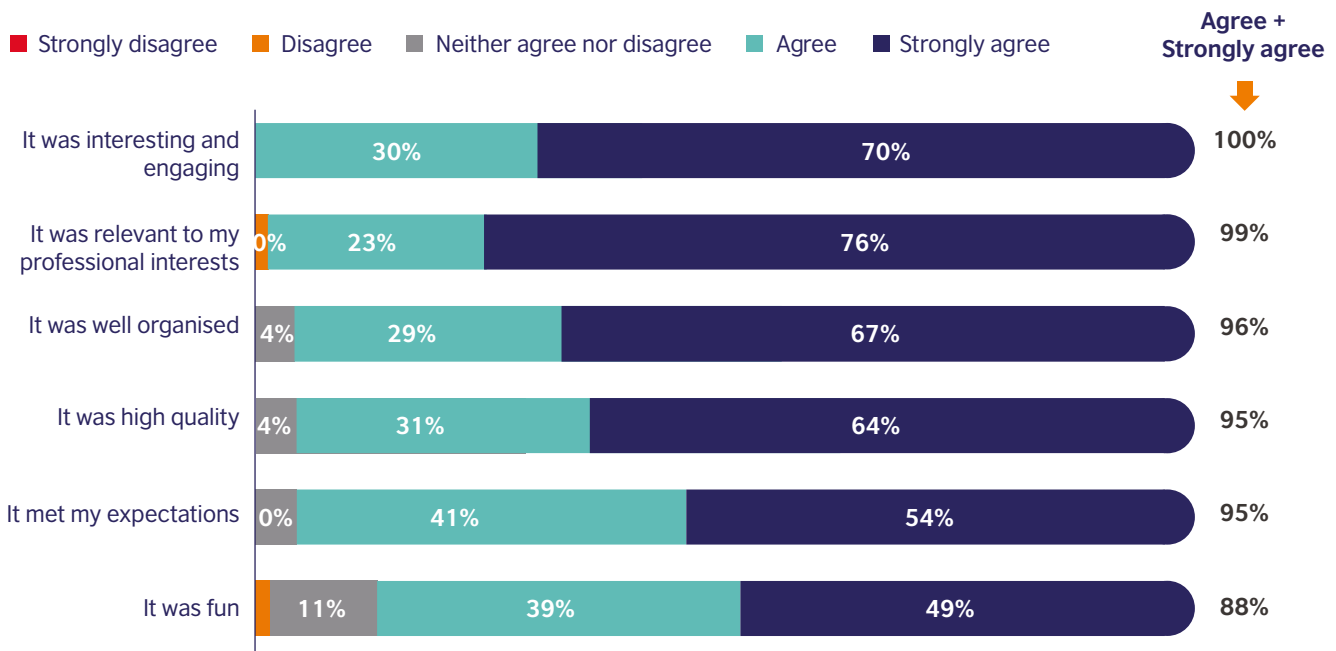
The evaluation of the Season programme was organised around the six dimensions of the OECD DAC evaluation framework. The evaluation is based on research using a mixed mode data collection methodology, involving the collation of secondary programme data alongside the collection of primary data via online surveys and in-depth interviews. The timeline of the evaluation was affected by the reorientation of the Season which led to an extension of 6 months.

Relevance

Themed “*Future Reimagined*” the Season showcased the distinctiveness, diversity, vibrancy and resilience of Ukrainian arts and culture. The Season featured Ukraine at international festivals, alongside a range of other events and activities. It fostered cross-country collaboration, involving both experienced and new partners. About half of the UK organisations had never worked with Ukrainian counterparts before, and nearly half of the participants were new to working with the lead partners, the British Council and the Ukrainian Institute.

Advocacy and professional relevance of Season activity

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the event?



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants

Coherence

Despite the ever-changing circumstances and the need for adaptable programming, the Season successfully united a diverse group of arts and cultural organisations from both countries within one cohesive programme. Well-known institutions including museums, festivals, theatres, and dance companies worked with emerging independent players in a vibrant mix of bilateral and multilateral collaborations. The Season encompassed a wide range of art forms, from literature (for example, ‘Ukraine Lab’) to dance (‘Let the Body Speak’) to radio documentaries (‘Skills for Radio Docs’), to film (‘Ukrainian Film Months’), and theatre (‘Bunker Cabaret’). Importantly, it extended its reach beyond capital cities, embracing cultural initiatives in, for example, Donetsk, Ukraine, and Newcastle, UK, with projects addressing issues of marginalisation and inclusion. Themes included the persecution of the Crimean Tatars and representation included the Outburst Queer Arts Festival in Belfast. The Season’s dedicated website, <https://ukuaseason.org/>, continues to serve as a living archive and reference point for its activities.

Efficiency

Assessing the Season's efficiency in an extraordinary context - marked by both the COVID-19 pandemic and the outbreak of the war - is challenging. However, adaptability and flexibility from all parties involved was crucial for success. Partner organisations had to make significant adaptations. The transition to online activities improved efficiency, especially in engaging displaced artists. The British Council's swift reorientation and reimagining of the Season was greatly appreciated by partners and participants who almost universally found the revised projects relevant and well-supported. Despite the uncertainty, the British Council's management processes, administrative systems, and people proved agile and robust in supporting the Season effectively.

Effectiveness

The Season comprised **42 collaborative projects** involving **75 organisations** from Ukraine and the UK. It engaged a minimum of **670,000 people** through both virtual and in-person activities. Among these participants, at least **23,409 were general audiences** engaged face-to-face, while at least **2,445 arts professionals** directly or indirectly benefited from **24 projects** designed specifically for professional engagement.



The Season reached a broader audience of at least 1.58 million people through the online channels of the British Council and Ukrainian Institute and through the Season's website. Projects with significant digital reach included the opening event at Sheffield Doc/Fest (198K), the mental health focused 'I'M FINE' (154K), and the 'Ukrainian Film Month' in the UK (139K), which toured various film festivals and cultural venues.

Impact

More Opportunities for Purposeful International Engagement, Exchange: The Season expanded cultural exchange, fostering new and stronger partnerships. Organisations adapted creatively and exceeded expectations, resulting in sustainable collaborations. Creative resilience emerged during challenging situations, leading to greater impact and innovative approaches. Virtual training and mentorship programmes were crucial for skills-building and capacity development.

We have enjoyed working together and found that through collaboration we have come up with new projects which can extend our work in the Season. Our partners have been fantastic in opening up new opportunities for us.

Partner, Ukraine

The Season boosted interconnectedness, creating numerous professional and organisational contacts. Data suggest that approximately **10 professional contacts** and **3 organisational contacts** were established per participating arts professional and approximately **14 professional contacts** and **4 organisational contacts** were established per participating arts organisation.



The Season catapulted Ukrainian partnerships onto global platforms, facilitated the access of participants to international networks and supported their professional development. It provided access to commercial opportunities which will support the future resilience and growth of the arts and culture sector in Ukraine.

More Opportunities for Practice Development: During the Season, innovative learning approaches such as collaborative language translation were tested and led to plans for wider adoption in public and educational settings. Virtual training workshops and mentorship schemes significantly enhanced the capacity and skills of Ukrainian professionals, empowering them to create impactful cultural content. Online mentorship facilitated training and expanded project reach, while workshops empowered Ukrainian translators to translate leading writers into Western languages and to diversify their skills. Collaborations across disciplines and countries strengthened skills and practice, enabling learning cascade and the sharing of expertise, multiplying opportunities to share Ukrainian culture. The Season also fostered entrepreneurial and project management skills, empowering participants to seek opportunities and to expand their practice.

Increased Knowledge and Understanding of Each Other's Practice, Ways of Working and Ecosystems: Collaborative projects during the Season strengthened partner relationships, providing deeper insights into working methods and cultural ecosystems. Even partners with prior collaborations found their work on the Season to be a unique experience that fostered closer collaboration. Multilateral partnerships extended understanding of broader cultural contexts. Some partnerships exceeded expectations, enhancing relationships and understanding between organisations. Partnerships also facilitated greater understanding of different aspects of cultural sectors in both countries, fostering belief in the importance of continued cooperation and discussions. On a personal level, UK professionals engaging with Ukrainian work found the experience to be personally enriching and professionally enlightening, deepening their understanding of their own practice.

Increased Engagement with Ukrainian Arts and Culture: The Season showcased Ukrainian arts and culture to global audiences by facilitating access to international platforms including the Cheltenham Literature Festival and the Lviv Book Forum. These events featured prominent Ukrainian authors, artists, musicians, and filmmakers, amplifying Ukrainian voices and attracting substantial international attention and interest. Participants recognised the importance of using culture to counterbalance the dominance of short-term news agendas, aiming to document and share their experiences of war for present and future generations. UK partners also emphasised their role in supporting Ukrainians to promote their culture and engage international audiences in discussions about the war's long-term impact on culture. The Season gave new significance to both established and recent work. Premiered works such as the 'Chornobyl'dorf' opera acquired new relevance amid the war.



Chornobyldorf was created two years before the large-scale Russian war against Ukraine and it is now that the opera has become radically relevant. In 2020 a nuclear explosion had an abstract meaning to us, whereas today the fear of nuclear threat is well-founded. Each day, the fictional world of Chornobyldorf is getting more real. The content of the piece changed for both its creators and the whole world.

Roman Grygoriv, Composer and Director

New translations increased engagement with Ukrainian history and celebrated Ukrainian culture. For example, a new translation of ‘Cassandra’ written more than 100 years ago by one of Ukraine’s foremost writers Lesia Ukrainka was performed in Oxford and Cambridge. It generated substantial media coverage, highlighting themes and activities across local, national, and international media outlets.

Increased Intercultural Fluency, Understanding and Respect for Difference: The ongoing war with Russia has become a symbol of Ukraine’s rejection of Russian colonialism and an assertion of its distinct cultural identity, with artistic expressions in the Season largely centred on war experiences and identity as a form of resistance.

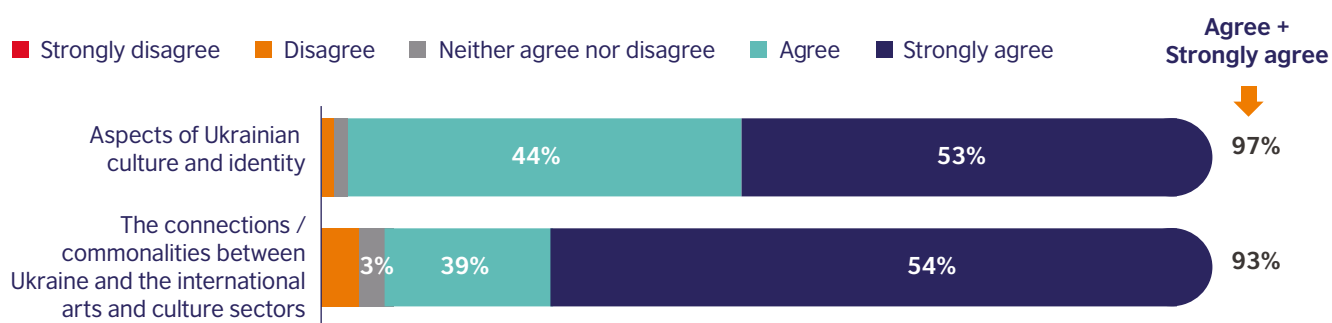
Since the war, the Ukrainian cultural identity has taken on new meaning, both as a symbol of resistance and a source of inspiration for the future of Ukraine. Ukraine’s cultural sector will be integral to how the country rebuilds after the war by, for instance, enabling people to process trauma, share a common identity and articulated shared experiences – experiences that show the world how united and resolute Ukrainians can be.

Scott McDonald, Chief Executive of the British Council in Voices magazine, November 2022

The conflict has accelerated the ongoing decolonisation of Ukrainian culture and the Season served as a platform for Ukrainian arts professionals to emphasise the significance of Ukrainian as an independent language and culture. While some professionals struggled at first to come to terms with the idea of cultural events during wartime, most came to recognise culture’s role in preserving and promoting Ukrainian identity, providing both entertainment and hope amid the turmoil. UK arts professionals also deepened their understanding of the current Ukrainian experience and cultural identity through their involvement in the Season.

Increased intercultural understanding through the Season

To what extent do you agree or disagree that this event was an appropriate opportunity to understand/ explore:



Increased Engagement with Ukraine Arts and Culture across the UK: Season activities and partner organisations have been well represented across different regions in the UK. Events took place in 20 UK cities.

England: 36 partners - e.g. Brighton Film Festival; Cheltenham Literary Festival; EuroFestival (Liverpool); Greenwich+Docklands International Festival; The London Book Fair; Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival; Sheffield Doc/Fest; The Great Escape Festival, Brighton; Bouquet Kyiv Stage Oxford; Cassandra (Oxford & Cambridge); Bunker Cabaret (London); Wales: 1 partner - Lviv BookForum - broadcast live by Hay Festival; Scotland: 8 partners - e.g. Edinburgh International Film Festival; Scotland-Ukraine Arts Residencies; Edinburgh Culture Summit: Ukraine Cultural Leadership Dialogue; Northern Ireland: 3 partners - Belfast Film Festival; Outburst Queer Art Festival, Belfast; BIFPA



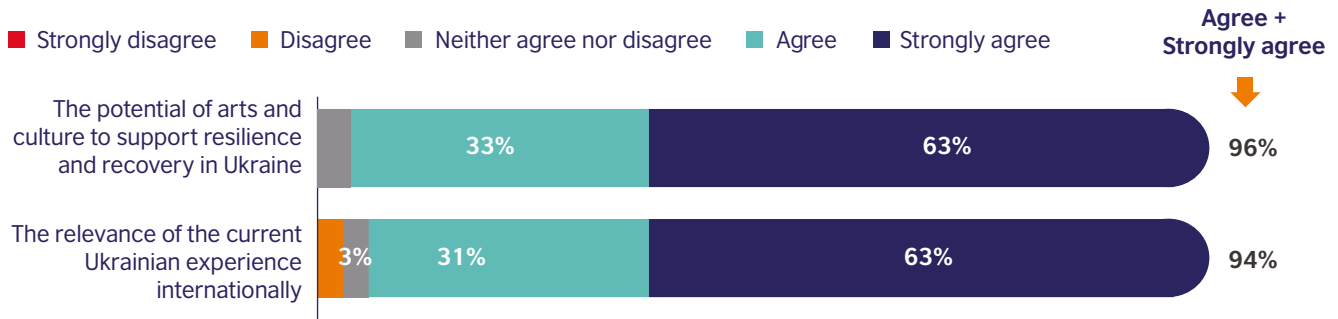
Increased Support for the Ukrainian Diaspora: The Season offered opportunities for members of the diaspora community to reconnect with their heritage and culture. Cultural activities and outreach initiatives allowed diaspora members to engage emotionally and culturally, creating a stronger sense of identity and continued support. Experienced organisations collaborated with members of the diaspora in schools and community groups across the UK in ways which served as a blueprint for wider language learning initiatives and mechanisms for engaging displaced communities. Touring performances reached greater numbers of the diaspora and there was a desire for further touring to be undertaken to reach even more in the future.

Access to International Platforms/Safe Places for Dialogue: The revised Season programme acknowledged the realities of war. It prioritised the creation of physical and ideological safe spaces for contributors both when the productions were under development and when they were being performed. Events in Ukraine, such as the Season's contribution to the Lviv BookForum, were curated with extra safety measures. UK partners maintained sensitivity, ensuring Ukrainian ownership of relocated projects and adapting flexibly to the challenging war context in ways which often deepened their collaborations. The Season offered a secure environment for artistic expression, both physically and digitally, while UK partners supported Ukrainian artists in navigating through their often deeply personal experiences. Creative solutions, through initiatives such as the 'Bunker Cabaret' tour, were devised to include male contributors able to travel, highlighting the Ukrainian government's recognition of culture's significance during wartime and showcasing the resilience of Ukrainian artists.

Shape a more Positive Future through supporting the resilience of Ukrainian Arts and Culture: The Season served as a catalyst for essential dialogues, fostering a sense of community in the face of adversity and boosting Ukrainian artists' self-confidence. Beyond the Season's timeline and geographical boundaries, it has established a solid foundation for ongoing advocacy of Ukrainian arts and culture by nurturing individuals' long-term resilience, cultivating strong relationships with international partners, and providing a platform to showcase the vitality of Ukrainian culture to the world. This will ultimately contribute to the Ukraine sector's continued growth and prosperity.

Supporting the resilience of Ukrainian arts and culture

To what extent do you agree or disagree that this event was an appropriate opportunity to understand/explore:



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey

Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants

Sustainability

Long-Term Partnerships: The Season's most significant legacy lies in the long-term partnerships it has forged. These collaborations, rich in potential, are poised to extend the Season's impact well into the future. Many partner organisations express unwavering commitment to continuing working together, with or without a project in mind and to continue nurturing the bilateral and multilateral connections they have developed. These partnerships offer opportunities to amplify ongoing high-profile projects in Ukraine, such as the first-ever Ukrainian animation feature film, along with innovative theatrical translations. UK partners are committed to supporting their Ukrainian counterparts and to exploring avenues for enhancing sustainability, from taking performances to international festivals to facilitating further artistic exchanges.

Mavka: the forest song is a feature film [based on a play by Lesia Ukrainka] which has been in development for a long time before [the] war and has now finished in production. It is being shown in cinemas in Ukraine and we are really looking forward to seeing it at an international festival – we are working with the creative team behind the film to make sure it gets coverage and we can help celebrate this major achievement.

Partner, UK



© Image credit British Council Ukraine

There is a keen interest in bringing UK professionals to perform in Ukraine as well, when circumstances allow. The Season has also stimulated unexpected shifts in understanding and perspective, such as contemporising the interpretation of Lesia Ukrainka’s classic, Cassandra.

Professional Recognition: The Season significantly elevated the international profile and recognition of many Ukrainian professionals, particularly those well-known locally but not globally, offering them opportunities to advance their careers on a broader scale and with a far larger audience..

UK Soft Power and perceptions of the British Council

Arts and culture is recognised as an essential element of Ukraine’s response to Russian aggression. Cultural bodies and professionals greatly appreciated the fact that the Season was reorientated and reimagined after the full-scale invasion of Russia rather than being cancelled. The revised projects were deemed to be appropriate, realistic and well-supported by the British Council. The connections forged during the Season will serve as a resource for future collaboration between the UK and Ukraine, deepening the cultural ties between the two countries. Internationally, the Season exemplified the UK’s commitment to cultural independence and democratic values.

The UK and Ukraine are close friends and partners. And our ties have only strengthened despite the challenges of Russia’s invasion. I am really proud that even in these times we have been able to deepen cultural connections between our countries and in particular to hold the UK/Ukraine Season.

