

# TELLING THE EU REGION STORY



## A TSUNAMI OF SCIENCE

2016 SAW THE SIXTH SOFIA SCIENCE FESTIVAL, WHICH OVER THE YEARS HAS HIGHLIGHTED BOTH UK SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION AND OUR PLACE AS A LEADING ADVOCATE FOR EDUCATION IN SCIENCE.

During the festival audiences from across Bulgaria learnt how to land on a duck-shaped comet (courtesy of the Rosetta Mission's Matt Taylor), how to solve a 500-year-old murder mystery (that of Richard III's, solved by the University of Leicester's Dr Turi King), investigated the roots of lying, and what Shakespeare and science had to say about it. The tenth Bulgarian winner of Famelab was also crowned.

All of this, plus much more, took place over the course of four days, with more than 10,000+ people turning out to hear 90 speakers from Bulgaria, Europe and the US present 70 separate sessions. We also made arrangements for a further 2,000 school children to attend. In support of our belief in the importance of inclusion, all sessions were translated, some of them in sign language.

*"Our time at the Science Festival ranks among the very best experiences we have ever had overseas, and that is all down to you and your great team. It will motivate and inspire me for years to come."*

Dr Frank Burnet MBE,  
Emeritus Professor of Science Communication,  
University of the West of England





## EU EUROPE PORTUGAL

### HELPING 1 MILLION PEOPLE WITH THEIR GRAMMAR

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VODAFONE, OUR LEARN ENGLISH APPS ARE NOW INSTALLED ON OVER 1 MILLION MOBILE PHONES IN PORTUGAL.

In Europe we knew that there was a market for English language learning through apps, and thanks to this new partnership, three of our LearnEnglish apps are being automatically installed onto a million Android smartphones, alongside significant promotion to Vodafone's iOS customers.

Vodafone is the most valuable UK brand of British origin and the 22nd most valuable brand in the world, and so this project provides a great opportunity to learn, and then meet the needs of 16-35 year olds in this area.

Portugal is a test bed for potential further collaboration with the Vodafone Group in other countries where we both operate.

*"The British Council has always demonstrated a huge interest in the project and partnership with Vodafone. The Portugal team have always been very cooperative and supportive, while remaining focused on the main goals."*

Francisco Viana, Vodafone Portugal,  
Head of Mobile Local Apps



## **EU EUROPE**

### **GERMANY**

## **CELEBRATING UK CRIME FICTION**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY BERLIN WE ORGANISED THE 31ST LITERATURE SEMINAR, FOCUSSED ON "BRITCRIME – A NEW GOLDEN AGE OF UK CRIME-WRITING".

The seminar featured a diverse line-up of UK crime writers including Jake Arnott and Philip Kerr, and was chaired by John Mullan, professor of English Literature at University College London. The audience of academics, publishers, translators, teachers, bloggers, students, and crime fiction fans celebrated the writers in public readings, thematic workshops and a lively panel discussion.

Once again the seminar proved an international platform for UK writers with participants from Germany, Russia, Spain, and Italy, a direct connection to Barcelona's BCNegra festival and live-streaming of all sessions to a global audience in 50 countries. The global interest in the debate was manifest through 5.5 million hashtag impressions from our live Twitter coverage, #BritLitBerlin.

*"Back from #BritLitBerlin with my brain in a tizz – surrounded by smart people saying Really Interesting Things about crime fiction."*  
@ValMcdermid





## EU EUROPE

GREECE, LATVIA, GERMANY & CYPRUS

## DEBATING EUROPE'S CHALLENGES

EUROPE IS FACING GREAT UNREST. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BBC WORLD SERVICE WE TOOK THEIR "WORLD QUESTIONS" BROADCAST TO FOUR COUNTRIES TO DEBATE THE ISSUES AFFECTING THEM BOTH LOCALLY AND ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

