

Call out: Cultural Producers Programme applications

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Supported by the British Council Cultural Economy programme, and partnered by Common Purpose South Africa, Business and Arts South Africa (Basa) is launching a new Cultural Producers Programme for which applications are now open.



The Programme will take the form of an intensive leadership accelerator training programme, which will also place the candidates into South African creative/arts organisations that have identified the need for capacity-building leadership skills. Additionally, the cohort will receive training in business skills through the British Council Creative Economy E-learning programme, as well as micro-grants for the creation of new cultural/creative products. In 2022, with the SOCreative Hubs Summit digital meet-ups, the participants will connect with other young hub managers and creators from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and the UK to network and exchange ideas and opportunities for co-curation. □□

Says British Council's Head of Arts South Africa and Cultural Exchange Sub-Saharan Africa, Farai Ncube Tarwireyi: "There is increasing recognition in South Africa of the creative industries as a vital source of income for young people. Through the Cultural Producers Programme, mid-level experienced cultural producers can advance their skills, gain confidence, build global relationships and networks, and share their knowledge about cultural intelligence in multi-sectoral/disciplinary cultural and creative environments. In turn, this will enable them to realise their potential and participate in strong and inclusive communities, create new businesses and careers, develop meaningful partnerships on an international scale, and meet market demands for creative and innovative work."

□□ "With news of the country's unemployment rate climbing to 34.9%, the cultural and creative sector has the potential to provide low-barrier access to entrepreneurial opportunities and career development, particularly amongst the youth," adds Basa CEO, Ashraf Johaardien. "Leadership skills are essential in any sector. However, in the creative sector, these attributes are not commonly mentored or formally taught – especially in the arena of cultural production and management. For this reason, organisations and projects with great promise often plateau or fizzle out before fulfilling their true potential. That's because the kind of training needed for sustained arts development is actually very different to the skill sets required for unleashing creativity – and that is precisely the gap which the Cultural Producers Programme aims to address," he explains. □□

Aimed at experienced/mid-level cultural producers aged 18–35 years, the programme will create the next generation of upskilled leaders to take the sector forward; accelerating growth in skills development; capacitating global networks, and driving innovative new work in ever-changing markets. Its objective is to strengthen the creative economy ecosystem between South Africa and the UK. The project will bring together a group of 25 mid-career creative and cultural producers already working in South Africa, united as a single network to enable innovative work practice.

□□“At Common Purpose, we are devoted to developing leaders who can cross boundaries – between geographies, generations, sectors, specialisations, backgrounds and beliefs. This is borne out of the realisation that we live in a world full of complex problems that cross boundaries and yet most leaders do not,” says Common Purpose South Africa CEO, Elsbeth Dixon. She adds, “That is why we are delighted to partner on the Cultural Producers Programme to equip the South African creative sector with skills that will allow them to work more collaboratively, build diverse and resilient teams, and be able to navigate the challenges posed by the disruptive world we currently live in.”

□□Applications for the Cultural Producers Programme are now open and the deadline for applications is 21 January 2022. Successful applicants will be announced in February 2022. For eligibility criteria, further information and to apply, please visit https://bit.ly/CPP_info.

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