Melinda Simmons. HMG Ambassador to Ukraine speaking at the closing ceremony on June 1, 2023

The Season has also enhanced the reputation of the British Council within the cultural sector of Ukraine. The British Council’s pivotal role in the Season has positioned it as an institutional model of soft power and cultural relations which Ukrainian institutions aspire to replicate in order to safeguard their own culture and identity.

High likelihood to recommend Season activities among professional 11 participants

How likely is it that you would recommend this type of event to a friend or colleague?

■ Not at all likely - 0 ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ Extremely likely -10



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey

Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants; NPS – Net promoter score=Promoters (scores 9-10) – Detractors (scores 1-6)

The British Council has a very good reputation in Ukraine – it is seen as a symbol of quality and there is a sense that whatever it is doing is something worth paying attention to.

Professional, Ukraine

Conclusions

The UK/Ukraine Season of Culture emerged as a timely and vital platform and showcase, providing a voice to Ukrainian creative professionals while addressing the evolving needs of Ukraine's cultural sector. It served as a beacon of support for Ukrainian arts and culture during a period of unprecedented conflict, earning commendation from a wide range of stakeholders. The Season successfully fostered connections and partnerships between the UK and Ukraine, laying the groundwork for future collaborations and enhanced digital working.

Importantly, it showcased both established and lesser-known Ukrainian artists and emerging talents on the global stage, amplifying Ukrainian culture and language while shedding light on the harsh realities of Russia's invasion. It facilitated access to international platforms and commercial opportunities, offering hope and resilience to a sector facing enormous financial challenges. As Ukraine rebuilds post-war, the insights gained from the UK's artistic and cultural ecosystem will contribute to the country's cultural revival. Ultimately, the Season offered space for reflection on resilience, morality, art's role in times of conflict and on 21st-century values. It engaged audiences worldwide and paved the way for ongoing support and international recognition for Ukraine and its culture.



3. UK/Ukraine Season of Culture

3.1. Context

- Ukraine is the second largest country by geography in Europe, located between the European Union and Russia. It had a pre-war population of 44m.
- It gained independence from the USSR in 1991 but has faced ongoing challenges reflecting embedded corruption and tensions between its historical ties to Russia and the aspirations of many of its young people to align more closely to the countries and values of Western Europe.
- Since independence, the country has experienced significant political and social upheaval, including the Revolution of Dignity in 2013-14. Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, fomented secession in the Donbas region in the South-East and launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.
- According to the latest Census (2001), Ukraine has a diverse population with over 130 nationalities being represented, including Russians (17,3%), alongside Belarusians (0.6%), Moldovans (0.5%), Crimean Tatars (0.5%), Bulgarians (0.4%). Many Ukrainians speak both Ukrainian and Russian and a proportion speak other community languages, too. An increasing number of young people speak English.
- Prior to the invasion, many Ukrainians had family members working in EU countries, especially in Poland. The Ukrainian diaspora in Europe has grown exponentially as a result of the war, with millions of mainly women and children now living outside the country.
- Ukraine's arts and cultural sector faced disruption during the Soviet era but since independence in 1991 there has been a renewal of governance structures and civil society. The Ministry of Culture and Information Policy and the Ukrainian Institute support cultural development and international engagement. The sector has grown significantly after the Revolution of Dignity, with support from Western donors.

Following Ukraine's Euromaidan revolution of 2013–14 and Russia's subsequent aggression against the country, Ukraine experienced an impressive cultural revival. From publishing to music, film production to theatre, fashion to curated exhibitions, the Ukrainian cultural scene grew in boldness, diversity and scale. The Euromaidan movement spurred a powerful wave of cultural activism, involving among other things the establishment of platforms for debates, the holding of pop-up exhibitions, urban regeneration projects, and initiatives by volunteer groups to protect crumbling national heritage sites around the country.

Pesenti M. (2020)

- Yet, even prior to the war, financial challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic in particular had impacted the sector's viability.
- To provide perspective on the direct financial impact of the war on the cultural sector, the World Bank's second **Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA2)** for Ukraine estimates that as of February 24, 2023, the total cost of damage was:

- historic cities, buildings, and sites imbued with recognized cultural/social values—US\$1.7bn,
- movable cultural properties and collections, repositories of culture—US\$143m,
- buildings/workshops/ateliers dedicated to cultural and creative industries (CCIs)—US\$150m,
- and tourism facilities—US\$650m.

The war has also deeply affected the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and creativity, undermining the social fabric and interfering with the daily practices and livelihoods of living heritage practitioners, producers, community members, cultural professionals, and artists. Internal displacement and outflow of artists and cultural professionals have significantly reduced the diversity of cultural practices and expressions, particularly in eastern oblasts, and have diminished the ability of cultural institutions to cope with emergency needs.

RDNA2 (2023)

3.2. Season Overview

- In the arts, the British Council supports international bilateral exchange and skills development for creative professionals, practitioners and managers across theatre and dance, literature, the visual arts, fashion, music and the wider creative economy.
- Festivals and Seasons form a core part of the British Council’s work in arts and an important part of the portfolio through which cultural relations are developed between the UK and the countries in which the British Council works.
- As a continuous presence in Ukraine over many years of political and societal change, the British Council has positioned itself as a constant, stable player in the national cultural scene. The British Council’s ambition in Ukraine has been to support the country’s European orientation and ambitions for international partnership and to maintain the UK as a partner of choice in supporting reform and renewal of its arts and cultural sector.
- The UK/Ukraine Season of Culture was a bilateral cultural programme initially developed to celebrate the 30-year anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and the UK by:
 - Giving a voice to Ukrainian creative professionals and focusing on the changing needs and priorities of the Ukrainian cultural sector;
 - Providing a platform for cultural exchange between the two countries across various art forms (literature, music, performing arts, film) and offering a unique opportunity to strengthen the cultural relationship between the two countries.
- The Season was organised collaboratively by the British Council and the Ukrainian Institute. Following the reorientation precipitated by Russia’s invasion in February 2022, the Season was formally launched in the UK during Sheffield DocFest in June 2022 and its conclusion coincided with EuroFestival 2023, a 2-week long cultural festival (held between 1-14 May, 2023 and formally outside the Season) that took place in Liverpool during the Eurovision Song Contest.
- EuroFestival provided a focus for 24 new commissions, including 19 collaborations between UK and Ukrainian artists. The UK/Ukraine Season’s team provided professional advice for the festival organisers and facilitated networking opportunities between cultural organisations from Liverpool and the Ukrainian cultural sector.



© Image credit British Council Ukraine

- The overarching theme of the Season was *Future Reimagined*. It aimed both to champion the narrative that an independent Ukrainian culture exists and to support the resilience of the arts and culture sector in the country.
- The Season therefore sought to pave the way to a reimagined future in which Ukrainian arts and culture survives and prospers as an affirmation of the right of Ukraine and its people to survive and prosper.
- The crucial role that creative professionals and artists take on during a war is well summarised by Volodymyr Yermolenko, Ukrainian philosopher, journalist, and presenter of the podcast Explaining Ukraine who participated in the Lviv Book Forum:

Literature during the war is a blasphemy because the reality of the war cannot be expressed in words. The war makes you speechless, silent. You can never express the pain of loss of your beloved ones. Or the horror of the mass graves and burnt cars with people inside. Or the abyss of mothers who lost their children. Any attempt to break this silence of mourning seems to be blasphemous. Yet literature during the war is also a duty. We have a duty to speak, to witness, to confess, to make testimonies. Evil which is buried in silence is an evil that will return. Ukrainians know this all too well. The attempt of genocide we are facing now from the Russian invaders is horrible not only because it is an embodiment of cruelty, but also because it is an embodiment of the repeated cruelty. Previous crimes in this region were kept in silence for too long, and people who attempted to tell its stories were sent to jails or killed en masse. Therefore, we should break this vicious circle of silence. This makes literature an act of revolt against evil.

Volodymyr Yermolenko

3.3. Season Aims and Objectives

- The Season was originally seen as an opportunity to showcase the UK in Ukraine and Ukraine in the UK, bridging the geographical distance between the two nations with the best in music, theatre, cinema, publishing, fashion, the visual arts and the full range of creative sectors.
- It had very ambitious objectives to explore the effects of digital technology on arts, to understand the real value of digital innovation, to encourage the sector to stay local while not ignoring global expertise and to explore the role arts and culture play in responding to the ongoing climate crisis.
- In response to Russia's invasion, the **overarching ambition** of the UK/Ukraine Season was adapted to become:
 - To showcase and celebrate Ukrainian culture and identity, to increase international awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by the Ukrainian people and to support the resilience and contribution of arts and culture in Ukraine in helping to shape a more positive future.
- This ambition was built on **two long-term goals**:
 - Celebrate and support Ukrainian identity through enhanced opportunities to showcase, share and increase appreciation internationally of Ukrainian arts, culture and heritage;
 - Increase awareness and understanding internationally about shared global challenges, especially the war in Ukraine and its consequences for the Ukrainian people in order to support resilience and help shape a more positive future.
- The aims and objectives and the logical structure of the Season were formalised in a Theory of Change (ToC), presented and discussed later in this report.

3.4. Delivery

- The Season was organised collaboratively by the British Council and the Ukrainian Institute.
 - The **Ukrainian Institute** is a state institution acting in the field of cultural diplomacy. The institution's activities are aimed at improving the understanding and perceptions of Ukraine in the world and developing its cultural ties with other countries. Established by the Government of Ukraine in 2017, the Institute operates under the administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- The original plan was to stage the Season's programme as a truly bilateral cultural event series: a UK Season in Ukraine led by the British Council and a smaller Ukraine Season in the UK led by the Ukrainian Institute, united by a joint communication plan.
- This delivery model was then adapted to accommodate the new post-invasion reality:
 - The British Council took the overall lead, the Ukrainian Institute supporting it,
 - *Future Reimagined* was realised as a diverse portfolio of live events held predominantly in the UK, with global online access to some of programme,
 - The Season became a living programme and adapted and evolved in response to the changing circumstances,
 - The timeline was more flexible, again allowing for activities and arts partners to adapt.
- The Season's activities and projects were structured into two complementary portfolios (full list of projects/partners available in Appendix 1 & 2):
 - The first portfolio included projects supported via a restricted open call. The open call invited organisations previously working with the British Council in the UK or in Ukraine to put forward a collaborative bid between one/more Ukrainian and one/more UK partner(s) that would support the Season's objectives.
 - The second portfolio of projects comprised Ukraine focused events/days, usually as part of a wider artistic programme, e.g., Ukraine days at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Spotlight on Ukraine at the London Book Fair.

3.5. Stakeholders and Audiences

- There were a range of stakeholders with different roles in the Season:
 - Funding partners:
 - British Council
 - Ukrainian Institute
 - Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, UK (FCDO)
 - Delivery partners:
 - British Council
 - Ukrainian Institute
 - Institutional partners (full list available in Annex 2 and 3).
- These stakeholders had slightly different expectations from the Season, while all working towards the Season’s overarching aim as a programme for cultural exchange:
 - For funding partners, the Season was one of a number of programmes they support, therefore their priorities are: a. to ensure the funding is spent in line with partner agreements and b. the funded Season is working towards a goal that is in line with their own agenda. In the case of the British Council this is an agenda of enhanced Cultural Relations expressed through a set of aims and objectives for its bilateral Seasons;
 - For the delivery partners, the Season had to align with specific objectives for the UK/Ukraine bilateral programme;
 - For institutional partners, the Season activity was usually part of a bigger programme or wider set of activities , therefore they were keen to ensure the Season aligned well to their own long-term agenda.
- In addition, the UK’s Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) was an important stakeholder with an interest in the Season. However, it was not directly involved from a delivery or funding perspective.



4. Evaluation of the UK/Ukraine Season of Culture

4.1. Evaluation Framework

- The evaluation of the Season programme within this report is organised around the six dimensions of the OECD DAC evaluation framework¹:
 - **Relevance:** Did the programme do the right things?
 - **Coherence:** How well did the programme fit together?
 - **Efficiency:** What were the levers and barriers to success?
 - **Effectiveness:** How well did the programme achieve its output targets?
 - **Impact:** What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?
 - **Sustainability:** Will the benefits and impact of the programme last?
- Reporting under the Impact dimension references the short-term outcomes set out within the Season's Theory of Change.

4.2. Season's Theory of Change

- The logical structure of the Season was set out in a Theory of Change (ToC) which was developed in close consultation with the British Council Ukraine team (Figure 1).
- A Theory of Change is a high-level overview of a programme which:
 - Details how Season activities are designed to respond to specific needs,
 - Identifies how Season activities are designed to deliver target outcomes (desired changes) through a logical chain of interventions and expected effects which contribute to delivering overall programme goals.



© Image credit British Council Ukraine

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>



Figure 1. UK/Ukraine Season of Culture – Theory of Change

Arts ToC - Needs	UK/UA Season - Needs	Who benefits?	Programme Activities	Short-Term Outcomes	Medium-Term Outcomes	Goals	Ambition
The need for artistic and cultural exchange between the UK and countries internationally to be supported and expanded	<p>Insufficient number of connections and sustainable partnerships for cultural exchange between the UK and Ukraine arts and culture organisations and artists</p> <p>Lack of mutual understanding among UK/Ukraine Arts and culture organisations and artists of the peer cultural ecosystem and how it works</p> <p>Non-sustainable (short-term) working models of international collaboration among UK and Ukraine arts and culture organisations and artists</p> <p>Need for Ukraine arts and culture organisations and artists to have increased access to new audiences in international markets</p>	<p>UK/Ukraine artists and creative professionals</p> <p>UK/Ukrainian arts and culture organisations</p>	<p>Artistic residencies</p> <p>Restricted Grant Programme</p> <p>Professional visits and exchanges</p> <p>Public talks/ Conferences/ Networking events</p> <p>Festivals</p> <p>Concerts/ Performances</p>	<p>UK and Ukraine artists and creative professionals/ organisations gain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunities for purposeful international engagement, exchange • More opportunities for practice development • Increased knowledge and understanding of each other's practice, ways of working and ecosystems <p>Increased engagement with UK arts and culture by UK and international audiences</p> <p>Increased intercultural fluency, understanding and respect for difference</p> <p>Increased engagement with UK arts and culture across the nations and regions of the UK</p> <p>Increased support to the new Ukraine diaspora audience in the UK to keep in touch with their culture and language</p>	<p>Wider and deeper international networks involving UK and Ukraine arts and creative organisations, artists and creative professionals</p> <p>More sustainable partnerships and models of collaboration between UK and Ukraine artists and creative professionals (and the organisations which support them)</p> <p>An increased number of bilateral projects and exchanges supporting the development of more innovative and creative artistic and cultural output</p>	<p>Celebrate and support Ukrainian identity through enhanced opportunities to showcase, share and increase appreciation internationally of Ukrainian arts, culture and heritage</p>	To showcase and celebrate Ukrainian culture and identity, to increase international awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by the Ukrainian people and to support the resilience and contribution of arts and culture in Ukraine in helping to shape a more positive future
The need for inclusive artistic and cultural expression to be supported, valued and shared internationally	<p>Lack of international opportunities and platforms that provide creative professionals with space for dialogue about shared global issues, especially the war in Ukraine and the consequences for the Ukrainian people</p>	<p>Ukraine artists and creative professionals</p> <p>Ukraine arts and creative organisations</p> <p>UK arts and culture audiences</p> <p>Ukraine diaspora audiences in the UK</p>		<p>Increased access to international platforms / safe places for dialogue about shared global issues, especially the war in Ukraine and the consequences for the Ukrainian people</p> <p>Help shape a more positive future through supporting the resilience of Ukrainian arts and culture</p>	<p>Facilitate the development of, and international engagement with, artistic and creative practice which better reflects the challenges faced by the Ukrainian people and their global relevance and significance</p>	<p>Increase awareness and understanding internationally about shared global challenges, especially the war in Ukraine and its consequences for the Ukrainian people in order to support resilience and help shape a more positive future</p>	
The need for the UK and countries internationally to benefit from the opportunities for inclusive growth offered by the Arts, Culture and Creative sectors	<p>The need for Ukraine arts and creative organisations and creative professionals to be better equipped with commercial/ entrepreneurial skills.</p>	<p>Ukraine artists and creative professionals</p> <p>Ukraine arts and creative organisations</p> <p>UK arts and creative organisations</p>		<p>Ukraine arts and creative organisations have increased access to training, development resources and expertise (especially around commercial and entrepreneurial skills) in international creative enterprise</p>	<p>Ukraine arts and creative organisations have a better understanding of creative enterprise internationally and are better equipped with commercial/ entrepreneurial skills to support resilience and sustainability</p> <p>Ukraine arts and creative organisations and creative professionals share their enhanced knowledge and skills through cascaded learning within the Ukraine arts and culture sector</p>	<p>Support the resilience and sustainability of the arts and culture sector in Ukraine</p>	<p>Due to changed circumstances, this focus of the Season was deprioritised</p>

4.3. Overview of the Evaluation Methodology

- The evaluation is based on research using a mixed mode data collection methodology, involving the collation of secondary programme data along with primary data via online surveys and in-depth interviews.
- Secondary data was collected and provided by the British Council and partner organisations. It included data relating to:
 - Number, content and target audience of activities,
 - Social media reach and engagement.
- The evaluation research collected primary data from:
 - UK artists and arts professionals,
 - Ukrainian artists and arts professionals,
 - Partner organisations,
 - Other internal and external stakeholders.
- The timeline of the evaluation was affected by the reorientation of the Season which led to an extension by 6 months.

4.4. Data Collection

- Table 1 summarises data collection from the specific audiences:

Table 1. Data collection

Data collection tool/ Respondents	Online survey	In-depth interview	Narrative report
Professional audience	70	5	n/a
Partner organisations	21	8	14
Internal stakeholders	n/a	2	n/a
External stakeholders	n/a	7	n/a
TOTAL:	91	25	14

- All tools were developed and used primarily in English except where deemed necessary when they were translated into Ukrainian (professional audience survey and discussion guide).
- The narrative reports, completed primarily by the leading partners of the grant funded projects, were shared with the British Council Ukraine team to evidence how the grant was used.
- Most in-depth interviews were conducted in English. However, in a small number of cases Ukrainian was preferred by the interviewee and this request was accommodated by the research team. A full list of interviewees, both at the inception and at the implementation stage, is provided in Appendix 3&4.
- All primary data was collected between October 2021 – June 2023.
- This primary data was complemented by secondary data around reach provided by the British Council and in-person/virtual observations of activities (Appendix 5).

4.5. Limitations of the Evaluation Approach

- There were a number of challenges and limitations to this evaluation which had an impact on the quality and breadth of the evidence collected:
 - The initial evaluation plan (including the ToC) had to be revised and adapted to the new situation and focus of the Season. Some of the initial scoping interviews with external stakeholders lost some of their direct relevance for the same reason.
 - Understandably, the British Council Ukraine team had to work under enormous pressure and within extremely difficult circumstances. This inevitably restricted at times the level of communication with the evaluators.
 - The evolving nature of the Season meant that in some cases the evaluation team was not aware of all activities being undertaken at the time and on occasions this limited the feedback (especially the immediate feedback) that could be collected around that activity.
 - Arts partner organisations which were not in receipt of a restricted grant were sometimes unwilling or unable, because of time and resource pressures, to contribute to the evaluation.