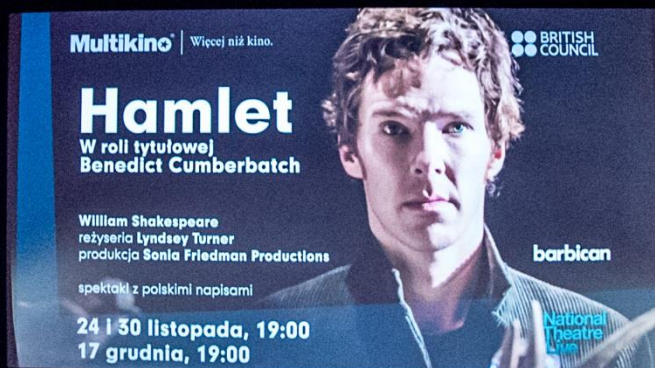
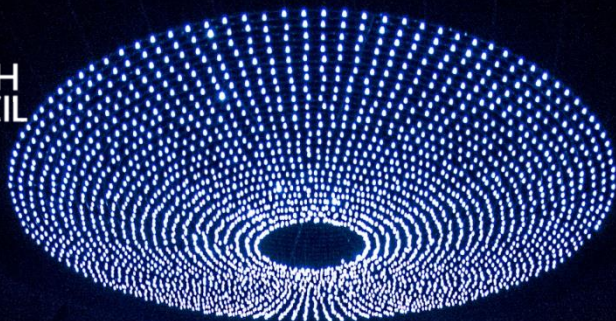
These included the future of the Greek economy, Russia's role in the Baltics, Germany's response to migration, and the prospect of reconciliation in Cyprus. Recorded in front of a live audience, members of the public put their questions to panels that included the Greek Finance Minister, the Mayor of Riga, the German Migration Minister and the Leader of the Governing Party of the Republic of Cyprus.

Over 1,000 people attended the four broadcasts, with 40,000 people listening to the first three recordings. Broadcast live, an audience of 2.4m people tuned in for the Nicosia show.

*"Getting local knowledge, access to networks and the opportunity to add a social element to the event itself – that's what we value most in our collaboration with the British Council."*

BBC Executive Producer





## EU EUROPE POLAND

### USING TECHNOLOGY TO SHOWCASE BRITISH THEATRE

THANKS TO A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE BRITISH COUNCIL AND BRITISH-OWNED CINEMA CHAIN MULTIKINO, AUDIENCES IN POLAND HAVE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE THE BEST BRITISH PLAYS STAGED BY THE LEADING THEATRES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

The plays, recorded live using state-of-the-art technology, are delivered in 17 Polish cities, making the audience feel as if they were watching the shows on stage. In 2015 over 40,000 viewers experienced British theatre with performances by, among others, Helen Mirren and Tom Hiddlestone.

So far in 2016 13 Shakespearean performances have been screened as part of Shakespeare Lives, attracting 12,500 viewers. 14 more Shakespearean plays are planned, including further screenings of the record-breaking “Hamlet” with Benedict Cumberbatch. Screenings are in English with Polish subtitles and include productions by the National Theatre, Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company, Royal Opera House, the Globe, and Royal Shakespeare Company.

*“Partnering with the British Council enabled us to grow the project immensely and reach new young audiences who value high quality art and have become frequent visitors to Multikino.”*

Mariusz Spisz, President of the Board,  
Multikino Media



## THE BIG DANCE PLEDGE

OVER 600 PEOPLE TOOK PART IN BIG DANCE EVENTS AND TRAINING DAYS IN MADRID, SAN SEBASTIÁN AND VALENCIA, ORGANISED BY THE BRITISH COUNCIL.

Amateurs and professional dancers took up the challenge of following the choreography, created by Akram Khan. The support given by the Olatu Tanka festival and the Fil d'Arena Dansa-Teatre company in San Sebastián and Valencia was key to reaching people wanting to take taking part in this inclusive initiative.

Sessions were run at the Dance Centre at the Teatros del Canal Madrid for dance schools, companies and professional dancers, and an open dress rehearsal was organised took place on International Dance Day (29 April).

*"Action! And the dancers began to move towards their position on the stage. Each of them had already chosen their favourite style, the rhythm that suited them best and the space they would occupy. The essence of each dancer merged into the here and now and the atmosphere evoked by the space. The best was to come at the end: the final embrace. The world revolved to the pace of the BIGDance that day".*

Enara Tejasdas, BigDance participant, San Sebastián



**EU EUROPE**

GREECE, ITALY, POLAND (&amp; SERBIA)

**SUPPORTING YOUTH  
AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT**

SEEING YOUNG AUDIENCES THROUGH THE EYES  
OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

Led by British Council, Take Over, a Creative Europe co-funded project, brings together Bios, Chorea Theatre, Kolarac Endowment and Teatro Limonaia, driven by a desire to connect with young adults and engage with a more diverse audience. Take Over explores a demand-led audience development model by establishing a youth board in the four organisations. After workshops attended by 300+ young people our partners chose 8-16 young people to sit on their own youth boards.

