

**TRANSFORMING**

**NARRATIVES**

**BANGLADESH | BIRMINGHAM | PAKISTAN**

# **Transforming Narratives Open Call Guidelines & Application Process – Collaborative Projects, Artistic Programme**

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Transforming Narratives is managed by Culture Central, and delivered in partnership with The British Council and 12 Birmingham-based cultural partners. It is supported by Arts Council England and delivered in association with The British Council

[transformingnarratives.com](http://transformingnarratives.com)

## About Transforming Narratives (TN)

### **Programme Vision**

To establish Birmingham as a leading international centre for contemporary South Asian arts practice, presenting multi-art forms through an artistic exchange programme, for the mutual benefit of Birmingham and cities in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

### **Programme Mission**

- To carry out an exploration of identities, stories and cities through an ambitious artistic exchange programme. Develop a new generation of artists, creative producers and cultural leaders from Pakistan, Bangladesh and within Birmingham's Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.
- To provide development opportunities to showcase innovative but lesser known and less established artists practicing in Pakistan, Bangladesh and in Birmingham.
- Reshape our understanding of arts practice, city place-making and creative engagement with diversity.
- To develop an international cultural programme through an audience-led approach, placing community consultation and engagement at the heart of the development process to ensure the programme has meaning and relevance to local communities; encouraging more engagement with the arts within those communities.
- To strengthen and develop sustainable cultural relationships between Birmingham's Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities and contemporary society in Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- Create new narratives and telling old stories through a contemporary lens, which have resonance in all three places.
- Through international exchange working with Bangladesh and Pakistan, to support more creative dialogue and collaboration between larger and smaller cultural organisations/creative practitioners/artists across different parts of Birmingham leading to a collective, shared cultural offer as an international city.
- Reach diverse audiences using new technologies and digital engagement

<https://www.transformingnarratives.com/>

## **Overall Guidelines**

- Applicants may apply for more than one programme strand.
- Lead applicants can make only one application per strand, per round, however they can be named partners/collaborators/mentors in other applications.
- Applications are welcome from arts, culture and heritage organisations, individual artists, programmers, producers and consortia partnerships.
- All applicants must demonstrate commitment to the aims and values of Transforming Narratives within an arts and culture context.
- UK lead applicants must demonstrate a strong history of engagement with the city of Birmingham and its cultural ecology.
- All projects within each of the opportunities must meet the programme criteria guidance. Further details on each of the opportunities can be found below.
- Overseas travel arrangements, time frames and itineraries will need to be agreed with British Council representatives and partner organisations in advance of booking travel. All safety and security procedures must be followed, as set by the British Council (UK and overseas).
- If you are applying for more than one open call strand, you must complete a separate application form for each strand.

## **Overall panel selection considerations and criteria**

The panel will consider the overall sequence of Transforming Narratives projects to create a coherent curatorial narrative and contribute to a vibrant and holistic, place-based programme in Birmingham and cities in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Project will be reviewed with consideration for the overall Transforming Narratives project, including its other intersecting strands of work (Cultural Leadership, Critical Dialogue, Marketing and Audience Development, and Archive and Legacy). This will enable them to consider projects which:

- Deliver ambitious work of artistic quality across the programme and make a contribution to the overall quality of programmed work and the level of meaningful engagement with audiences.
- Develop an atmosphere of mutual support and build bridges across different cultures.
- Embed challenging, but responsible critical dialogue around contemporary cultural practices in each of the three participating countries which is dealt with sensitively and appropriately (either peer-to-peer or public facing).
- Look for work that considers legacy and archive
- Ensure there is a balance of work represented from each of the three countries in all of the TN programme.
- Bring coherence to the whole project and represent a range of art forms across the wider programme to support creating a Transforming Narratives

'season' of events (theatre, dance, visual arts, heritage, literature and poetry, music).

- UK lead applicants must be living and working in Birmingham and demonstrate a strong level of engagement in the city.

The panel will be looking for work that is of excellent artistic quality, contemporary and provide mutual benefit for organisations and artists/producers in Birmingham, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

They will score against the following considerations:

- Meaningful and transformative
- Artistic quality and contemporary
- Audience engagement and reach
- Critical dialogue and discussion
- Legacy and archive
- Deliverability
- Proven track record

## Funding Opportunities

Transforming Narratives will include three distinctive funding opportunities:

- (i) **Exchanges programme** These funds can be used to broker new partnerships or develop existing ones through international residencies, exchanges and critical dialogue in Birmingham, Pakistan or Bangladesh (see the guidelines for [exchanges](#) for further information).
- (ii) **Collaborative projects** – These Funds can be used to support ambitious cross country collaboration projects to develop new work and build on existing ideas.
- (iii) **Reciprocal showcasing** – These funds can be used to support showcasing contemporary artistic programme and on building long-lasting relationships cross country relationships (see the guidelines for [reciprocal showcasing](#) for further information).