5. Relevance

OECD DAC criterion: RELEVANCE – *Did the programme do the right things?*



Key findings

- The Season launched successfully in May 2022 despite the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It provided access to the world stage for Ukrainian culture and support for the Ukrainian creative sector.
 - The Season highlighted the resilience and commitment of Ukrainian arts and cultural professionals and the distinctiveness of Ukrainian culture in the urgent context of the challenges of living and working in wartime.
 - The Season shone a spotlight on Ukraine at prestigious international festivals and events, increased access to arts and culture for displaced Ukrainian audiences, and fostered closer collaboration between the arts sectors of the UK and Ukraine.
 - Feedback from arts professionals involved in the Season indicated that the activities were engaging (100%), professionally relevant (99%), well organised (96%) and of high quality (95%), benefiting the Ukrainian creative sector.
- The Season's original relevance was in the context of a celebration of the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and the UK and ongoing support for Ukraine's aspiration of greater European integration.
 - Following Russia's invasion, the Season's relevance naturally aligned to the wider international response to the challenge facing Ukraine's culture and cultural sector as part of the existential challenge to Ukraine itself.
 - Speaking at the opening event at Sheffield DocFest in June, 2022, Clare Stewart, Interim CEO, captured well the Season's relevance in response to the urgent need to showcase the distinctiveness and uniqueness of Ukrainian culture to the world and to support the resilience of the Ukrainian creative sector:

The fact that this collaboration has expanded, and is now represented across all of our programme, is a testimony not only to the great documentaries Ukraine is producing, but also to the resilience and the commitment of our Ukraine colleagues, who despite the unimaginable challenge of living in a state of war, continue to fight for the future of Ukrainian culture.

Clare Stewart, Interim CEO of Sheffield DocFest

- The thematic direction of the Season, Future Reimagined aligned well with the forward-looking and resilient attitude of Ukrainians during the war.
- Spotlighting Ukraine at world-renowned festivals and events (e.g. the Cheltenham Literature Festival, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Belfast International Film Festival), ensured focused attention on Ukraine-related programming and raised Ukraine's profile as an independent country with a distinctive arts and cultural offering.

- Displaced Ukrainians were offered discounted tickets to increase access to their culture through the Season activities.
- The Season also brought the arts and culture sectors in the two countries closer together by working with a mixture of institutions which had previous bilateral experience and others which did not.
 - Eight out of 17 UK partner organisations had never collaborated with organisations or creative professionals from Ukraine prior to being involved in the UK/Ukraine Season.
- It also reached out to a wider pool of arts professionals. Just under half of professional participants reported through the feedback survey that they had not previously worked with either the British Council or the Ukrainian Institute (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Previous experience of arts professionals with the British Council and the Ukrainian Institute

		Have you previously participated in an event organised by the Ukrainian Institute?	
		Yes	No
Have you previously participated in an event organised by the British Council?	Yes	26%	17%
	No	11%	46%
Total: 100%			

Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants

- Further feedback from arts professionals participating in the Season (Chart 1) suggests that activities were relevant by being engaging (100%), professionally relevant (99%), well organised (96%) and of high quality (95%).

As a Ukrainian production company we had a fantastic experience collaborating with Nowness. We made a fantastic project and we had a chance to reach [a] huge amount of international viewers (audience). It was fun, it was interesting, it was beneficial for us and for the Ukrainian creative sector also (we engaged many creative sector professionals for making the project happen).

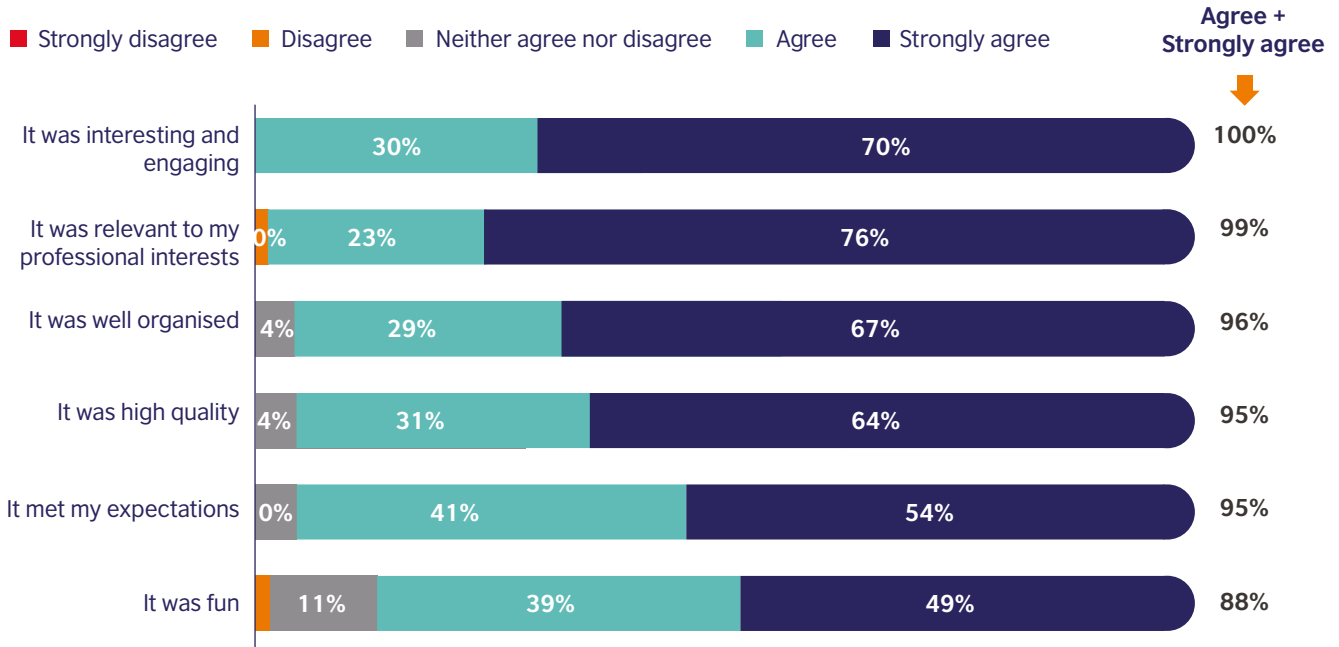
Professional, Ukraine



© Image credit: British Council Ukraine

Chart 1. Advocacy and professional relevance of Season activity

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the event?



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants



© Image credit: British Council Ukraine

6. Coherence

OECD DAC criterion: COHERENCE – *How well did the programme fit (together)?*

Key findings



- The Season's extraordinary achievement was in bringing together a very diverse and innovative portfolio of arts and cultural organisations from both countries in the most difficult of circumstances. The portfolio included emerging organisations alongside well-established arts and cultural players and spanned a range of art forms from literature to dance, to film, to theatre and beyond.
- The Season also championed geographic and socio-economic diversity and addressed some issues of marginalisation and inclusion.
- A dedicated website (<https://ukuaseason.org/>) was developed to keep audiences informed about upcoming events and will function as a living archive in the future.

- Despite the ever-changing circumstances and the sometimes necessarily opportunistic and reactive nature of the programming, the Season brought together a very diverse portfolio of arts and cultural organisations from both countries in one coherent programme.
- More established institutions such as museums, festivals, theatres and dance companies shared the Season stage with newer and smaller independents focusing on niche/emerging areas such as environmental sound, animation or hybrid working across dance/drama/song. Some of the partnerships were bilateral collaborations between two parties e.g. film critics or festival organisers, while others were multilateral partnerships.
- The Season also achieved diversity in art forms, spanning:
 - literature (e.g. 'Ukraine Lab' – a collaboration between the Ukraine Institute and PEN Ukraine),
 - dance (e.g. 'Let the Body Speak' – a collaboration between Ukrainian Contemporary Dance Platform and The Place),
 - radio documentaries (e.g. 'Skills for Radio Docs' – a collaboration between JSC "Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine" and BBC Media Action),
 - film (e.g. 'Ukrainian Film Months' touring Ukrainian films across major UK film festivals),
 - theatre (e.g. 'Bunker Cabaret' – a collaboration between Hooligan Art Community, Mahogany Opera and imPOSSIBLE Producing) and beyond.
- The Season helped to reach arts and culture sector representatives beyond the capital cities, e.g. the 'Regrounding' was delivered by ICF IZOLYATSIA: Platform for Cultural Initiatives (Donetsk, Ukraine) and D6: Culture in Transit (Newcastle, UK).
- Some of the projects of the Season addressed specific issues of marginalisation and inclusion e.g. the persecution of the Crimean Tartars was explored in 'Crimea 5am', Ukraine was represented through the Season at the Outburst Queer Arts Festival in Belfast and the Ukrainian Films Month in UK explored issues impacting disadvantaged communities.
- The Season had a dedicated website where audiences could check timings, themes, locations of (and access to) particular activities: <https://ukuaseason.org/>. This website now serves as a living archive and a reference point for Season activities.

7. Efficiency

OECD DAC criterion: EFFICIENCY – *What were the levers and barriers to success?*



Key findings

- The extraordinary context of the war necessitated significant adaptation and flexibility from all parties involved in the Season.
- Shifting from face-to-face to virtual exchanges helped to overcome obstacles caused by the geographical displacement of arts professionals.
- Despite the considerable challenges, the British Council is widely seen to have shown flexibility and empathy and to have provided practical support when needed.
- The British Council demonstrated the robustness and reliability of its systems in times of rapid change and uncertainty.

- It is very difficult to make any objective judgment of the efficiency of the Season considering the extraordinary context in which it occurred. The outbreak of war followed close on the heels of the huge disruption caused to the cultural sector in both countries by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Adaptation and flexibility from all parties involved in the Season was necessary to make the programme a success.
- The level of adaptation that was necessary from the partner organisations to deliver the projects (e.g. moving from face-to-face to virtual engagement, following a fluid timeline, dealing with geographically displaced artists) was enormous. Moving many of the activities online did contribute significantly to making the process more efficient in the circumstances which prevailed e.g. overcoming the obstacle of engaging with geographically displaced arts professionals.

We were working remotely online, using live streaming sounds to connect locations in and outside Ukraine. This was a specific change from the proposal, which envisaged face to face exchanges that proved impossible.

Partner, Ukraine

From our perspective, everything went extremely well (and in very challenging circumstances).

Partner, Ukraine

I think we were very proud of what we delivered as part of the Season, there is nothing obvious we would have changed, except to change the circumstances around the war

Partner, Ukraine

- The British Council's speed and responsiveness in reorientating the Season was hugely appreciated by cultural bodies, organisations and professionals involved and the majority of participants felt that the revised projects were appropriate, realistic in scope and well supported and funded. There was a great deal of flexibility in working around considerable challenges. Individuals at the British Council showed empathy and sensitivity and were willing to provide practical support when needed:

They worked closely with us to reorganise the activities and the event was well funded and fit for purpose. It felt very manageable and comfortable and we felt protected and safe. We were supported ongoing to develop our skills.

Professional, Ukraine

- In the face of considerable uncertainty and rapid change, the British Council's management processes, administrative systems and most especially its people ultimately proved robust enough and agile enough to be able to support the Season.



8. Effectiveness

OECD DAC criterion: EFFECTIVENESS – How well did the programme achieve its output targets?



Key findings

- The Season's programming included 42 collaborative projects, delivered by 75 organisations (27 Ukrainian and 48 UK organisations).
- The Season meaningfully engaged at least 670,000K people through virtual and in-person activities.
- Of these, at least 23,409 were general audiences engaged face-to-face. Additionally, at least 2,445 arts professionals were directly or indirectly involved in and benefited from the 24 Season projects targeting professional engagement (rather than general audience engagement).
- The Season reached at least 1.58m people through the British Council's and the Ukrainian Institute's online media channels and the Season's website.
- The projects with the largest digital reach included the opening event at Sheffield Doc/Fest (198K), the mental health focused I'M FINE (154K) and the Ukrainian Film Month in the UK (139K) touring to the Belfast Film Festival, Leeds International Film Festival, Cornwall Film Festival and Museum of Technology, Cambridge.

- The Season's programming included 42 activities/projects, delivered by 75 organisations (27 Ukrainian and 48 UK organisations).
- Table 2 summarises the profile of projects within the Season by activity type:

Table 2.UK/Ukraine Season project profile by activity type

Target audience	Activity type	Number of projects incorporating this type of activity
Wider audience / general public	(1) Festivals, exhibitions, other showcasing events	20
	(2) Residencies for professionals from Ukraine	5
	(3) Training, mentoring programmes and workshops for arts and creative professionals	9
Professional audience	(4) Panel discussions	16
	(5) Publications	7
	Total – professional audiences	28

NB. Projects could have multiple activities in their programming.

- The primary aim of the Season to strengthen exchange between the arts and culture sectors of Ukraine and the UK led naturally to the prioritisation of professional engagement rather than wider audience reach.
- The Season engaged at least 670,000 people across its virtual and in-person activities.
- Of these, at least 23,409 people were engaged face-to-face, with showcasing events representing the main source for these audiences. Major showcases included the Discover Ukraine: Bits Destroyed at Greenwich+Docklands International Festival and the Ukrainian Film Month in the UK which toured 5 short films in multiple locations.
- Projects targeted at professional audiences engaged at least 2,445 arts and cultural professionals of whom around 800 were direct participants and/or direct beneficiaries of the Season's projects. The remainder benefitted indirectly by observing/attending these events and activities.
- In addition, the online media channels of the British Council and the Ukrainian Institute along with the Season's website reached at least 1.58m people digitally.
- The projects with the largest reach included the opening event at Sheffield Doc/Fest (198K), the mental health focused I'M FINE (154K) and the Ukrainian Film Month in the UK (139K) touring through Belfast Film Festival, Leeds International Film Festival, Cornwall Film Festival and Museum of Technology, Cambridge.
- The Season's dedicated website attracted 6,800 visitors globally in the period of October 2022 – June 2023, with people accessing it most commonly from the UK and Ukraine.
- Further information on the digital reach of the Season through the British Council and the Ukrainian Institute media channels and the Season's website is provided in Appendix 6.



9. Structure of Impact

- The Impact of the Season is reported against the **9 short-term outcomes** associated with the two **goals** of the Season, as presented in the Theory of Change (Figure 1):
- **GOAL 1 - Stronger and expanded artistic and cultural exchange:** Celebrate and support Ukrainian identity through enhanced opportunities to showcase, share and increase appreciation internationally of Ukrainian arts, culture and heritage;
 1. More opportunities for purposeful international engagement, exchange,
 2. More opportunities for practice development,
 3. Increased knowledge and understanding of each other’s practice, ways of working and ecosystems,
 4. Increased engagement with Ukraine arts and culture,
 5. Increased intercultural fluency, understanding and respect for difference,
 6. Increased engagement with Ukraine arts and culture across the nations and regions of the UK,
 7. Increased support to the new Ukraine diaspora.
- **GOAL 2 - Support for artistic and cultural expression:** Increase awareness and understanding internationally about shared global challenges, especially the war in Ukraine and its consequences for the Ukrainian people in order to support resilience and help shape a more positive future.
 8. Access to international platforms/safe places for dialogue,
 9. Shape a more positive future through supporting the resilience of Ukrainian arts and culture.



10. Impact: More Opportunities for Purposeful International Engagement, Exchange

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 1: More opportunities for purposeful international engagement, exchange – Key findings

Sustainable partnerships and enhanced collaborations:

- Partnerships during the Season surpassed previous levels of cooperation in scale and scope.
- Many partnerships exceeded expectations, creating a solid foundation for future collaborations.

Creative resilience and adaptive practices:

- Partners worked together in challenging conditions, channelling creativity to process trauma.
- Necessity drove practice adaptation, leveraging digital progress from the COVID-19 pandemic for greater impact through creative approaches. Virtual training and mentorship programs were crucial for skills-building and capacity development.

Interconnectedness and access to opportunities:

- The Season has facilitated access to many opportunities to network and make new in-country and international contacts. Data suggests that approximately 10 professional contacts and 3 organisational contacts were established per participating arts professional and approximately 14 professional contacts and 4 organisational contacts per participating arts organisation.
- For Ukrainian arts professionals the Season improved their access to networks and platforms with international opportunities as well as, for some, to commercial opportunities offering greater stability in times of disruption.

Sustainable partnerships and enhanced collaborations

- The Season focused on fostering new connections and enhancing existing partnerships, aligned to its goal of expanding cultural exchange.
- While some of the organisations had collaborated previously, the scale and scope of cooperation within partnerships during the Season was far greater than anything that had taken place before. There were unprecedented opportunities for purposeful international engagement, exchange, collaboration and practice development between UK and Ukrainian arts and creative organisations, artists and creative professionals.

The main goal of such collaboration was to develop dialogue between Ukrainian, British critics and film makers, share insights and industry knowledge, popularise cinema of both countries among the audiences with a help of mass media that these critics represent. Main of our missions is to support cultural diversity and develop intercultural dialog. This mission was achieved with collaboration of Ukrainian and British film critics, through conducting research on contemporary cinema in both countries, provide expert evaluation of new films, and holding open interviews with directors and discussions with the public during the festival itself, publications in mass media of the achieved results

Partner, Ukraine

- The success of collaborations often exceeded expectations. Several sustainable partnerships have been able to develop and most of the partners who provided feedback through the interviews intend to continue collaborating beyond the Season:

This has been so much bigger and better than we had expected, especially after the war had started. We have established strong foundations with our partners, built our practice and got our work seen at places that matter. We will continue to work together and find ways to promote Ukraine to the world.

Partner, Ukraine

We have enjoyed working together and found that through collaboration we have come up with new projects which can extend our work in the Season. Our partners have been fantastic in opening up new opportunities for us.

Partner, Ukraine



Creative resilience and adaptive practice

- Some partnerships collaborated in extremely challenging situations across different countries and platforms. Professionals in Ukraine faced disruptions including on occasions having to work out of bomb shelters, which of course impacted them personally and professionally. They recognised creativity as a way to cope with the situation.

This project was conceived in the bomb shelter [...] I, as an artist, after many years and even in the circumstances of the traumas associated with the war in Ukraine, was able to reconnect to curiosity. [...] I am very grateful for what happened because it allowed me to find the seemingly lost path of pure creativity.