This autumn these youth boards will 'take over' their venues, curating their own festivals to reflect their generation's artistic tastes and helping partner venues better understand how to involve and engage young audiences. We have organised study trips to Edinburgh and Amsterdam, giving the youth boards a chance to prepare for their own events.

*"Take Over has been a unique experience for me as it is a chance to learn how to plan an event from the beginning and a chance to make our own ideas come true".*

Anastasia Kallou,  
Take Over Bios Youth Board member





# BIOLOGICALS



## EU EUROPE

ALL 30 COUNTRIES

## #SHAKESPEARENOFILTER

SHAKESPEARE LIVES IS A MAJOR GLOBAL PROGRAMME FOR 2016 CELEBRATING BOTH HIS WORKS AND INFLUENCE ON CULTURE, EDUCATION AND SOCIETY ON THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH.

As part of this, we've launched "#ShakespeareNoFilter, a campaign which sees us retell three classic Shakespeare plays through Instagram. It all started in August with 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', interpreted as a group of intertwined lovers travelling to European festivals as a band, we will focus on the stories which have strong European roots.

By following the story on social media, audiences across Europe are able to engage with Shakespeare's themes of love, friendship and jealousy in a fresh way, and connect with talented young UK performers. Follow the story on Instagram @britishcouncileurope

*"Being part of this project is something more than just acting; I'm able to help reach out and make Shakespeare more attractive to everyone. Using Instagram as a platform gives people my age a chance to really engage with Shakespeare."*

Liam Joseph,  
Actor (Lysander)

## EXPLORING MIGRATION, THE CREATIVE ARTS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

WE DEVELOPED LEARNING LAB WITH THE FORUM ON MIGRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS, LATER MERGED WITH OTHER ARTS-LED MIGRATION PROJECTS TO FORM COUNTERPOINT ARTS, TO ENCOURAGE DEBATE ON MIGRATION AND ART.

The Labs take many forms: roundtables, workshops, modules, practical studios/incubators and public programmes. They are designed to facilitate lively imagining and debate, forging alliances between creative artists, curators, educators, community organisers/activists, policymakers and cultural business sectors, etc. The resulting learning is put on the Learning Lab Editions website in the form of freely accessible resources: including films, audio, interviews, essays, working papers etc.

*“Learning Lab believes in making research an accessible activity for everyone. Learning Labs are designed to mobilise horizontal, democratic spaces for peer-to-peer learning and the creation of new knowledge.”*

Áine O'Brien,  
Co-Director of Counterpoints Arts

*Image title: The Value in Making: Crafting, Memory, Migration and Storytelling.  
Image credit: 'Turn Right at the Mango Tree', Livstycket*





**EU EUROPE**  
CROATIA

## **CELEBRATING 70 YEARS IN CROATIA**

LOOKING BACK AT THE CELEBRATIONS OF OUR ANNIVERSARY IN CROATIA IN 2016, ONE EVENT CERTAINLY STANDS OUT – THE VISIT OF HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES AND THE DUCHESS OF CORNWALL, HELPING OPEN OUR INCLUSIVE DESIGN EXHIBITION.

As the Vice-Patron of the British Council, HRH the Prince of Wales readily accepted the invitation to visit Croatia and open the exhibition, which showcased the results of several of British Council Croatia's projects with designers and people with disabilities, including the latest and the largest EU funded one called Design for Inclusion.

The event was supported by the British Embassy in Zagreb and was reported in all the news in all of the media. 350 guests, including our partners, were all honoured and excited to meet the Prince and spoke highly both of our work in Croatia and the exhibition.

*"I often find, when I'm travelling in different parts of the world I meet all sorts of people who have a particular fondness or affection for Britain that can be traced back to the British Council."*  
HRH Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales

## EUROPE'S CREATIVE HUBS

CREATIVE HUBS HAVE BECOME NEW MODELS FOR CREATIVE ENTERPRISES TO GROW, AND AN INVALUABLE MECHANISM OF CHANGE, THEIR UNIQUE STRUCTURES PROVING GREAT DRIVERS FOR BOTH GROWTH AND INNOVATION.

The European Creative Hubs Network is a two-year project, run by the British Council in partnership with 7 organisations across Europe, and co-funded by the European Commission.

The project partners aim to build a network of minimum 300 creative hubs across Europe by bringing creative hub leaders together in fora and by offering training programmes to help hub leaders better their skills and strengthen their hub. Additionally, the project will create a collection of case studies and recommendations for the creative hubs sector and the policy makers, and help the network become self-sustainable in 2018.

