

TRANSFORMING

NARRATIVES

BANGLADESH | BIRMINGHAM | PAKISTAN

Transforming Narratives Open Call Guidelines & Application Process – Exchanges, 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

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.
- (ii) **Collaborative projects** – These funds can be used to support ambitious cross country collaboration projects to develop new work and build on existing ideas (see the guidelines for [collaborative projects](#) for further information).
- (iii) **Reciprocal showcasing** – These funds can be used to support showcasing contemporary artistic programmes and on building long-lasting relationships and cross country relationships (see the guidelines for [reciprocal showcasing](#) for further information).

Exchanges programme – Birmingham, Pakistan & Bangladesh.

- Two open call application rounds for exchanges :

- 1) August to October 2019 total value of £60,000
- 2) Jan to March 2020 total value of £40,000 (with a legacy focus).

- Grants of up to £3,000 will be awarded per applicant, with a maximum of one application per organisation in each round.
- There will be a maximum of 20 grants awarded for exchanges in the first round and a 12 grants awarded for exchanges in round 2, with a proportionate allocation to all three countries.
 - The grant can be used to broker new partnerships or develop existing ones through residencies.
 - Applicants must demonstrate clear aims, itinerary, and timeframes proposed for the exchange/residency.
 - Applicants will be expected to report back on the quality of experience of the exchange, and report findings.
 - Where applicants have already benefited from exchange funds, a clear rationale should be provided on how this exchange/residency will build on the previous one. They should also demonstrate how they have used learning from the previous.
 - Applicants are encouraged to cover the cost from their own funds or seek additional funding from other sources if more than one individual from each organisation is interested in visiting. Exceptions can be considered for individuals and/or small organisations demonstrating strong rationale and where the exchange necessitates more than one person traveling
 - Applicants will be required to articulate their intended outcome of the exchanges programme, but cannot be reliant on further rounds of Transforming Narratives funding to enable the next phase of their plans.
 - Some of the exchange grants (round 2 only) could support cultural leaders to attend the Transforming Narratives final conference (UK) in early 2021.
 - Applicants must liaise with overseas partners to shape the residency and confirm timeframe of travel, and itinerary in advance of booking any travel.

- All applicants should work with their host organisations in the country they are visiting and the British Council offices (where exchanges are to take place in Bangladesh and Pakistan) to organise a critical dialogue event with peers or members of the public, exploring a theme of mutual interest. These should be built into the programme submitted from an early stage, be planned well in advance to ensure maximum engagement locally and allow adequate time for working with partners on marketing and audience development.
- All applicants should demonstrate they are also investing matched funding in the exchanges (in kind or cash), and that they have the capability to cashflow their visit in the event of any issues with disbursement of funds.
- Overseas travel will need to be agreed with British Council representatives in advance of booking travel arrangements. Time scales are to be agreed with overseas partner organisations and British Council officers.

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 and archive or legacy e) who you plan to work with (artists / producers / programmers/ 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: **Exchange Proposal**
- Send to: transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk
- Deadline: 5pm (GMT) on 31 October 2019.

Access Needs: Please contact the Transforming Narratives team on 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 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.

Artistic Open Call Briefings

We will be hosting two open call info sessions in September:

- 25 September: [Midlands Arts Centre](#)
- 26 September: [STEAMhouse, Digital Cities](#)

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

Contact

- General open call queries: transformingnarratives@culturecentral.co.uk
- Open call queries related to Pakistan: Quratulain.Amjad@britishcouncil.org.pk
- Open call queries related to Bangladesh: lfra.lqbal@britishcouncil.org

Further reading and resources

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