Partner, Ukraine

- Adapting practices was clearly born out of necessity but through more creative approaches greater impact was sometimes achieved in terms of reach and increased knowledge and understanding. For example, The Lviv Book Forum in collaboration with the Hay Festival was a hybrid programme – taking place partly in-person in Lviv and partly through virtual live streaming. It brought together renowned Ukrainian writers with internationally acclaimed literary figures in conversations ranging from art in times of conflict, memory, gender-equality, loss, corruption, imperialism and hope. Some international writers and journalists attended in person in Lviv and then wrote about their experiences afterwards. These exchanges gave international participants a much deeper understanding of the situation in Ukraine and an increased determination to work in solidarity with Ukrainians.

We were live in Lviv in a bomb shelter but we were also broadcasting events all over the world. As a result, a lot of writers have written pieces about Ukraine. And writers whose culture is threatened existentially by this war were connected with their audiences around the world. We reached around 3 million people in 103 countries. Our strategy was to take that conversation far beyond Ukraine. We gathered together to think what can we do to change the situation? And what can we do to protect people from the future invasions and from the future wars? We created impact all around the world.

Video, Hay Festival

- During the COVID-19 pandemic many organisations had already had to adapt their practice to work digitally. One UK partner felt this background helped them to adjust to the online working which was necessitated by the Russian invasion. Some reflected that although they have had no choice but to collaborate digitally, it has enabled them to work more creatively with others. It is also a more sustainable model of working for the environment.

We had already developed the tools which were a kind of substitute for in person engagement [...] the structure we'd developed worked really well for these workshops and it was a really good test to see how these things work when they are the only way of working rather than as an alternative and it held up really well; it has pointed to ways of working together in the future; indeed we felt that it was as good as if not better than if we would have done things in person in Odesa.

Partner, UK

It was extremely admirable for all concerned that this project went ahead during war and upheaval. Colleagues were spread across the world, with lives upturned but we still managed to pull it off.

Partner, UK

- Co-curation often involved partners taking different roles with complementary but different skills. For the 'I'M FINE' animation online festival, the Ukrainian partner devised the programming and selected international animation directors to be interviewed to discuss the theme of mental health, while the UK partner conducted interviews, managed the screening, online articles, videos, films and podcasts:

We built on an already strong relationship in our collaboration. We were able to draw on our different skillsets [...] It worked really well and will continue to find ways to work together and support Ukraine.

Partner, UK

- The same project is a strong example of how a project can influence a whole practice internationally through innovative ways of working and content. The theme of mental health awareness resonated widely across the animation sector and the project partners are now being approached for guidance on best practice to explore this area further:

The outputs and discussions on mental health, as well as materials and resources have been put on [online platform] which will always be there. I've also had a lot of festival people and animators from elsewhere getting in touch to say they want to do something themselves in this area – it really resonates with a lot of people in the industry – we've had really good feedback from people who have had secondary interactions and want our advice on how to do something similar themselves.

Partner, UK

- Partners used creative approaches in their performance. Dash Arts produced 'Crimea 5am', a verbatim documentary play about 10 Crimean Tatar political prisoners and their families, featuring Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian cast members, activists, and journalists. They aimed for an authentic interpretation of the author's work. Additionally, a podcast is being created to provide background and context, deepening engagement with the subject, especially since the performance was a one-off:

It was a challenging but extremely rewarding experience to faithfully present the work as the authors had intended. We included a trained and non-trained cast and everyone rehearsed on Zoom until the very last minute. It was a very intense experience and the cast put so much into it and really gave it their best.

Partner, UK

- Adapting the focus of collaborations for Ukrainian artists to reflect the experience of working in the context of war gave UK partners scope to experiment and explore different and wider applications of their approaches. This has resulted in greater creativity and innovation and encouraged the partners to look at ways to expand the scope of their practice:

We felt that the project was extremely rewarding in terms of overcoming the initial challenges and in facilitating the participating artists to create new works that explored the brief in ways that were both poignant and striking to listen to. We had to really think about how to make use of our different approaches to support the artists so that we could all make the most of our synergy.

Partner, UK

- Some projects tried to capitalise on similarities between the two nations. For example, the 'Regrounding' visual arts project in Newcastle was due to take place in a mining area in Ukraine but was re-purposed as a residency in Newcastle. It became a positive experience, facilitating networking and learning from many different stakeholders engaging with regeneration in Newcastle. The findings were presented at a conference in London which facilitated new contacts and relationships:

We learned so much about the post-industrial context of the mining communities around Newcastle and how they have been regenerated – this has been a unique experience to enable us to think about how to rebuild the mining region in Ukraine which has now been completely destroyed and to learn how other people have done this. We have seen how ecology and gardening have been integral to this and talked to so many people from the old miners to those involved in the transformation. We have been so inspired.

Partner, Ukraine

Increased interconnectedness and access to opportunities:

- The interconnectedness of the arts and cultural sectors between and within Ukraine and the UK was developed at both an organisational and individual level.

Table 3. Increased Interconnectedness of arts and cultural professionals

	(Base: 9) UK professionals would keep in touch...	(Base: 56) UA professionals would keep in touch...
...with UA professionals	51	358
...with UK professionals	44	209
...with professionals - Subtotal	662	
...with UA organisations	11	95
...with UK organisations	10	91
...with organisations - Subtotal	207	

Source: Professional Audience Survey [Q: Roughly how many ... that you met through the event would you like to keep in touch with?]

- Feedback from 65 arts professionals (9 UK and 56 Ukrainian) suggests they developed approximately 10 professional contacts and 3 organisational contacts per arts participant (Table 3). There is some overlap between the professional and organisational contacts made, therefore they are not completely additive.

Table 4. Interconnectedness of arts and cultural organisations

	(Base: 17) UK organisation would keep in touch...	(Base: 4) UA organisation would keep in touch...
...with UA professionals	102	95
...with UK professionals	68	25
...with professionals - Subtotal	290	
...with UA organisations	52	4
...with UK organisations	18	8
...with organisations - Subtotal	82	

Source: Season Partner Survey [Q: Roughly how many ... that you met through the event would your organisation like to keep in touch with?]

- Based on more limited feedback at an organisational level, partners also report on developing connections with other organisations and professionals.
- Feedback from 21 arts organisations (17 UK and 4 Ukrainian) suggests they developed approximately 14 professional contacts and 4 organisational contacts per arts organisation (Table 4). There is some overlap between the professional and organisational contacts made, therefore they are not completely additive.
- The Season also facilitated access to many opportunities to network, make new contacts and access potential commercial opportunities (Chart 2).

Cheltenham Literature Festival provides a unique and well-known platform for showcasing talent, gaining authors exposure to new audiences and growing readership, as well as an opportunity to network with industry professionals.

Partner, UK

A Ukrainian picture book is being published in the UK based on my recommendation which I feel is a huge affirmation of my knowledge and connections in the Ukrainian book world. Hopefully a German translator is considering translating another book by Kateryna Babkina. I feel I am likely to be more successful pitching that book on the back of other connections and contacts made through the season; it just builds and builds [...] it has created something tangible, not just connections.

Partner, Ukraine (diaspora)

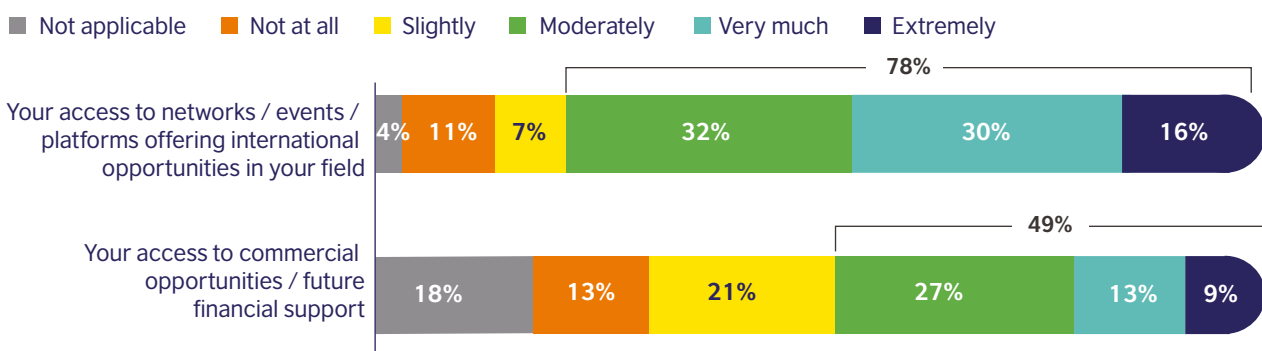
- Some events expanded Ukrainian partnerships onto larger international platforms, fostering cultural exchange and promotion. For some Ukrainian participants, the Season provided their first exposure to global networks and platforms, recognized as a crucial step for their growth.

Our idea was to do something sustainable for the future and we took Ukrainian talent across the Hay Festivals. As well as the UK we are going to Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Wales, Hong Kong, Ghana and India ... having real Ukrainians telling people what is going on is fantastic.

Partner, Ukraine

Chart 2. Access to networking and funding opportunities for professional participants was key

To what extent, if at all, have the following improved as a result of your participation in the event?



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 56 Ukrainian Arts professional participants

- Involvement in the Season has led to access to commercial opportunities for some, offering greater stability in times of disruption.

We have been able to go to festivals and speak to the commercial people there; we want our work to be seen by more people and it is very important that we get in front of the people who can distribute films to the world. There is greater awareness now and we need to make sure that we can make the most of these opportunities.

Partner, Ukraine

- Some sectors have been previously isolated from international markets, largely due to underfunding and so involvement in the Season has had a profound impact on these sectors and their potential to grow:

Lots of films and great work are being made but there is not the funding to do anything with this; of course some artists have been able to break through and punch above their weight but for others, there has been a lack of education, support and knowledge about what's going on in rest of world ... animation is a young industry in terms of commercial and independent film making and has had to be very self-sufficient.

Partner, UK

- Building domestic networks has also been an important aspect of the Season for organisations and individuals. These connections supported artistic development and provided emotional and practical assistance during the stress of wartime:

It was interesting to see how they came up with ideas and it was striking how they executed them in response to each other's work – they clearly got a lot out of listening to other places they couldn't travel to but through the streaming they could feel like they were there; listening to changed landscapes made them feel nostalgia for this.

Partner, UK

- The Season's extensive support transformed Ukrainian participants' networking opportunities and platform access, demonstrating the potential of bilateral programs for substantial growth.

Bilateral programmes are very important and without this there would not have been an opportunity to share Ukrainian animation – we might have worked together in other ways but it would never have happened on this scale. It was a big project and they were able to tour their work – it gave Ukrainian animation a great platform.

Partner, UK

11. Impact: More Opportunities for Practice Development

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 2: More opportunities for practice development - Key findings

- The Season provided a number of capacity building opportunities through training workshops and mentorship schemes, delivered mainly online.
- Season participants were able to enhance their project management and entrepreneurial skills, benefiting the sustainability of the Ukraine cultural sector.
- Collaborations enabled professionals from both countries to strengthen their skills and practice.
- Ukrainian artists and organisations disseminated new practice effectively through cascading learning.

- During the Season, events offered opportunities to test innovative learning approaches. During Ukraine Day at the Cheltenham Festival a creative writing event allowed audiences to collaborate on translating a Ukrainian picture book. This novel approach to language learning, outside of traditional school settings, proved successful and will be expanded to celebrate and encourage language learning in other public and educational settings:

Our workshop approach is designed to encourage pupils to explore other languages and to value their own language skills. It seemed like a good opportunity to bring that experience to a wider stage and test it to develop the practice. We found that it worked really well in this forum with groups of all ages.

Partner, Ukraine (diaspora)

- Training workshops and mentorship schemes, delivered mainly virtually, were key to building capacity and developing practice during the Season. A mentorship and training programme aimed to enhance the professional potential and skills of presenters, editors and journalists from Ukrainian radio channels. This involved an online training programme run by a BBC expert for Ukrainian professionals who were able to use their newly acquired skills in documentaries for the Season project which were also broadcast across Ukraine:

I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to participate in the radio documentary training. It was a very useful workshop: I was able to gain valuable knowledge and skills in working with documentary characters, stories, scriptwriting, and technical work with sound and recording. [...] It was an incredible experience for me, because thanks to the training, I was able to create the first radio documentary in my life, which was broadcast on national radio.

Professional, Ukraine

- The Season provided scope for greater innovation of practice through gaining exposure to new areas of expertise. One participant, soon after her radio documentary training, was promoted to head of documentaries and drama at a Ukrainian radio station. She plans to use this platform to celebrate Ukrainian culture and has already created a series on Lesia Ukrainka. The hope is to respond to domestic interest and stimulate more international demand, especially after the increased awareness through the Season's translation and performances of this important Ukrainian cultural icon. Radio has become vital during the war for accessing information and enhancing the reach of cultural outputs:

I made my first radio broadcast about this author [Lesia Ukrainka] who is a very important figure but has been invisible for a long time despite having produced this amazing, very modern interpretation of the motivation for war. The UK Ukraine season has given it a new lease of life and it feels like a metaphor for me that invisible things about Ukraine are starting to be visible. [...] Our culture is still treated as part of Russian culture and this project helps to promote Ukrainian culture in its own right.

Partner, Ukraine

- Online mentorship was a typical approach used to replace in-person training to enable professionals to develop their artistic practice. Mentees for the 'Let the Body Speak' dance project were based in various locations in Ukraine as well as in countries across Europe and a focused training was successfully developed despite the many challenges. Through the support from international cultural organisations not directly involved in the Season, mentees expanded their project's reach, e.g., 'Let the Body Speak' had live performances in Germany, Poland, Denmark, and the USA, building valuable future connections.
- Workshops were another important area of skills training and were particularly valuable for Ukrainian translators. They shifted their practice to translate leading Ukrainian writers into Western languages. At the 2022 International Literary Translation Summer workshop, Ukrainian translators collaborated on translating Artem Chekh's work, receiving skills training and entrepreneurial support. They were motivated to promote Ukrainian culture and develop new workstreams:

It was so valuable to be able to develop my expertise and to work alongside other translators from different cultures to see the different styles and approaches. It helped me to develop my skills of translation. Mentors at the workshop and my colleagues already translating into English were very supportive and encouraged us to switch the source and target language [from Ukrainian to English]; I have only worked in literature before but now I am more confident trying to cover film and other disciplines.

Professional, Ukraine

- More generally, collaborations allowed UK and Ukrainian professionals to strengthen their skills and practices. Musicians and performers from the two countries worked together online for the hcmf// 22 festival, despite challenges faced by Ukrainian professionals because of the war:

The level of preparation and implementation was outstanding. The whole team cooperated and were committed to the collaboration. We all learned so much.

Professional, Ukraine

- Cascading learning had been a useful way to disseminate practice for Ukrainian artists and organisations. One translator who attended the International Summer workshop organised by the British Centre for Literary Translation (BCLT) at the University of East Anglia is keen to share her learnings and knowledge with peers in the hope that this will multiply opportunities to share Ukrainian culture:

I kept a record of the approaches and insights from the course in a notebook which I still refer to and reflect on. I think it's important to share and help others to develop their practice and I am now teaching translation and sharing the learnings with my students. I also shared what I had learned with other professionals in a conference forum where we talked about different aspects of translation and I really tried to share practical elements of what we had learned. We had [online] participants from a wide range of countries and we held a Q&A session with them ... It is important as we seek to share our culture as widely as we can.

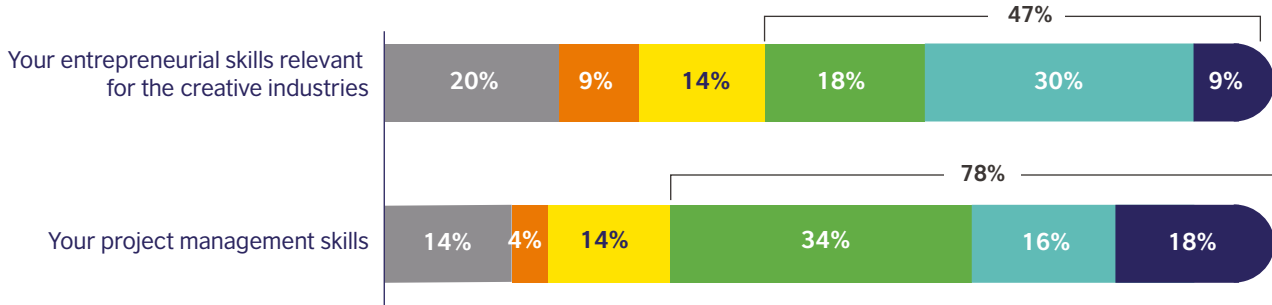
Professional, Ukraine

- Participation in the Season enabled participants to improve their entrepreneurial and project management skills; with two-thirds of Ukrainian professionals believing that they had at least 'moderately' improved their project management skills and just over half of them their entrepreneurial skills (Chart 3):

Chart 3. Relevant capacity building was a key outcome for Ukrainian professional participants

To what extent, if at all, have the following improved as a result of your participation in the event?

■ Not applicable ■ Not at all ■ Slightly ■ Moderately ■ Very much ■ Extremely



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 56 Ukrainian Arts professional participants

- The Season empowered participants to become more entrepreneurial, fostering confidence and skills to seek opportunities and expand their practice. Translators formed contacts with publisher, enhancing opportunities for Ukrainian authors, while film and animation organisations showcased Ukrainian work at major festivals, building relationships with distributors and buyers.



© Image credit: British Council Ukraine

12. Impact: Increased Knowledge and Understanding of Each Other's Practice, Ways of Working and Ecosystems

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 3: Increased knowledge and understanding of each other's practice, ways of working and ecosystems - Key findings

- Collaborative projects strengthened partner relationships and deepened mutual understanding of each other's way of working, benefiting both sides.
- Multilateral partnerships also helped to deepen understanding of wider ecosystems.
- Additionally, participating UK arts professionals found the experience personally enriching and professionally enlightening.

- Working together on projects allowed partners to strengthen their relationships with each other, better understand their ways of working and the ecosystems within which they work, even if they had worked together before. For example, the Ukrainian artists involved in 'Land to Return, Land to Care,' having been trained in the artform of sound streaming by UK partner Soundcamp, were not only able to advance their practice in this medium but also gained access to the wider community around art, sound and music.

We had worked before on a smaller project so knew and respected each other's work. This was something completely different and meant that we were able to work much more closely and got to know much more about how each other worked as well as the wider animation world.

Partner, Ukraine

- Multilateral partnerships also helped to deepen understanding of wider ecosystems. For example, UK partners Soundcamp and Acoustic were able to extend their collaboration with Ukrainian artists beyond broadcasting of the main sound stream project to include taking new sound recordings to an exhibition and giving a presentation about the collaboration at a festival in Aix-Marseilles. The Ukraine partner, Museum of Odessa also held an exhibition in Ukraine which included works by visual artists and talks about the collaboration.