*"It's been wonderful working with partners further developing the programme. We're very excited to be representing the UK in this Europe-wide collaboration."*

Janine Matheson, Director of Creative Edinburgh  
(UK-based hub partner)



## WELCOME INFANTS

ON ITS 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY, THE BRITISH COUNCIL SCHOOL (BCS) RETURNS TO THE HEART OF MADRID WITH A NEW CENTER OPENING ITS DOORS TO STUDENTS AGED 2-5.

Located in Madrid, this new centre maintains the same revolutionary and innovative characteristic spirit of the BCS, where students follow the English National Curriculum. The new school has modern classrooms where children can develop their mental and physical abilities while learning through games and activities inside and outside of the classroom.

Since 1940 nearly 2,000 pupils have completed their studies each year, and 45% continued their education at UK Universities. BCS has won international recognition for excellent levels in education, which promotes continued personal development. They adapt their plans to the needs of students and society. Therefore opening in a new location was a response to those parents who are looking for the best education for their children while maintaining close ties with our institution.

*"We try to evolve and adapt to changing times. We are proud to present this new center which complies with the philosophy of the British Council School, making sure that everything is in place to make children feel at home."*

Gillian Flaxman, Head of the British Council School.



**EU EUROPE**  
GREECE & POLAND

## SHAPING A NEW GENERATION OF CULTURAL LEADERS

THE CULTURAL SECTOR IS AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTOR TO ECONOMIC GROWTH, MAKING IT VITAL TO EQUIP THE WORKFORCE WITH THE RIGHT SKILLS TO RESPOND TO SHIFTING NEEDS IN THE LABOUR MARKET, RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE AND NEW EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS.

In response, in 2016 we joined forces with partners including the Arts Marketing Association, the Audience Agency and Goldsmiths College to launch the first edition of the Cultural Skills Academy in Athens and Warsaw.

The Academy covered three tailored courses in Audience Development, Business Modelling and Digital Strategies. Each course was delivered by leading UK experts, and followed by online mentoring and 'train the trainer' days, allowing participants to share the learning in their own organisations.

74% of participants rated the courses as good value for money, and 93% highly valued the innovative engaging methods used. We are now planning to run the courses in more countries, in order to build a more vibrant, robust and sustainable cultural sector.

*"There's a lot of blunt honesty within the group, which is very powerful".*

Siân Prime, Director,  
MA Cultural and Creative Entrepreneurship,  
Goldsmiths College, University of London



## CREATING EFFICIENCY THROUGH FACEBOOK

OUR TEAM NEEDED A PLATFORM TO SHARE UPDATES WITH EXAM INVIGILATORS AND SUPERVISORS. USING FACEBOOK, THEY CREATED A WELCOMING SPACE TO DO JUST THAT, AS WELL AS FACILITATE NETWORKING BETWEEN ITS MEMBERS.

The platform has over 300 members, and gives them the opportunity to network, ask questions and give feedback directly to our exams team, improving our overall exam processes. Facebook also allows us to react to unexpected situations quickly and effectively, like finding available staff to invigilate or supervise on short notice. Queries can be dealt with much quicker and exam documents can be shared and found in one place.

This measure, unique to the Netherlands operation, has created a friendly community, making supervisors and invigilators feel more engaged with our work.

*"I find it to be exceptionally informative. The FB account is updated by dedicated, hard-working staff and, I find that, especially during the exam periods, vacancies are advertised and everyone is notified long beforehand of any changes, problems, queries, etc."*  
Judy Allard, Exams Supervisor

## CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY

THE BRITISH COUNCIL IN HUNGARY HAS BEEN PART OF THE HUNGARIAN BUSINESS LEADERS FORUM'S DIVERSITY TARGET GROUP SINCE 2009 – FORMERLY CALLED AS HR WORKGROUP FOR DIVERSITY.

The target group's mission is to mainstream the concept and best practice of diversity management as part of the sustainable development of business and wider society. In 2016 the Target Group's flagship program launched the EU Diversity Charter in Hungary, in partnership with the Consulting and Corporate Community Association.

On this occasion, Ágota Bíró, Business Development Manager was recognised for her "enthusiastic and exceptional" contribution to the initiation of the EU Diversity Charter in Hungary, at the same time helping to reinforce the British Council's EDI commitment in Hungary and beyond.

*"We do have a responsibility to share our knowledge and experience in diversity mainstreaming. In Europe and in Hungary, it is more important than ever. The Diversity Charter can take this to a higher level. We need to be part of it."*

Ágota Bíró, Business Development Manager, British Council Hungary