## Collaborative projects - £150,000

- Two rounds of collaborative funding:
  - 1) August - October 2019 TBC total value of £75K
  - 2) Jan to March 2020 TBC total value of 75K
  
- There will be an opportunity to apply for two tiers: awards up to a maximum of £10,000, and up to a maximum of £50,000. However applicants may make the case to apply for a higher award if the proposed activity is exceptional
  - All collaborations should ideally include two Birmingham based partners (preferably a more established / larger and an emerging/smaller organisation working in partnership) and at least one partner in either Pakistan and/or Bangladesh.
  - The lead organisation should ensure that all collaborative partners have been involved in the design and drafting of the application and it should be signed by representatives from all partners.
  - Where possible, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing between partners should be built into the design of the project.
  - Partners should consider collaborating across a range of platforms including digital, demonstrate a genuine international collaboration with clear artistic aims, and a particular focus on contemporary arts practice across a range of art forms, such as literature, visual arts, theatre, music, dance, outdoor arts.
  - All collaborative projects should include an element of cultural relations and context sharing with one another, such as a public showcase supported by creative documentation, critical dialogue or archive. Details for each of these elements, should be outlined as part of the application.
  - Multiple applications for the same project will not be accepted.
  - All collaborative projects should be able to provide evidence of matched cash funding and in kind support having already been secured and plans of further fundraising.

- Proposals must demonstrate how the project will build legacy, for example contribute to a city wide programme vision, link into leadership development, and develop South Asian and other new audiences.
- There is a requirement that all ticketed events will contribute to the budget for TN. Any applications should assume that 50 % of ticket income will be returned to the TN budget and should only include 50% of projected income in their budget (after all deductions have been factored in).

## Application process and decision process

**An application form is provided where you will be asked to answer the following questions and provide supporting information.**

- Indicate which funding strand you are applying for.
- Indicate which country and partners you are working with.
- Clear proposal answering the following: a) what the project aims to achieve b) how the activity meets the programming criteria c) who is your audience d) plans for critical dialogue, archive or legacy e) who you plan to work with (artists / producers / programmer / organisations f) your relevant experience.
- Project plan to include all planned activity and location, a schedule, and who is doing what.
- Proposed budget to include a clear itemised breakdown of all income and expenditure in the budget template provided.
- Evidence of confirmed match income by letter of support
- Supporting information (as appropriate): CV/ Links/ Short Film/ Audio/ Images/ Evidence of partnerships, match cash e.g. letter of support.

Send your completed application form and equal opportunities form to:

- Subject line: **Collaborative Project Proposal**
- Send to: [transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk](mailto:transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk)
- Deadline: 5pm (GMT) on 31 October 2019.

Access Needs: Please contact the Transforming Narratives team on [transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk](mailto:transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk) or 0121 607 1803 (Tuesday – Thursday) should you need to discuss access needs or require reasonable adjustments in order to make an application.

Selection Panel: Your application will be assessed by a selection panel with representation from:

- Culture Central and Transforming Narratives.
- Arts Council England
- British Council - Representatives from UK, Bangladesh and Pakistan
- Arts organisations - Small and large TN organisations partner organisations.

Notification of application outcome:

- Open call round 1: August until 31 October 2019. Successful applicants will be notified by early December 2019.
- Open Call round 2: January to March 2020. Successful applicants will be notified by early May 2020.

[Sign up to our newsletter](#) to keep updated on further details.

## **Contact**

- General open call queries: [transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk](mailto:transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk)
- Open call queries related to Pakistan: [talha.mufti@britishcouncil.org.pk](mailto:talha.mufti@britishcouncil.org.pk)
- Open call queries related to Bangladesh: [lfra.lqbal@britishcouncil.org](mailto:lfra.lqbal@britishcouncil.org)

## **Further reading and resources**

- What do we mean by [critical dialogue and legacy and archive?](#)
- [Transforming Narratives research resource](#)