- Some partnerships involved much closer collaboration and support than originally anticipated and have enabled organisations to forge much stronger relationships and mutual understanding:

The International delegate programme was a big success and something we are carrying forward and developing on a bigger scale, to provide more opportunities for international festivals to work together and learn from each other. We strengthened the relationship with the Ukraine Book Arsenal that we had already begun to establish and were able to offer a very meaningful and significant dedicated day of events in the Literature Festival.

Partner, UK

The experience of production and dance education from our partner is priceless for us.

Partner, Ukraine

- Partnerships helped to give greater insight and understanding of different aspects of cultural sectors in respective countries and belief that this will lead to continued co-operation:

We believe that collaboration between critics of Kyiv Critics' Week and The Critics' Circle helped both sides to discover the film industry of two countries from the inside. Talks and discussions that they had during selection broadened their perspectives and understanding of different cinematic traditions and cultures both in the Ukraine and UK. Collaboration and talks with film makers in front of the public encouraged critical dialogue about films and their place in the global cinematic landscape. This we hope will lead to more nuanced and insightful discussions about the artistic and cultural significance of films.

Partner, Ukraine

- On a personal level, UK professionals taking part in performances of Ukrainian work felt that the experience tested and better engaged them and deepened their understanding of their practice.

13. Impact: Increased Engagement with Ukrainian Arts and Culture

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 4: Increased Engagement with Ukraine Arts and Culture - Key findings

- The Season showcased Ukrainian arts and culture globally through international platforms such as the Cheltenham Literature Festival and the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival.
 - Access to these platforms with global reach enabled Ukrainian artists to take control of the current narrative of war and helped to keep Ukraine's culture in the eye of international audiences. The work of Ukrainian artists was able to counterbalance short-term news agendas and bear witness to war's impact through documenting and sharing real experiences in the moment.
 - The Season gave new significance to both established and recent work. Premiered works such as the 'Chornobyldorf' opera acquired new relevance amid the war. New translations increased engagement with Ukrainian history and celebrated Ukrainian culture, e.g. a new translation of 'Cassandra' written more than 100 years ago by one of Ukraine's foremost writers Lesia Ukrainka was performed in Oxford and Cambridge.
 - The Season provided a unique opportunity to promote both established and contemporary figures (largely unknown in the West) and through the events to engage audiences, including academics, about Ukraine's cultural relevance.
 - Access to international platforms generated positive coverage of activities in local, national and international media.
- The Season provided a unique opportunity to showcase Ukrainian arts and culture to wider UK and international audiences.
 - Access to international platforms (e.g., Cheltenham Literature Festival, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, Lviv BookForum) was key. For example, The Ukraine Day at the Cheltenham Literature Festival hosted a series of co-curated events with the International Book Arsenal Festival from Ukraine to amplify Ukrainian artists' voices. High-profile authors, artists, poets, musicians, and filmmakers showcased their work in response to the war, attracting large audiences, including from the Ukrainian diaspora. The event gained significant attention, even being mentioned in the UK Parliament:

We had a day dedicated to Ukrainian voices – a range of events across different genres, curated by the Book Arsenal staff with Ukrainian authors and participants. We also invited Ukrainian refugees and supplied over a hundred free tickets to the events. Events were preceded by an ambassadorial reception where local MPs, council leaders and the media were present, as well as staff from both organisations, refugees and supporters.

Narrative report, UK partner

- Access to networks and platforms with global reach has been an important way for Ukrainians to take control of the narrative of war and to keep Ukraine's culture in the public eye. Many artists want to use culture to counter-balance the dominance of the short-term news agenda in engaging the world with real experiences of war in Ukraine:

We feel that the war has broken everything for us, our feelings, hopes and structures of how to behave and live; the only way to live in such a reality is to make things visible, audible and say it aloud. It is really important to speak about what has happened to people and find ways to articulate these experiences. At first we were angry but then we felt we had to communicate how we felt differently. The training helped us to learn new skills to better tell a story and to do this through documentaries. Radio is a good way for people to hear these stories and to share different perspectives.

Professional, Ukraine

- Participants see themselves as playing an important role in bearing witness to the impacts of war by sharing and reflecting on in-the-moment experiences and documenting them for posterity:

Art in war has a very practical role, to be a support, a help and to be a testimony, to be a tool for empowering memory [...] The most important is the testimony that's recorded immediately, during events, not afterwards. We will not forget what's happening now, because it's unforgettable, it will remain in our individual memories and collective memories for a long time. But we will never speak about it the way we are speaking about it now [...] I understood very quickly that people also have another very important need – to tell stories. I was an anonymous listener to them, often the first person to hear their stories.

Translator Ostap Slyvynsky, Lviv BookForum 2022

- The ‘Crimea 5am’ production used documentary drama to depict Russian persecution of Crimean Tatars. A follow-up production is in development, using verbal testimonies from the current war as evidence of war atrocities.

It was a demonstration of Ukrainian culture at its best and celebrates the determination and activism within this little-known minority, telling a story of oppression and persecution through the female perspective.

Partner, UK

- UK partners also believe that they should play an important role in supporting and facilitating opportunities for Ukrainians to promote their culture, in terms of celebrating artistic output as well as engaging international audiences with the consequences and long-term implications of the war on culture:

I feel very strongly that we should hear Ukrainian voices in the UK and that we need to be more aware of Ukrainian culture which is so rich. We had a wonderful opportunity to make this happen. I knew I had to find a way to articulate their story about trauma and it’s about the long-game, the long-term impact of oppression.

Partner, UK

- Some of the work premiered in the Season was created before the war and has helped to showcase the Ukrainian reality for new audiences. For example, the premiere of opera ‘Chornobyldorf’ at hcmf// acquired a new resonance and relevance:

Chornobyldorf was created two years before the large-scale Russian war against Ukraine and it is now that the opera has become radically relevant. In 2020 a nuclear explosion had an abstract meaning to us, whereas today the fear of nuclear threat is well-founded. Each day, the fictional world of Chornobyldorf is getting more real. The content of the piece changed for both its creators and the whole world.

Roman Grygoriv, Composer and Director



The Season's translation and performance of Lesia Ukrainka's play 'Cassandra' brought attention to her significant work, especially in the context of Russian oppression and the war. It increased awareness and engagement with the war for both audiences and professionals:

Our production introduced Ukraine's great playwright Lesia Ukrainka to UK audiences, and showed the relevance of her anti-colonial, feminist work to Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression today ...director Helen Eastman and the team of actors and creatives who worked on Cassandra have now learned a great deal about Ukraine's history and culture, and have become advocates for Ukraine, committed to working on Ukrainian theatre in future, and continuing to raise awareness about Ukraine's rich culture which has been repressed for centuries.

Partner, UK

- Wrap-around activity linked to these showcase events gave an opportunity for audiences including academics to explore the writer and the relevance of her work in greater depth.

Over 200 audience members learned more about Lesia Ukrainka, Ukrainian culture, and the relevance of the play to Russia's war against Ukraine today by staying for our post-show discussions - Thousands more came across Lesia Ukrainka's work through our digital outreach ... and leading scholars learned more by engaging as speakers.

Partner, UK

- Access to international platforms also contributed to the Season activities and themes being widely covered by local, national and international media. For example, the Lviv BookForum – Hay festival partnership hybrid event:
 - Created 28.8M impressions, across English and Spanish language social media,
 - Achieved 220 media mentions, including coverage in El Pais, Deutsche Welle, El Universal, Hindustan Times, The Guardian, The Times.

14. Impact: Increased Intercultural Fluency, Understanding and Respect for Difference

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 5: Increased intercultural fluency, understanding and respect for difference - Key findings

- The war has accelerated the decolonisation of Ukrainian culture, and the Season has allowed Ukrainian arts professionals to explain its importance to international audiences.
- The Season’s artistic output focused largely on war experiences and reflections on identity as a form of resistance.
- Ukrainian participants showcased culture’s role in protecting and promoting Ukrainian identity during the war.

- Many Ukrainians now regard the current war with Russia as marking the final rejection of Russian imperialism and a “total rejection of Russian content and Russian culture” as the writer Oleksandr Mykhed told the Lviv BookForum.
- Artistic output for the Season has focused largely on experiences during the war and in particular on reflections on identity as a form of resistance.

Through offering the curation of events to the Book Arsenal, they were able to be supported to deliver relevant content with authors and speakers who were truly representative of the trauma and who could articulate their experiences and share their grief.

Partner, UK

- The war has accelerated the decolonisation of Ukrainian culture, and the Season allowed Ukrainian arts professionals to explain its importance to international audiences as an independent language and culture.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is not only about territory: it’s an attempt to stamp out a culture. In the arts, we must refuse to let this happen by amplifying Ukrainian culture in the work that we do.

Partner, UK

- The Season gained new significance as a means to respond to the changing needs and priorities of Ukraine’s cultural sector and became “a timely opportunity for Ukrainian creatives to tell their own story and assert their own identity on the international stage”.

Since the war, the Ukrainian cultural identity has taken on new meaning, both as a symbol of resistance and a source of inspiration for the future of Ukraine. Ukraine’s cultural sector will be integral to how the country rebuilds after the war by, for instance, enabling people to process trauma, share a common identity and articulated shared experiences – experiences that show the world how united and resolute Ukrainians can be.

Scott McDonald, Chief Executive of the British Council in Voices magazine, November 2022

- Some Ukrainian participants were initially conflicted about highlighting culture during a war but came to acknowledge its role in protecting and promoting Ukrainian identity. Providing entertainment and helping to give people hope are also considered important roles for culture during the war:

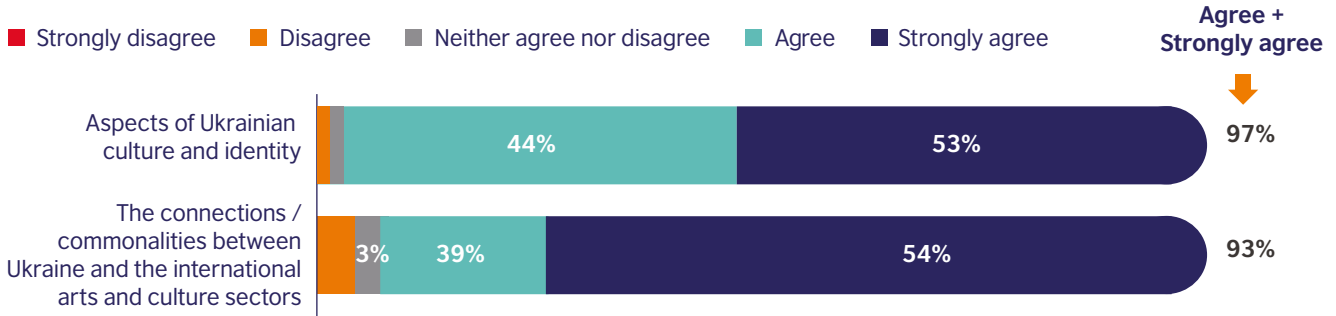
There was also a philosophical dispute among the team regarding the necessity of holding cultural events in times when people are dying and physically suffering, which in the end resolved with the decision to focus in our public discussions on war, things that were happening in Ukraine on that point and talk about how the film industry could fight Russian propaganda in media. On the other hand we came up with the conclusion that our film screenings provided a welcome respite from the violence and stress of war, and helped to promote a sense of normalcy and community.

Partner, Ukraine

- UK arts professionals also opened up more towards Ukrainian arts and culture. Their involvement in the Season improved their understanding of the of the current Ukrainian experience and of the Ukrainian cultural identity (Chart 4,5).

Chart 4. Increased intercultural understanding through the Season

To what extent do you agree or disagree that this event was an appropriate opportunity to understand/ explore:



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants

Chart 5. Increased intercultural understanding for UK arts professionals

Has participating in this event?



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 14 UK Arts professional participants

15. Impact: Increased Engagement with Ukraine Arts and Culture across the UK

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 6: Increased engagement with Ukraine arts and culture across the nations and regions of the UK - Key findings

- Season activities and events took place in 20 cities across the UK.
- The 48 UK partners of the Season were spread across the four nations (36 from England, 1 from Wales, 8 from Scotland, 3 from Northern Ireland).

- The Season brought together partners from across the four devolved nations (Table 6) in one coherent artistic and cultural collaborative programming, exceeding the scale of any such endeavour previously organised by the British Council.
- Season activities and partner organisations have been well represented across different regions in the UK and events took place in 20 cities across the UK:

Table 5: Regional diversity of UK partner organisations, activities and events

Number of UK partner organisations	UK partner organisations (associated events)
England: 36 partners	Brighton Film Festival ; Cheltenham Literary Festival; EuroFestival (Liverpool); Greenwich+Docklands International Festival; The London Book Fair; Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival; Sheffield Doc/Fest; The Great Escape Festival, Brighton; Bouquet Kyiv Stage Oxford; Cassandra (Oxford & Cambridge); Bunker Cabaret (London) – list not exhaustive
Wales: 1 partner	Lviv BookForum - broadcast live by Hay Festival
Scotland: 8 partner	Edinburgh International Film Festival; Scotland-Ukraine Arts Residencies; Edinburgh Culture Summit: Ukraine Cultural Leadership Dialogue – list not exhaustive
Northern Ireland: 3 partners	Belfast Film Festival; Outburst Queer Art Festival, Belfast; BIFPA (Belfast International Festival of Performance Art)

- There was also some geographical diversity of partners from Ukraine (Table 6). However, many of them had to change their location after February 2022.

Table 6. Geographical diversity of Ukrainian partner organisation

Number of Ukrainian partner organisations	Ukrainian partner organisations
Kyiv: 20 partners	Kyiv Critics Week; PEN Ukraine; Arthouse Traffic; International Book Arsenal Festival; Ukrainian Book Institute; 86 NGO; Hooligan Art Community; Centre of Contemporary Art DAKH – list not exhaustive
Lviv: 2 partners	BookForum; Unbeaten Path
Kharkiv:1 partner	YermilovCentre
Mariupol: 1 partner	Theatromania
Odesa: 3 partners	Slushni rechi; Past / Future / Art; Museum of Odesa Modern Art

- Ukrainian culture was showcased to the UK public through regional UK film festivals. Five short films were screened at the Belfast Film Festival (as well as festivals in Brighton, Leeds and Cornwall) showing the human, resourceful and innovative side of Ukrainian culture as opposed to the presentation of victimhood which is often portrayed in the media:

Five films that I've chosen give Belfast audiences an insight into the Ukrainian national character, which is not just about being victims of Russian aggression but is also full of the sense of resourcefulness and inventiveness that Ukrainians have. We created a partnership with the British Council and with the Ukrainian Institute who then opened up basically a whole new world of Ukrainian cinema for us to be able to bring to the festival. There really seems to be an appetite to keep these channels open. And we don't want to be just about reflecting on what's happening right now, we want to be building things for the future.

Partner, UK – British Council Ukraine YouTube Channel [Ukrainian Films Month in the UK]

16. Impact: Increased Support for the Ukrainian Diaspora

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 7: Increased support for the Ukrainian diaspora - Key findings

- Special attention was given to access for the Ukrainian diaspora audience to help them stay connected with their heritage, celebrate their culture and take pride in their identity.
- Touring performances such as ‘Cassandra’ and the ‘Bunker Cabaret’ enabled more of the diaspora community both to see performances and to take part in Q&A sessions around them.

- Special attention was given to access for the Ukrainian diaspora audience to help them connect with their culture and language. Cultural and outreach activities allowed diaspora members to engage with their heritage, celebrate their culture and take pride in their identity:

Meeting the displaced Ukrainians who came to see our play and hearing how important it was to them culturally and emotionally was a real highlight. They felt they were being supported by it. It helped make the work we were doing feel so much more relevant and powerful.

Professional, UK

For Ukrainians it was really affirming to have their language and politics centre stage.

Partner, Ukraine

- The Season spotlighted Ukraine and facilitated experienced organisations to work with the Ukrainian diaspora. Partners, including the Stephen Spender Trust and the National Centre for Writing, undertook workshops and activities in schools and community groups where Ukrainians are represented across the UK. This programme is starting to be seen as a best practice blueprint that could be adapted for language learning initiatives and to engage other communities of displaced children and families:

We are expanding this programme to develop workshops and resources that anyone can deliver – they are multilingual activities which can be run by teachers even if they don't have the language – the important thing is to make a connection for speakers of Ukrainian and languages to see their language as something that they can use in the arts or to have some other practical application.

Partner, Ukraine

- Touring performances such as 'Cassandra' and the 'Bunker Cabaret' enabled more of the diaspora community to watch performances and to take part in Q&A sessions around them. Further touring would have been welcomed to achieve even wider reach:

I would love the tour to have been more extensive (going to more places) and more opportunities to meet and talk with Ukrainians, potentially through an outreach programme.

Partner, Ukraine



17. Impact: Access to International Platforms/ Safe Places for Dialogue

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – *What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?*



Short-term outcome 8: Access to international platforms/safe places for dialogue - Key findings

- The Season's revised programme acknowledged the impact of war and prioritised the creation of safe spaces, both physically and ideologically, for contributors while the productions were under development and also while they were being performed.
- Events in Ukraine, for example parts of the Lviv BookForum, were thoughtfully curated with extra safety measures.
- UK partners supported Ukrainian artists to share their experiences and emotions around war with wider, international audiences.
- The Season enabled ideas to be expressed freely, both physically and digitally.

- The revised programme for the Season recognised the reality of war and was mindful of the need to provide safe spaces, physical and ideological, for contributors both while the productions were under development and being performed.
- The small number of events that took place in Ukraine were carefully curated with extra precautions taken for the safety of the participants. The Lviv BookForum was held in Lviv with acclaimed Ukrainian writers talking with international figures about literature written in response to the war both in person (some international contributors attended) and online. The international contributors believed that attending helped them to deepen their understanding of the Ukrainian experience and they appreciated being invited.
- UK partners were mindful of the importance of ensuring that Ukrainian partners retained ownership of in-person projects which were relocated to the UK from Ukraine and that they were able to support them as flexibly and sensitively as possible. The war context gave these partnerships greater depth and focus:

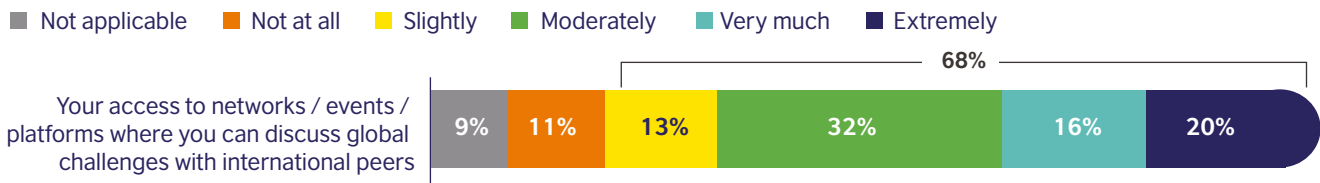
It was different in the sense that we had to be very flexible around the planning and delivery of events due to the war and in terms of giving the Ukrainian Book Arsenal ownership in curation because the day was in lieu of the Festival taking place in Ukraine, which could not go ahead. It was also different in terms of the depth and importance of the collaboration within the political climate.

Partner, UK

- The Season provided a safe space for expression both physically and digitally while providing access to platforms where Ukrainian artists could discuss global challenges with their international peers (Chart 6).

Chart 6. The Season provided access for Ukrainian Artists to platforms where they can discuss global challenges

To what extent, if at all, have the following improved as a result of your participation in the event?



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 56 Ukrainian Arts professional participants

- The Season allowed ideas to be expressed freely:

Any work that can be translated by UK publishers is worthwhile. Having authors come over and help English readers find out about Ukrainian artists raises awareness globally and feeds into the resilience of the Ukrainian arts industry; having books in bookshops in a small way has a measurable effect and helps Ukrainian artists to have hope and defiance. Some activities no longer shy away from being defiant – on Ukrainian Day there was a musical performance that was political and defiant. We should do this more.

Partner, Ukraine (diaspora)

- UK partners also reflected on their role in facilitating Ukrainian artists to share their personal experiences and feelings about the war for wider audiences. At times, some partners said they felt overwhelmed by what the Ukrainian artists were experiencing but saw it as important to support and enable the artists to express themselves:

The project supported artists to have a platform and voice to explore what it means to be occupied or invaded. It was hard to think about the wider picture – it seemed overwhelming and inapproachable. It felt very difficult as the artists were struggling and interpreting things in a personal way that we would never have experienced; we were able to help them to do that but it would be tricky for us to make a claim beyond that; the project was intimate and hopefully a positive time for the people involved.

Partner, UK

- Due to wartime restrictions, some male contributors were unable to travel to the UK so creative solutions were found to enable them to be involved. For example, Artem Chekh, a writer, spoke online to a group at the International Summer Workshop who were translating one of his plays and his wife discussed the book-to-film translation.
- The fact that some male artists from Ukraine were ultimately allowed to travel to the UK for the Season indicated the Ukrainian government's recognition of the importance of culture during the war. The Hooligan Art Community performed 'Bunker Cabaret' developed in a Kyiv bomb shelter and collaborated with UK partners to tour the performance across the UK and Europe.



18. Impact: Shape a more Positive Future through supporting the resilience of Ukrainian Arts and Culture

OECD DAC criterion: IMPACT – What difference did the programme make (how well did it deliver against its target outcomes)?



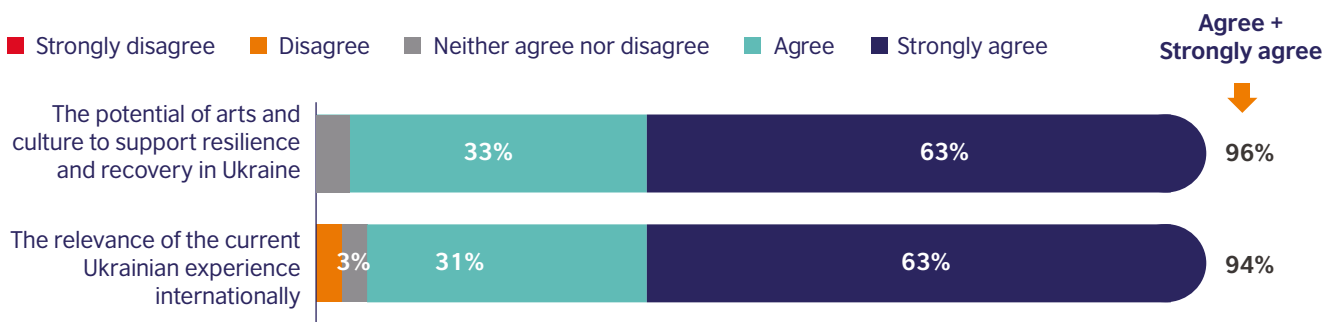
Short-term outcome 9: Shape a more positive future through supporting the resilience of Ukrainian arts and culture - Key findings

- The Season is recognised as having played a key role in providing support for Ukrainian culture and increasing awareness of the situation in Ukraine in multiple ways: by starting a conversation; by creating a sense of community during difficult times; and by boosting professionals' self-confidence.
- This support extended beyond the Season and the borders of the UK and Ukraine. A strong foundation was developed to advocate for Ukrainian arts and culture in the future.

- The Season is recognised as having played a key role in providing support for Ukrainian culture and increasing awareness of the situation in Ukraine (Chart 7).

Chart 7. Supporting the resilience of Ukrainian arts and culture

To what extent do you agree or disagree that this event was an appropriate opportunity to understand/explore:



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants

- The Season provided this support in multiple ways:
 - By starting a conversation:

There is now much greater awareness of what is happening in Ukraine and the threat our cultural identity faces; our artists have been able to tell their stories and the world has been listening. We need to keep sharing these stories and the Season is helping us to plan for the future.

Professional, Ukraine

- By creating a sense of community during difficult times:

It highlighted for me the resilience, support and sense of community in the creative arts.

Professional, UK

- By boosting professionals' self-confidence:

For Ukrainians, it has taken a war but it has given them the power to go out and prove what they can and will do. It has opened up a lot of opportunities for them to get to festivals and to be seen and to talk about their work. It has given a big boost to their industry and exposure and they can see the opportunity to take advantage.

Partner, UK

- This support extends beyond the timeline of the Season and the borders of the UK and Ukraine. A strong foundation has been developed to advocate for Ukrainian arts and culture in the future:
 - By supporting the long-term resilience of individuals and their practice:

We had a sense that the project contributed to the resilience and sustainability of practice; initially some did not feel mentally engaged enough to take part and we emphasised that there would be zero pressure from us; some of those who seemed quite vulnerable early on were the ones with the strongest streams – it gave them a focus for that period to have something outside the day to day that they could focus on. They have been able to continue to work and build their practice.

Partner, UK

- By continuing to grow and advocate for the arts and culture sector outside Ukraine and beyond the Season through the strong relationships forged during the Season:

We have developed a brilliant relationship with them and we hope that they can use this as they are doing so much for Ukrainian animation and are pretty much the voice of Ukrainian animation. We really want to be part of their celebration of their industry and help them capitalise on opportunities that have come about because of the war.

Partner, UK

- By providing a platform to show the world that Ukrainian culture is very much alive and continuing to thrive:

It's really important to us that we can continue to work to rebuild our business, rebuilding our connections and build up our capacity. Good communication about this is vital. We want to show others that they can still work with us and it is safe for us to work in Ukraine. We won't let anybody down.

Partner, Ukraine

19. Sustainability: Long-Term Partnerships

OECD DAC criterion: SUSTAINABILITY – What is the legacy of this cultural programming that stays behind?



Long-term partnerships - Key findings

- The Season established successful, sustainable partnerships and collaborations, surpassing expectations for a bilateral programme and fostering a long-term commitment for continued collaboration.
- Partner organisations are committed to continuing the collaboration, with or without a project in mind and maintaining the network of contacts developed during the Season.
- The Season has accelerated the progress of high-profile projects in Ukraine such as the completion and promotion of the first-ever animation feature film from Ukraine.
- UK partners are dedicated to supporting their Ukrainian counterparts, with plans to take performances to other festivals and to explore further collaborations in arts and social spheres. There is a keen interest in bringing UK professionals to perform in Ukraine as well.

- A major legacy of the Season is the partnerships forged. The Season was successful in creating sustainable partnerships and models of collaboration. It has exceeded expectations of what can be achieved in a bilateral programme and delivered on many fronts in facilitating committed, long-term relationships which have laid the foundation for continued collaborations and will continue to create opportunities..
- Many partner organisations are committed to continuing the partnerships and to building on projects included in the Season. Beyond the partnerships themselves, they are keen to keep the network of contacts they have developed alive and to take them forward:

We'd like to continue collaboration with the UK organisation The Place and the artists we met during the project. We expect to present two new performances created in the frames of the project in the UK this or next year.

Partner, Ukraine

- There has also been scope to accelerate the progress of other high profile projects already underway in Ukraine. For example, the first ever animation feature film made in Ukraine has recently been completed, is being screened across Ukraine and is being widely promoted on the international stage:

Mavka: the forest song is a feature film [based on a play by Lesia Ukrainka] which has been in development for a long time before [the] war and has now finished in production. It is being shown in cinemas in Ukraine and we are really looking forward to seeing it at an international festival – we are working with the creative team behind the film to make sure it gets coverage and we can help celebrate this major achievement.

Partner, UK

- UK partners are committed to continuing their support to Ukrainian partners and artists to become more sustainable and some have been able to identify specific ways of helping, e.g. to take the performances to other festivals, such as ‘EuroFestival’ in Liverpool, a celebration of Ukrainian culture in the UK which was organised around the Eurovision Song Contest 2023:

We are already discussing a future collaboration between the Ukrainian Institute London and the director to stage more translations of Ukrainian dramas.

Partner, UK

Between us we are working to get animations to festivals and will also send some to pitch at Mifa – the international pitching market. I have been asked to sit on the selection committee and to select which films get through. It’s a privilege to be involved in this process and to see so much Ukrainian work becoming more visible which was rare before.

Partner, UK

- The partners of ‘Land to Return, Land to Care’ are hoping to evolve some aspects of the current project by working with Ukrainian refugees within the context of Seasons in a forthcoming project for the British Council’s UK/Poland Season. They are keen to continue to support Ukrainian arts and to develop further work in the social sphere (not just the environment):

We are more aware of the social potential of soundscape work following the project in Ukraine. It has also contributed to our thinking about this work as a live archive in terms of history and the presentation of alternative histories of conflict. We have had some seed funding to explore the opportunity in Poland and it would be really good to be able to work with Ukrainian refugees and artists there and to see some kind of institutional infrastructure of care to support them.

Partner, UK

- Some Season activities have achieved impacts beyond their original remit. For example, the translation of Ukrainka's pioneering interpretation of Cassandra as a 'denunciation of military violence rather than a heroic celebration' has changed academic understanding and discourse about the meaning of the Trojan story. One academic who attended the post-show event announced that she will be adding a chapter on Lesia Ukrainka to her upcoming book on adaptations of the Trojan story.
- More generally, there is a real appetite for developing relationships and future working, even if there are no specific projects in mind, including to find opportunities to bring UK professionals to perform in Ukraine:

Broadening of horizons and perspectives, future collaborations and a commitment to continue working with organisations in Ukraine doing amazing work at this difficult time and hopefully in the future during times of peace.

Partner, UK

There is an increased awareness of artists and organisations based in Ukraine, along with possibilities for future collaborations. Individual links with participating artists that can be developed further - one of whom is planning to study in the UK during 2023.

Partner, UK

Continued collaboration with Ukrainian artists and ongoing collaborations between hcmf// and cultural organisations in Ukraine (including Opera Aperta and Jam Factory). In the longer term, we also hope to create opportunities for emerging British artists to export their practice to Ukraine.

Partner, UK

20. Sustainability: Professional Recognition

OECD DAC criterion: SUSTAINABILITY – What is the legacy of this cultural programming that stays behind?



Professional recognition - Key findings

- Many professionals have gained greater recognition and international profile as a result of exposure during the Season. Many had been well-known in Ukraine but had no prior profile globally.
- Ukrainian participants have been able to capitalise on opportunities created through their involvement in the Season for their personal career progression.

- Many professionals have gained international recognition as a result of exposure during the Season.

We have discovered new and exciting Ukrainian filmmakers and speakers who work within the animation industry.

Partner, UK

Some of our writers are now better known internationally and have been able to promote themselves. And this helps us as a nation at a time when we need to protect our culture and for the world to support us to do so.

Professional, Ukraine

- Ukrainian participants have successfully leveraged the opportunities generated by their participation in the Season to advance their personal careers and establish a foundation for long-term sustainability.:

Thanks to the collaboration with British artists, a lot of space and prospects for new cultural projects have emerged for me.

Professional, Ukraine

—
It helped me hone my translation skills, expand my professional network, and improve my industry expertise. I keep in touch with Olena Jennings, who ran the workshop, and some of the fellow participants, and these contacts have already led to some exciting projects and ideas.

Professional, Ukraine

—
Participating can lead to new projects, collaborations and professional opportunities that will help me develop and expand my career as an inclusive dancer.

Professional, Ukraine

21. UK Soft Power and Perceptions of the British Council

UK Soft Power and Perceptions of the British Council



Key findings

- The Season had a positive impact on perceptions of the UK with its support for Ukraine’s arts and culture seen to sit alongside its economic and military support as an expression of commitment to the country’s future.
 - There was a positive impact on perceptions of the British Council among arts and cultural professionals involved in the Season, with nearly nine in ten reporting improved perceptions as a result.
 - Cultural bodies and professionals greatly appreciated the reorientation of the Season after the full-scale invasion of Russia. The revised projects were deemed to be appropriate, realistic and well-supported by the British Council .
 - The British Council is regarded as a model of good practice for promoting soft power, something that Ukrainian bodies would like to emulate and which they regard as necessary for the long-term survival of Ukrainian culture and identity.
- The Season was undertaken for the benefit of Ukraine and to support the future of its arts and cultural sector. Although not formally linked, the UK’s support for the Season can be seen alongside the UK’s support for Ukraine more widely in terms of economic assistance, military assistance and support for refugees.
 - The Season has contributed to positive perceptions of the UK in Ukraine among political leaders, professionals and to an extent, the wider public which is being driven by this wider package of support.

“Today cultural co-operation between Ukraine and the UK is flourishing as never before [...] we are very grateful to our British friends for helping us to withstand the cultural front [...] and discover new dimensions of Ukrainian soft power and even to reinvent Ukrainian public diplomacy ...”

Emine Dzheppar, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine speaking at the closing ceremony on June 1, 2023

- As evidenced elsewhere in this report, the Ukrainian government sees arts and culture not as a ‘nice-to-have’ in a time of war but as both an essential part of what it is fighting for and a crucial dimension of its response to Russia’s aggression.
- The Season has contributed to perceptions within Ukraine of the British Council as a model of good practice and an institution that Ukraine would like to replicate for itself as a vehicle for promoting the long-term survival of Ukrainian culture and identity:

It [the British Council] is a model institution for soft power that Ukrainian institutions aspire to.

Arts agency, Ukraine

- In the wider international community the Season has served as an example of the UK's commitment to cultural independence within its wider support for democratic values and the Rule of Law.
- Many of the connections and partnerships developed within the Season will continue and grow and serve as a specific resource for further collaboration between the UK and Ukraine in the future.

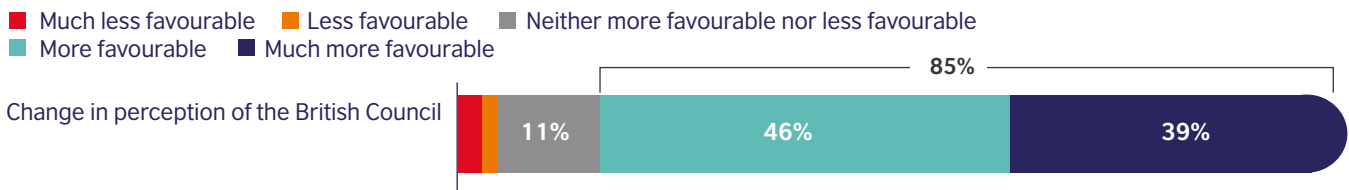
The UK and Ukraine are close friends and partners. And our ties have only strengthened despite the challenges of Russia's invasion. I am really proud that even in these times we have been able to deepen cultural connections between our countries and in particular to hold the UK/Ukraine Season.

Melinda Simmons. HMG Ambassador to Ukraine speaking at the closing ceremony on June 1, 2023

- The Season had a positive impact on perceptions of the British Council among arts and cultural professionals, with over nine in ten reporting an improved perception of the organisation as a result of their participation (Chart 8).

Chart 8. Improved perception of the British Council

As a result of taking part in the event/activity, has your perception of the British Council become?



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants

- For many Ukrainian cultural professionals, the positive reputation of the British Council preceded their direct experience of participating in the UK/Ukraine Season of Culture, even among those who had not previously worked with the organisation in Ukraine. The British Council is widely considered to be a high quality, prestigious organisation which has a deep understanding of the arts and culture sectors in Ukraine, has good relationships with key individuals and is plugged into many arts networks and organisations:

The British Council has a very good reputation in Ukraine – it is seen as a symbol of quality and there is a sense that whatever it is doing is something worth paying attention to.

Professional, Ukraine

- Some UK organisations worked with the British Council for the first-time during the Season and those involved via project grants appreciated the opportunity to work on more structured projects rather than having contact only via open calls. The Season gave them the opportunity to work with partners, not just with greater financial support, but also on a more professional footing at a larger scale. They felt that this helped to lay the foundations for more long-term working with the British Council itself:

We had applied through open-call proposals but didn't really have a sense of what it was like to work with them [the British Council] and how they support more focused projects and workstreams. It was good for us and we hope we can continue to work with them.

Partner, UK

- Arts professionals typically report that they would also promote similar events to friends and family, which is testimony to their appreciation of the quality of the Season (Chart 9).

Chart 9. High likelihood to recommend Season activities among professional participants

How likely is it that you would recommend this type of event to a friend or colleague?

■ Not at all likely - 0 ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ Extremely likely -10



Source: UK/Ukraine Season of Culture; Arts professional survey
 Base: Feedback from 70 Arts professional participants; NPS – Net promoter score=Promoters (scores 9-10) – Detractors (scores 1-6)

22. Conclusions

- As described on the Season's dedicated website the *"UK/Ukraine Season of Culture is [was] giving a voice to Ukrainian creatives and focusing on the changing needs and priorities of the Ukrainian cultural sector"*.
- The Season actively supported the Ukrainian arts and cultural sector at home and internationally. For tragic reasons, it proved to be the right programme at just the right time because, in the words of Dame Melinda Simmons, then British Ambassador to Ukraine, *"...it has never been more important to celebrate and recognise Ukrainian culture than now, when it is under attack,"*
- Feedback from various stakeholders suggests that the very fact that the Season took place at all in such circumstances is to the great credit of the sector, organisations and professionals in the UK and Ukraine and especially to the British Council and the Ukrainian Institute.
- The Season succeeded in facilitating connections and partnerships between the UK and Ukraine which will form the basis for future collaborations and channels of exchange.
- It accelerated digital working for partners in both the UK and Ukraine. Many organisations had worked digitally during the Covid-19 pandemic but the experience during the programme has demonstrated that this can be an efficient, creative and sustainable approach to partnership working.
- It showcased established but internationally little-known Ukrainian artists and organisations alongside emerging, innovative performers to give a more rounded and nuanced perspective on Ukrainian arts and culture.
- It provided unprecedented access to globally important international platforms such as The Cheltenham and Hay festivals for Ukrainian cultural professionals and in doing so gave vital support to their role in increasing awareness both of Ukrainian language and culture independent of Russia and of the horrors being inflicted on the country through Russia's invasion.
- It provided invaluable access to wider commercial opportunities internationally for many Ukrainian professionals and institutions struggling to survive financially and through skills and knowledge exchange strengthened the platform for artistic and cultural resilience and revival in the country once the war is over.
- It allowed institutions and professionals in Ukraine to experience and understand a different artistic and cultural ecosystem and environment in the UK which may provide some learning and relevant models for the system which will need to be rebuilt after the war.
- The Season also helped facilitate deeper reflection and debate on globally relevant issues of resilience, morality, the role of art in times of war and the values which are important in the 21st century and did so through artistic practice which attracted and engaged international audiences.
- The Ukrainian arts and creative sector will continue to need significant ongoing support beyond the Season but the Season has allowed Ukrainian culture to be celebrated in the UK and has paved the way for new opportunities and potential revenue streams to help the sector improve understanding and increase its profile on the international stage in the future.

23. References

Pesenti, M. (2020) Cultural revival and social transformation in Ukraine: the role of culture and the arts in supporting post-Euromaidan resilience, Chatham House research paper

World Bank Group (2023) Ukraine: Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment February 2022 – February 2023, World Bank report

24. Appendices

Appendix 1. List of 15 Season projects – recipients of a restricted grant

Project name	Lead partner	Other partners
Inclusive dance & music lab	Unbeaten Path (Ukraine)	Candoco Dance Company (UK)
Warpath.24.02	Fight for Right NGO (Ukraine)	Attitude is Everything (UK)
Regrounding	ICF IZOLYATSIA. Platform for Cultural Initiatives (Ukraine)	D6: Culture in Transit (UK)
Skills for Radio Docs	Suspilne Ukraine	BBC Media Action (UK)
Ukrainian Talents at NOWNESS	86 NGO (Ukraine)	Nowness (UK)
Ukraine is the Centre of My Universe	Ukrainian Fashion Week (Ukraine)	Foxall Studio (UK)
R u there? We r here...	The Albany (UK)	Josie-Dale Jones (UK), Center of Contemporary Art DAKH, Theatromania (Germany)
The Living Archive Project	Studio Wayne McGregor (UK)	Ukrainian Contemporary Dance Platform (Ukraine)
I'M FINE!	LINOLEUM (Ukraine)	Skwigly Online Animation Magazine (UK)
IN // BETWEEN London and Kharkiv	Royal College of Art (UK)	YermilovCentre (Ukraine)
Hooligan/Radiation: participative music theatre showcase	Mahogany Opera (UK)	Dnipro Centre of Contemporary Culture (Ukraine)
Ukraine Lab	Ukrainian Institute London (UK)	PEN Ukraine (Ukraine)
Kyiv Critics Week programme Focus: Ukraine/ Britain	Traffic Films (Ukraine)	The Critics Circle (UK)
Let the Body Speak	Ukrainian Contemporary Dance Platform (Ukraine)	The Place (UK)
Land to Return, Land to Care	Museum of Odesa Modern Art (Ukraine)	Past / Future / Art (Ukraine), Slushni Rechi (Ukraine), Soundcamp (UK)

Appendix 2. List of 27 Season activities – spotlight on Ukrainian arts and culture

Project name	Partners
Spotlight on Ukraine at the international Cheltenham Literature Festival	Cheltenham Literature Festival
Spotlight on Ukraine at the international Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival	Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival
Ukrainian programme at Sheffield DocFest	Sheffield DocFest
Lviv BookForum - broadcasted live by Hay Festival	Lviv BookForum, Hay Festival
Crimea 5am	Dash Arts
London Book Fair (2022): presentation of two Ukrainian authors at Pen England stand	PEN England
Ukrainian musicians at the international music festival The Great Escape (2023)	The Great Escape
International summer workshop for translators from Ukrainian into English	BCLT (British Centre for Literary Translation) @University of East Anglia
Ensuring the presentation of Ukrainian modern and archive films at the Edinburgh International Film Festival	Edinburgh International Film Festival
Discover Ukraine: Bits Destroyed at Greenwich+Docklands International Festival	Greenwich+Docklands International Festival
Transmission.UK: Ukrainian/British contemporary drama dialogue	Ukrainian Institute
Ukrainian artists at Ukrainian Film Month in the UK	Belfast International Film Festival, Brighton University, Dovzhenko Centre
Ukrainian artists at Outburst Queer Art Festival, Belfast	Outburst Queer Art Festival
Cassandra - tour to Cambridge and Oxford in March	Live Canon / Ukrainian Institute London
Chichester University - public event	Rathbones Folio Prize - Chichester University
Bunker Cabaret	Hooligan Art Community, Mahogany Opera, imPOSSIBLE Producing
Edinburgh Culture Summit: Ukraine Cultural Leadership Dialogue	Edinburgh International Culture Summit Foundation
Oxford Bouquet Festival of Contemporary Music	Dom Master Class, Cherwell College Oxford, Oxford University Ukrainian Society
Mapping Ukraine in the Museum World: Collections and Practices	Birkbeck, University of London
Conversation with Myroslav Marynovych: The Universe Behind Barbed Wire	Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain
Creative Ukraine Forum: The Power of Resilience	Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine
Ukrainian performers at the BIFPA 2023	Ulster University

Project name	Partners
Ukrainian delegates at Peace and Beyond 2023	British Council
Scotland-Ukraine Arts Residencies	Creative Scotland, Moniack Mhor, Cove Park, Hospitalfield, Edinburgh Sculpture Park, Edinburgh College of Art North Lands Creatives
Celebrating Ukrainian Culture	Partners: Stephen Spender Trust
Digital Writer in Residence/Outreach programme for schools	Stephen Spender Trust, University of Chichester
Krapka;Koma at the Great Escape (2022)	The Great Escape
Ukraine at the London Book Fair 2023	British Council, the British Library, PEN England, PEN International, PEN Ukraine, the Ukrainian Book Institute and the Ukrainian Institute

Appendix 3. List of interviewees - Inception phase

Name	Organisation/Project	Role
Galyna Grygorenko	The State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education	Agency Head
Tetyana Filevska	Ukrainian Institute	Acting Director General
Volodymyr Vorobej	PPV Knowledge Networks	Director of Festivals and Seasons
Rebecca Simor	British Council UK	Director of Festivals and Seasons
David Elliott	British Council UK	Senior Programme Manager
Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta	Mystetskyi Arsenal	Director - arts manager and curator
Keith Nichol	DCMS	Head of Cultural Diplomacy
Harriet Williams	DCMS	Senior Policy Advisor at Cultural Diplomacy Unit
Melinda Simmons	HMA	Ambassador Ukraine

Appendix 4. List of interviewees - Implementation phase

Name	Organisation/Project	Role
Anna Halas	International summer workshop for translators	Arts professional
Hanna Leliv	International summer workshop for translators	Arts professional
Yuliia	Let the body speak	Arts professional
Anastasiia Kyzmichova	Let the body speak	Arts professional
Viktor Konstantinov	Land to Return, Land to Care	Arts professional
Olena Huseinova	Skills for Radio Docs	Arts professional
Марина	Sheffield Doc/Fest	Arts professional
Ruth Ahmedzai-Kemp	Cheltenham Literary Festival	Arts professional
Sofiya Chelyak	Lviv BookForum - broadcasted live by Hay Festival	Partner representative
Josephine Burton	Crimea 5am	Partner representative
Anastasiya Verlinska	Deadline is not a verdict (I'M FINE!)	Partner representative
Aaron Wood	Deadline is not a verdict (I'M FINE!)	Partner representative
Mykhailo Glubokyi	Regrounding	Partner representative
Anna Goode	International summer workshop for translators	Partner representative
Glenn Boulter	Land to Return, Land to Care	Partner representative
Grant Smith	Land to Return, Land to Care	Partner representative
Harriet Williams	DCMS	Senior Policy Advisor at Cultural Diplomacy Unit

Appendix 5: List of observed Season events

As part of the data collection and contextualisation of the Season, the following Season activities were attended either in-person or virtually.

- In-person observations:
 - Ukrainian programme at the international Cheltenham Literature Festival
 - Ukrainian programme at the international Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival
 - Crimea 5am
 - Spotlight on Ukraine at the London Book Fair
 - Cassandra (Cambridge)
 - Bunker Cabaret
 - Closing ceremony at FCDO
- Virtual observations included sessions of the Lviv Book Forum

Appendix 6. Further information on the Season’s digital engagement

Selected projects/activities with large digital engagement through the British Council’s and the Ukrainian Institute’s Facebook and Instagram accounts and the Season’s website.












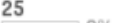








Season project	Engagement
Sheffield Doc/Fest	198,197
I'M FINE	154,301
Ukrainian Films Month in the UK	139,584
Discover Ukraine: Bits Destroyed	80,611
Ukrainian Talents at Nowness	80,089
Ukraine at the London Book Fair 2023	British Council, the British Library, PEN England, PEN International, PEN Ukraine, the Ukrainian Book Institute and the Ukrainian Institute

Location of users accessing <https://ukuaseason.org/> - October 2022 – June 2023



Source: British Council reporting

Campaign performance - #UKUASEASON: between 1st June, 2022 – 25th April, 2023

	VOLUME	TREND	REACH ESTIMATED
TWITTER	642 Mentions  54%	↑ 100%	108 K  44%
INSTAGRAM	291 Mentions  24%	↑ 100%	0  0%
FACEBOOK	246 Mentions  21%	↑ 100%	135 K  56%
WEB	5 Mentions  0%	↑ 100%	16  0%
BLOGS	2 Mentions  0%	↑ 100%	2  0%
NEWS	1 Mentions  0%	↑ 100%	25  0%
VIDEO	1 Mentions  0%	↑ 100%	0  0%
PINTEREST	0 Mentions  0%	0%	0  0%
GOOGLE+	0 Mentions  0%	0%	0  0%
FORUMS	0 Mentions  0%	0%	0  0%

Source: Digimind report

UK/Ukraine Season – Digital engagement: May 2022 – June 2023

Source of digital engagement	Reach	Likes, comments & shares
British Council - Facebook	1,341,714	5,180
British Council - Instagram	126,717	2,825
Ukrainian Institute - Facebook*	85,509	1,571
Ukrainian Institute - Instagram*	19,987	1,334
https://ukuaseason.org/ **	British Council UK	Senior Programme Manager
6,800	n/a	Director - arts manager and curator
Total reach:	1,580,727	10,910

* Data covers the following period only: October 2022 - January 2023

** Data recorded from October 2022 onwards only



Case study 1: Cassandra tour to Oxford and Cambridge

Location: Online and in-person

Project type: Theatre and Dance

Timing: March 2023

Partner organisations: Live Canon; Ukrainian Institute London

Background and context

The Ukrainian Institute London, a charity dedicated to promoting Ukraine's presence in the UK and beyond, supports and hosts a range of Ukraine-focused activities, including many cultural and literary events. Live Canon is known for performing verse text in theatres, museums, festivals, galleries, and on radio and digital platforms.

Lesia Ukrainka, a pioneering feminist writer, is a cultural icon in Ukraine but remains relatively unknown outside the country. *Cassandra*, her groundbreaking poetic drama, first published in 1908, retells the Trojan War from the perspective of Cassandra, princess of Troy. Despite Cassandra's gift of prophecy into the war's tragic outcome, she is destined to be disbelieved, trapped in besieged Troy and to witness its destruction.

In 2021, the Ukrainian Institute in London awarded its annual translation prize to Nina Murray for her excerpt of *Cassandra*, celebrating the 150th anniversary of Lesia Ukrainka's birth. An acclaimed translator, Nina Murray has also translated works by bestselling contemporary writer Oksana Zabukzhko, including *The Museum of Abandoned Secrets*.

Project aims

This project aimed to increase recognition of Lesia Ukrainka, a key figure in Ukrainian culture, through a performance based on the first English translation of her work, *Cassandra*. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has given the central theme of *Cassandra*, a prophecy of doom disbelieved by those who did not want to hear, a terrible contemporary relevance.

Project activities

Cassandra premiered at London's Omnibus Theatre in October 2022 and was directed by acclaimed director Helen Eastman, known for her work in producing

contemporary productions of Ancient Greek plays.

Support through the UK/Ukraine Season of Culture enabled the production to tour to Oxford and Cambridge and the Ukrainian Institute London organised post-show discussions and published a blog to deepen understanding of the writer and the play's context.

Achievements

Cassandra's translation, production and touring spotlighted Lesia Ukrainka as a prominent Ukrainian cultural figure and the author of a story with profound contemporary relevance.

On the UK stage for the first time, this Ukrainian masterpiece about truth, violence and power has astounding relevance today. Nina Murray's stunning new translation of Cassandra breathes new life into the classical war epic.

Partner, UK

The touring performances sold out and over 200 attendees joined the post-performance discussions. Media coverage in Cambridge and Oxford highlighted Ukrainian culture and the play's relevance to the Ukraine war. The production earned positive reviews.

Impact

The production supported intercultural understanding between the UK and Ukraine and helped to raise awareness of Russia's campaign to erase Ukrainian culture.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is not only about territory; it’s an attempt to stamp out a culture. In the arts, we must refuse to let this happen by amplifying Ukrainian culture in the work that we do.

Helen Eastman, Director of Live Canon Production of *Cassandra*, UK Ukraine Season of Culture website

Cassandra contributed to increased awareness and understanding outside of Ukraine of the significance and power of Lesia Ukrainka’s work and the global relevance of the wider themes which her work addresses, including feminism, class, colonialism and the nature of truth.

Academic experts from Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham universities participated in post-show discussions and within academia her work is increasingly widely recognized for its significance in the context of Greek text adaptations and as a pioneering critique of military violence in the Iliad. Professor Edith Hall of Durham University will feature Lesia Ukrainka in her upcoming book on Trojan War adaptations.

The production also raised awareness of Ukrainian culture among UK artists and theatre practitioners who are part of Live Canon. Future collaborations between the Ukrainian Institute London and Live Canon are in discussion.

The director Helen Eastman and the team of actors and creatives who worked on *Cassandra* have now learned a great deal about Ukraine’s history and culture, and have become advocates for Ukraine, committed to working on Ukrainian theatre in future, and continuing to raise awareness about Ukraine’s rich culture which has been repressed for centuries.

Partner, UK

The post-show discussions also contributed to strengthening connections and relationships between academics and translators.

Legacy

The translation and production of *Cassandra* highlighted an important work of Ukrainian culture and contributed to the elevation of Lesia Ukrainka to the ranks of literary figures of global significance. There is now greater interest in translating and producing other examples of her work for international audiences.

Live Canon has published an anthology of translated extracts of Lesia Ukrainka’s work while a translation of *Cassandra* by Nina Murray has subsequently been published by Harvard University Press.

Photograph Credits: Press Kit, UK/Ukraine Season of Culture website (<https://ukuaseason.org/press-kit-materials/>)



Case study 2: Ukraine Day at Cheltenham Literature Festival

Location: In-person

Project type: Festival

Timing: October, 2022

Partner organisation: Cheltenham Festivals

Background and context

Cheltenham Festivals is a charitable organisation which aims to foster a cultural world in which exploration and creativity flourish. Each year it stages four world-class, internationally recognised festivals in Jazz, Science, Music and Literature which feature top artists, unique experiences and emerging talent. Alongside the festivals it runs a variety of educational and talent development programmes with a particular focus in Cheltenham and the surrounding area.

In Ukraine, the International Book Arsenal Festival gathers global artists, writers and leading publishers in Kyiv each spring. The festival is billed as an annual intellectual event where the book, literary, visual, musical, and theatrical scenes develop and interact.

In 2022, when a full festival in Ukraine was impossible, the Cheltenham Literature Festival joined forces with the Book Arsenal as part of the UK/Ukraine Season for a series of in-person and online events and a Ukraine Day co-curated under the *Read the World* theme.

Project aims

The project aimed to celebrate Ukraine's rich culture and to shed light on the personal impact of the ongoing conflict.

International collaboration is at the heart of the Festival and it aimed to connect writers and thinkers from all over the world with both a local and global community of book lovers. It provided a unique opportunity to build collaborative partnerships with international

cultural organisations that are mutually beneficial and long-lasting. It provided a platform to showcase Ukrainian talent and give authors exposure to new audiences and growing readership and an opportunity to network with industry professionals.

Partner, UK

Project activities

In collaboration with Book Arsenal, Cheltenham Festivals hosted a Ukraine Day as an integral part of the Cheltenham Literature Festival on 11 October 2022. The day featured Ukrainian and international authors, poets, musicians and filmmakers in a mix of performance, conversations and workshops. A reception and networking events were held around the Ukraine Day.

Five events took place with high-profile Ukrainian authors and talents.

- “My Longest Book Tour (in conversation)” by Oksana Zabuzhko. She was on a book tour in Poland when the war started and learned that her home had been struck by missiles.
- “When War Comes to Your Home “ by poet, playwright and scriptwriter Liuba Yakymchuk, and author, historian and Director of the Ukrainian Institute London, Olesia Khromeychuck, discussed the impact of war.
- “Create a Canvas: How War Changed Rondo” by Romana Romanyshyn and Andriy Lesiv paid tribute to peace, resistance and hope with storytelling and an art workshop.

- “Songs of Love and Hate” is a musical soundtrack by Yuriy Gurzhy set to the poems of Grygoriy Semenchuk and Liuba Yakymchuk.
- A conversation with the visual culture researcher Kateryna Yakovlenko and the first UK screening of the producer’s cut of “Bad Roads” (2020) by Natalia Vorozhbyt.

Free, participatory events on the Huddle stage included:

- An Introduction to Ukrainian Language and Culture. Translators Anna Walden and Ruth Ahemdzai Kemp led a session on Ukrainian phrases and books for all ages.
- Explore Ukrainian: Translate a Ukrainian Picture Book, a creative, collaborative translation of a Ukrainian picture book.

Achievements

The staging of the Ukraine Day provided practical and symbolic support to the International Book Arsenal Festival in incredibly difficult circumstances. The face-to-face events attracted around 200 visitors on the day, some of whom were members of the newly displaced Ukrainian diaspora community in the local area. The Day was based around the *Read the World* theme of literature in translation and sparked curiosity about the Ukrainian language in relation to other European languages, particularly Russian, and the nature of Ukrainian cultural identity.

For Ukrainians, having their language and politics centre stage was affirming. For others, it was enlightening to learn more about the language and cultural identity.

Professional, Ukraine

Moving the events from Ukraine to Cheltenham and coordinating this digitally was a challenge that required flexibility and sensitivity, especially as this took place in an unstable situation and with people who were living and working in a war zone.

We learned about their experiences and developed an understanding of some of the challenges they faced while trying to put up the programme.

Partner, UK

It was very different regarding the depth and importance of the collaboration within the political climate.

Partner, UK

Impact

The events provided an international platform for Ukrainian authors, artists and performers from which to reach new, global audiences. The Ukraine Day showcased Ukrainian culture and language and demonstrated solidarity with Ukraine. In doing so, it supported the resilience of wider Ukrainian culture. Free events ensured that members of the Ukrainian diaspora could attend and engage in the activities.

The vision for the theme was to be the passport to a world of ideas, connecting writers and thinkers from all over the world with both a local and global community of book lovers.

Partner, UK



“[...]the Festival support to deliver relevant content with authors and speakers who were truly representative of the trauma and who could articulate their experiences and share their grief.

Partner, UK

Relationships between the UK and Ukraine were strengthened and further developed.

We strengthened the relationship with the Ukraine Book Arsenal that we had already begun to establish and were able to offer a very meaningful and significant day of events at the Literature Festival.

Partner, UK

We invited Ukrainian refugees and supplied over one hundred free event tickets. Events were preceded by an ambassadorial reception where local MPs, council leaders and the media were present, as well as staff from organisations, refugees and supporters.

Partner, UK



Legacy

The networking opportunities created international connections and opened up new, collaborative and commercial opportunities for some of the participating artists.

The free picture book event marked the debut of a new approach which is now being adapted for classroom use to promote language learning and pride in native languages, particularly Ukrainian. There are plans for roll-out to a wider group of UK schools within mixed communities. Funding for this expanded programme has been provided by the Stephen Spender Trust and the British Council.

We realised that we could do so much to promote language learning and creative writing in schools – diaspora children can take pride in their own language, and others can explore it. It can open up discussions about culture and politics

Professional, Ukraine

The Festival enabled individual artists to raise their international profile and to build a reputation. For example, the works of a Ukrainian children’s author is now being more actively promoted internationally.

My book recommendation helped to get it published in English. It is a huge affirmation of the power of knowledge and connections in the Ukrainian bookworld. I am currently also in discussions about getting another one of her books published in Germany – this has all come about on the back of other connections and contacts made through the season; it just builds and builds.

Professional, Ukraine

The Cheltenham Festival further strengthened its international connections and network.

Photograph Credits: Press Kit, UK/Ukraine Season of Culture website (<https://ukuaseason.org/press-kit-materials/>)



Case study 3: Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival / Chernobyldorf

Location: Huddersfield, UK

Project type: Music

Timing: 18th November – 27th November 2022

Partner organisation: hcmf// 2022: the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival

Background and context

hcmf// (the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival), an annual, international festival of contemporary and new music staged in Huddersfield, returned in 2022 after a Covid-imposed hiatus. It featured around 50 events, including concerts, music theatre, dance, multimedia, talks, and films.

hcmf// aims to provide life-changing and unique artistic experiences to as wide an audience as possible; to be an international platform for new music and related contemporary art forms in Britain; to enthuse existing audiences and to draw in new ones through adventurous programming and informed, stylish presentation, and to be an active cultural partner within the region.

The 2022 festival included an extensive programme within the UK/Ukraine Season of Culture, spotlighting new Ukrainian music and performance.

Project aims

The dedicated Ukrainian programme at the hcmf//22 aimed to provide an international platform for the celebration and sharing of Ukrainian voices, arts and culture.

—
Their unique power to bridge gaps of ignorance and suspicion, uniting nations and people, is poised to take the lead. And at this moment, the distinctly creative voices of the Ukrainian people, from past and present, will be heard.

[hcmf// 2022 website](#)

Project activities

There were four main elements to the Ukrainian programme at hcmf// 2022:

- *Chornobyldorf. An archaeological opera*” by Ukrainian composers Roman Grygoriv and Illia Razumeiko which combined folk and classical elements with theatre, dance, video, and unique instruments, exploring nuclear power’s global impact.
- A panel discussion about art in times of conflict.
- *String Air Synthesis* by Volodymyr Voyt and Solomiia Moroz involved the performance of composed and improvised pieces in microtonality and even temperament for Kharkiv-style bandura (a Ukrainian plucked-string folk-instrument) and flute.



- A premiere of compositions from Anna Korsun (Spleen and Plexus) and Maksym Shalygin (Drop After Drop), performed by the British orchestra Riot Ensemble.

Achievements

In the UK, an estimated 550 people attended face-to-face Ukraine-focused events and performances at hcmf// 2022.

The performances at hcmf// 2022 received huge critical acclaim and were widely reviewed in the UK media and beyond. *Chornobyl'dorf* was described by the Times as, “a modern Ukrainian masterpiece everyone needs to see” and BBC Radio 1 called it, “one of the most shattering and essential performances anywhere in the world today.”

The collaborations were brought to fruition despite the enormous challenges in place. Ukrainian professionals and their UK counterparts successfully adapted to virtual collaboration necessitated by the Russian invasion. Ukraine-based professionals were often working from makeshift spaces and on occasions even from bomb shelters.

Impact

hcmf// 2022 provided a prestigious platform for Ukrainian professionals and organisations to debut new work and to connect with global audiences. The event increased international visibility through associated activities, including a panel discussion addressing the Ukraine conflict’s context and future challenges for the culture sector in Ukraine. It served as both a safe space and a creative platform for Ukrainian professionals to express themselves and be heard internationally.

The opportunity to work with the festival team and to perform for the British audience gave a new focus to the theatre project. The feedback from the audience confirmed the importance of Ukrainian culture representation abroad during the war time.

Professional, Ukraine

Chornobyl'dorf, written before the Russian invasion, has gained new resonance and relevance.

Chornobyl'dorf was created two years before a large-scale Russian war against Ukraine and it is now that the opera has become radically relevant. In 2020 a nuclear explosion had an abstract meaning to us, whereas today the fear of nuclear threat is well-founded. Each day, the fictional world of *Chornobyl'dorf* is getting more real. The context of the piece changed for both its creators and the whole world.

Roman Grygoriv, Composer and Director (hcmf.co.uk)

Ukrainian participants were able to connect and network internationally, fostering growth opportunities and enhancing professional skills. UK partners went above and beyond to support their Ukrainian counterparts.

It helped to establish new connections with UK based organisations and artists, as before we did not have any. These connections are crucial for further development

Professional, Ukraine

The level of preparation and implementation was outstanding. The whole team cooperated and was committed to the collaboration. We all learned so much.

Professional, Ukraine

The events demonstrated the extraordinary dedication and resilience of Ukrainian professionals.

Events are happening with extra planning for the bombing.

Panel discussion speaker

Legacy

The partnership between the Season of Culture and hcmf// played a crucial role in uniting Ukraine and the UK's Arts and Culture sectors to create Ukrainian-focused programmes, fostering collaborations among organisations, artists, and professionals.

Robust partnerships generated new work and sparked ideas and plans for potential future projects.

[The long-term benefit is] continued collaboration with Ukrainian artists and ongoing collaborations between hcmf// and cultural organisations in Ukraine (including Opera Aperta and Jam Factory). In the longer term, we also hope to create opportunities for emerging British artists to export their practice to Ukraine.

Partner, UK

Thanks to the collaboration with British artists, a lot of space and prospects for new cultural projects have emerged.

Professional, Ukraine

Following the festival, BBC Radio broadcast an audio premiere of *Chornobyldorf*.

The second live performance of *Chornobyldorf* at Liverpool's EuroFestival in May 2023 as part of the Season involved adapting the opera into a club-immersion format for broader accessibility. Free tickets were made available to promote free cultural experiences and engage a more diverse audience.

***Chornobyldorf's* appearance there takes our work out of the realm of 'elite' art and into the masses. After all, radiation and post-apocalypse have no class, social or aesthetic boundaries**

Illia Razumeiko, composer, Ukraine.

All proceeds from the performance of *Chornobyldorf* at hcmf// 2022 were donated to humanitarian aid charities in Ukraine.

Picture credit: Press Kit, UK/Ukraine Season of Culture website (<https://ukuaseason.org/press-kit-materials/>)





Case study 4: Let the Body Speak

Location: Online and In-person

Project type: Dance Performance

Timing: 1-14 April 2023

Partner organisations: Ukrainian Contemporary Dance Platform; The Place

Background and context

The Ukrainian Contemporary Dance Platform unites and coordinates contemporary dance choreographers and performers. It organises the International Zelyonka Dance Festival. The UK partner, The Place, is a London-based centre for dance development, with Wayne McGregor CBE as a longstanding Patron.

Due to the displacement of Ukrainian dancers and choreographers following the Russian invasion, all training and mentoring activities transitioned to online platforms, allowing artists to participate regardless of their location.

Project aims

The project aimed to inspire and support choreographers and dancers working during the war. It provided an online platform to showcase and

archive their recent work. It sought to foster cross-cultural collaboration and address the discourse on “*contemporary dance art during the war*” while promoting peer learning among UK and Ukrainian dancers.

Project activities

Body language and dance conveyed war experiences, exploring themes including death, independence and collective trauma while interpreting Ukrainian identity. Ukrainian choreographers collaborated with UK mentors, receiving online consultations and tailored professional development. Three work-in-progress dance pieces were presented to an international audience in the UK on 28 March 2023, with audience feedback shaping future development. Performances in western European venues and in Lviv and were streamed online.



Performances included:

- Bohdan Polishchuk's *Danse Macabre* is a 30-minute dance, physical theatre and musical performance combining experimental research with tradition on how death has changed Ukrainian society.
- Tetiana Znamerovska's *Who Are We* explored psychological trauma from the catastrophic events that affect the nation.
- Yulia Lopata's *Kosachka* celebrated female warriors who choose to fight for freedom.

Each of the videos represents the Ukrainian identity in the way that dance might represent it. It is not a Ukrainian folk dance but a mix of different dance styles and techniques where each of the artists reflects the emotional and physical state of Ukrainian people during the war. Three choreographers who were selected for the support at the last stage of the project represent the ideas which reflect Ukrainian identity in the most original way.

Partner, Ukraine

Performances as part of the Season were held at Les Kurbas Lviv Academic Theatre on 14 and 15 April 2023.

Achievements

The project featured live performances in European cities in which Ukrainian dancers have relocated and an additional USA presentation. A video archive on the "Let the Body Speak" YouTube channel now hosts works, movement, practices and discussions by participating Ukrainian dancers and choreographers, with 140 artists already contributing and ongoing submissions accepted until the war's end.

The experience of production and dance education of our partner is priceless to us.

Partner, Ukraine

The educational programme engaged over 320 participants through a combination of workshops, lectures, online sessions and interviews, covering topics such as drama, composition, experimental dance, site-specific performance, project management, participation in residencies and festivals and dance techniques. Ukrainian choreographers and dancers expanded their skills and approaches through the training programme, while partners delivered innovative online training using new technology.

At first, I joined the educational programme, planned my time and chose lectures. Then I came up with the idea of a dance film, and when I found out that that it would be possible to publish it on the YouTube channel *Let the Body Speak*, I decided to shoot it. I also applied to participate in the preparation of a work-in-progress performance. Throughout the project I received a lot of motivation to do creative work.

Professional, Ukraine

Impact

The new techniques and tools facilitated artistic expression.

Dance is a universal language and a tool for self-expression; each choreographer's physical language is unique to themselves. Introducing new tools to expand their dance vocabulary is therefore a way of increasing their capacity to articulate meaningful and personal concepts through physical movement. Whilst the project was not focused on articulating the unique trauma of the Ukrainian people, it did not exclude them from applying the skills they learned to do so.

Partner, UK

The project fostered new connections and networks among Ukrainian and UK artists, venue curators, managers, and commissioning bodies.

It brings together talented dancers and artists from different countries and with different abilities. The participation gave me the opportunity to meet other professionals in the field of dance and music, establish contacts and expand my professional network. This can open new opportunities for cooperation and performances in the future.

Professional, Ukraine.

This has served to develop audience awareness of Ukrainian Contemporary Dance, of Studio Wayne McGregor and the Zelyonka Festival, and exposed new international audiences to contemporary dance.

Partner, UK

Legacy

Three performance films were presented at the 2023 Venice Biennale Danza.

The *Let the Body Speak* YouTube channel functions as a living digital archive for Ukrainian choreographers and dancers which promotes Ukrainian dance globally. The project partners are dedicated to future collaborations, launching new projects and expanding their international networks.

Future sustainability is inevitably strengthened through the building of professional relationships, both between partners and the individual participant artists, and between native artists themselves, providing mutual support and opening doors to future collaborative opportunities.

Partner, UK

Photograph Credits: Press Kit, UK/Ukraine Season of Culture website (<https://ukuaseason.org/press-kit-materials>)





Case study 5: Skills for Radio Documentaries

Location: Online

Project type: Capacity building

Timing: 1st September 2022 – 30th June 2023

Partner organisations: Suspilne Ukraine (The Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine), BBC Media Action

Background and context

BBC Media Action is the BBC's international development charity. With partners it aims to reach millions through creative communication and trusted media, to help people have their say, understand their rights, responsibilities and each other, and to take action to transform their own lives.

Suspilne Ukraine is the Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine, now working in the challenging circumstances of Russia's invasion.

Originally scheduled as a 3-day offline training in Odessa in May, the project was transformed into a six-day online training session and month-long mentorship programme following the invasion. The project received additional funding through the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO).

Project aims

The project aimed to enhance the professional skills and potential of presenters, editors, and journalists from Ukrainian radio channels in both Kyiv and the regions. Initially focused on pandemic-related content, the project shifted its focus to covering life and mental health in wartime.

It sought to assist Suspilne in raising journalistic standards and to achieve its goal of developing documentary-making skills and delivering public-serving content across all news platforms (radio, film and TV).

The only way to live in such a reality is to make things visible, audible and say it aloud. It is really important to speak about

what has happened to people and we need to find ways to articulate these experiences; initially it was all about speech of hate but this is very destructive for a long time and so we wanted to find other ways of speaking to communicate about the war.

Professional, Ukraine

Project activities

Louise Cotton, a 30-year BBC veteran, conducted a six-day online training programme for Ukrainian professionals, including Oleksandr Zinchenko (Historian, Publicist, Journalist) and Anastasiia Nizhnyk (Consultant Psychotherapist). The programme covered various topics, such as documentary criteria, archival data handling, wartime emotional resilience, and how to talk sensitively about traumatic events with eyewitnesses.

21 Ukrainian participants received online mentoring to develop radio documentaries. They consolidated knowledge and skills learned and equipment was purchased through the project in order to enable them to continue their work after the training had ended.

Achievements

The documentaries aimed to reflect the continuation of everyday life and the preservation of Ukrainian customs and culture during the war.

In the terrible times of Russian aggression ... everything that is not about survival but about life becomes a healthy island that helps to preserve sanity ... children continue to study; musicians write music and sing songs even in the trenches; winemakers make wine as many previous generations did; photographers document war crimes and create works of art that amaze the world. Life goes on.

Partner, Ukraine

The four documentaries broadcast on Radio Kultura in January 2023 were:

- **Musicians and War.** This piece focused on the Ukrainian music community's fight for victory. It featured stories of choice and victory, new creativity and impact. It was selected from many applicants to participate in the 49th International Conference on Radio Documentary / IFC AudiDocs in May 2023 in Reykjavik, Iceland. After the broadcast, delegates participated in a Q&A session and a special plenary session dedicated to Ukraine-related content. An episode was also posted on the Suspilne Kultura YouTube channel and received widespread national and specialist media coverage. The programme was shortlisted for the international Prix Europa award. The broadcaster also made efforts to continue the programme after the project ended - 5 more episodes of the radio documentary project were added to the initial 5 episodes dedicated to the fate of women musicians during the war.



- **One Day in the Life of a Teacher: Big Victories in a Small School.** Journalists spent time at a school observing teaching during air raids, power outages, and other wartime challenges.
- **Ukrainian Sparkling Wine: We Know How to Walk Around It.** Sparkling wine is explored as a symbol of the anti-colonial struggle in the Kherson region which has experienced and partly overcome the occupation and Russian aggression.
- **Photos of War: Stories from Behind the Frame** shows the reality of war crimes and tragedies. Each episode discusses the people, stories and context around a famous photograph.

Impact

The training strengthened soft skills, technical competencies and professional practice by enabling journalists to innovate and produce radio documentaries. Editors and presenters also developed their professional skills.

I was able to gain valuable knowledge and skills in working with documentary characters, stories, scriptwriting, and technical work with sound and recording. Together with the team, we analyzed radio documentaries by our colleagues from the UK and worked in groups to improve our skills. And most importantly, together with the team, we created a topic, finalized it with our coach Louise Cotton, and created 4 episodes of documentaries. It was an incredible experience for me, because thanks to the training, I was able to create the first radio documentary in my life, which was broadcast on national radio.

Professional, Ukraine.

Lead trainer Louise Cotton brought value through experience, expertise, professionalism and knowledge of UK documentary-making across many topics.

Louise gave us valuable advice on working with characters, finding topics, and working with sound. Louise also shared her life hacks on technical work and recording, we discussed the intricacies of work, and learned from examples of British radio documentaries. Louise answered all my questions, accompanied us during the training, and helped us a lot with focusing the topic and preparing our work ... she is a very high-quality and valuable specialist who will be able to help and advise us when working on further documentary projects. It was a unique opportunity to work with a coach who has achieved a lot and shared her knowledge with us.

Professional, Ukraine

Suspilne Ukraine expanded its portfolio of public service radio products to include documentaries, thus increasing its audience share and its competitiveness.

Ukrainian participants showcased reality through documentaries amid an increase in public demand for evidence-based war broadcasting.

Participants were supported to better showcase their work for a wider international platform.

Individuals were supported in their career progression. One participant was made Head of Arts and Culture at Suspilne. Her documentary about Lesia Ukrainka, author of *Cassandra*, was broadcast in Ukraine and online for wider domestic and international audiences.

I made my first radio broadcast about this author who is a very important figure but has been invisible for a long time despite having produced this amazing very modern interpretation of the motivation for war. The UK/Ukraine Season has given it a new lease of life and it feels like a metaphor for me that invisible things about Ukraine are starting to be visible.

Partner, Ukraine

Ukrainian participants made new connections both within and outside Ukraine.

Legacy

The project provided a lasting global platform for Ukrainian voices. Participants are now producing documentaries showcasing Ukrainian artistic and cultural figures at home and abroad.

A compilation of short films, *Shifting perceptions of women's participation and encouraging visibility and inclusion of LGBTQI+ communities in Ukraine*, is a new project resulting from the connections between participants within Suspilne and BBC Media Action.

Subsequently, BBC Media Action released 5 short documentaries on digital platforms as part of the Suspilne *Yes, I am a Woman* project.

Photograph Credits: UK/Ukraine Season's website - <https://ukuaseason.org/event/skills-for-radio-docs/>; Suspilne website - <https://corp.suspilne.media/newsdetails/5821>



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