**A REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL**

**CULTURAL POLICIES AND INITIATIVES**

**FOR THE VISUAL ARTS SECTOR**

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December 2017

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# INTRODUCTION AND MAIN SOURCES

Through this project, supported by the Scottish Graduate School of Arts and Humanities, research was conducted into cultural policy in Europe and North America with the aim of identifying best practice examples of policy, legislation and government-led initiatives that positively impact the contemporary visual arts sector.

The first half of this report summarises some of these international best practices and juxtaposes them with some UK examples. The starting point for this enquiry was the Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe Compedium, a transnational project initiated by the Steering Committee for Culture of the Council of Europe which has been running as a joint venture with the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research (ERICarts) since 1998. Another important source of information was data gathered from SCAN members and stakeholders. As well as reaching out through a project-specific survey, the data gathered through the Visual Arts Review Question 58 (for individuals) and Question 63 (for organisations) was consulted. Thirdly, various platforms for arts news and information, as well as artists’ association in various countries have provided further leads on best practices.

The second half of this report delves deeper into the cultural policy of three geographical regions that have a strong reputation in supporting the visual arts: the Nordic region, Germany and Canada. The detailed overviews of these regions are also based on the ERICarts Compedium, as well as feedback from representatives of the British Council and the Canada Council for the Arts. Furthermore, local arts professionals were interviewed with the aim of assessing the experiences of artists, curators and institutions working within these regions and demonstrating how the policy situation in their local context impacts their work, reach and impact.

# BEST PRATICES IN INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

Although countries do inevitably opt for a wide variety of policies and practices, it is possible to summarise trends and particularly successful examples that emerge from the data gathered. Five policy different areas were investigated: legislation, artists’ livelihoods, distribution of state funding, cultural mobility and EDI and education.

## Legislation

Status of the Artist is a category of legislation directed at improving the social and economic situation of professional artists and outlining their importance to society. Such legislation only exists in a limited number of countries. Canada has been at the forefront of this practice, with Quebec province to having its own status of the artist legislation since 1987. At federal level the country followed suit in 1995, when the Status of the Artist Act officially recognised the contributions artists make to Canadian cultural, social, economic and political life and established a policy on the professional status of the artist. More detailed information is provided in the section on Canada below. Morocco also adopted status of the artist legislation in 2003, including sections on remuneration, social security and juvenile artists.

In a small number of countries cultural spending is earmarked in legislation. In Austria, the Federal Arts Promotion Act has been in place since 1988, specifying that the federal budget must include the requisite funds for public arts promotion and that the social situation of artists and the framework for private sponsoring need to be improved. The law stipulates that promotion has to be directed mainly at "contemporary art, its spiritual changes and its variety" and lists the disciplines to be supported, including visual arts, by way of production, presentation, dissemination and preservation of works and documents. Facilities that serve this purpose have to be similarly supported. The law also lists individual measures that may be taken (e.g. funds, grants, acquisitions, loans, commissions, prizes awarded). In Finland, where the national lottery scheme is instrumental for financing the cultural sector, the Lottery Act and the Act Regulating the Use of the Profits of Lottery / Lotto earmark the returns from the state's lotto monopoly towards specific purposes, including a specific percentage (currently 38.5%) to the arts. In Belgium, subsidy legislation exists in the shape of the Arts Decree introduced in 2004 to support the emancipation of all art disciplines and provide funding covering several years. Furthermore, the Act supports international initiatives, arts education or socio-artistic projects, publications, and support centres for the different arts disciplines. In the Netherlands, the Cultural Policy Act 1993 regulates arts subsidies based on cultural policy decisions and enables the Minister of Education, Culture and Science to create funds to finance the arts and culture. The Act also regulates specific policy and financial relations between the State, provinces and municipalities.

In the UK, there is no over-arching legislative Act specifically governing culture, though legislation has been introduced over many years concerning specific cultural sectors. In addition to the UK Government, the Scottish Parliament and Northern Ireland Assembly can enact their own primary legislation and raise taxes for their own countries. This can include culture. Local authorities are empowered in all four countries in the UK to support culture, although such powers are discretionary rather than mandatory. Legislation does predetermine how National Lottery revenue is distributed, however the arts come under a category entitled ‘good causes’ and the percentage received can vary from year to year. In 2016-17 for instance, the income for good causes fell by 15% compared to the previous year.

## Artists’ Livelihoods

Countries that provide special social security, welfare or taxation regimes for the cultural sector are few in number. In most cases, freelance artists and arts professionals depend on the general social security regime which can pose difficulties if, for instance, they are urged to take up non-artistic work when claiming unemployment benefits.

Some countries do provide support for artists in joining the national social security schemes. Austria, for example, has set up a fund that grants artists a subsidy for social insurance contributions, with additional support available for artists in social need. Such individual subsidies are also available in Germany, where, additionally, companies that benefit from the work of artists and writers are obligated to pay an artists’ social insurance levy that contributes to the Artists’ Social Insurance Fund for those who are not in full-time employment. An alternative solution has been found in Finland, where self-employed and freelance artists and cultural workers may join the pension and social security system of agricultural entrepreneurs, in the absence of a sector-specific scheme. This practice was introduced in 2009 as national social security protection offers limited support for self-employed arts professionals.

A number of tax relief initiatives for artists are also available. In Austria and Denmark, it is possible to spread artistic income over a number of years for the purposes of taxation, to account for the fluctuation in artists’ revenues. In Canada a number of tax deductions are available for self-employed artists, such as travel and work space expenses, professional membership fees and promotional costs. In Belgium a ‘small fees scheme’ ensures that small payments received by artists are tax exempt. Awards and grants are also tax exempt in a number of countries, although not in the UK where the Inland Revenue has ruled that grants and awards to artists are taxable.

With respect to guaranteed income for artists, the Nordic countries have reputedly been seen as leading the way. However, a lifetime salary scheme is not the norm in any of the Nordic countries and has been recently discontinued in Norway. Long-term grants are more common, in general for up to 5 years, although in Finland these can be up to 10 years for of artists of high merit. Exhibition payment rights schemes are also in operation in a number of countries. In Canada, CARFAC, the professional association for visual artists, provides a minimum fee calculator to ensure that artists are correctly remunerated for a variety of activities. In Sweden, the MU agreement is a government statute that requires the state to pay individual compensation for public exposition of works of visual and applied art. The European Artists’ Rights (EAR) is a collaborative project established to explore how visual artists are remunerated for their work, benchmarking findings against Sweden’s MU agreement. Members include representatives of artists’ unions from a number of European countries, such as Scotland, Iceland or Norway. An alternative for supplementing artistic income was found in Belgium, although it is currently no longer available. The initiative provided loans for professional artists in the context of selected projects. The received microcredit would be paid back over a period of up to 4 years within an agreed schedule.

Resources that are non-monetary can be equally important, especially as many artists do not benefit from the helpful infrastructure provided by an employer. Ease of access to information can assist artists in better managing their career and available opportunities. Austria for example provides a number of centralised guides and handbooks, from advice for foreign artists and organisations to support in accessing EU cultural funding. In France, the Centre national des arts plastiques (National Centre of Visual Arts) lists, in special guides available on-line, private and public aids in favour of artists as well as residences for artists, curators, art critics, art theorists and historians. As well as information, artists can benefit from administrative and advisory support or skills development. Several countries in Europe are part of the SMartAT (Société Mutuelle Pour Artists) network, a non-profit organisation that takes over administrative tasks for artists and creative workers with the aim of achieving improved framework conditions and minimising risks. In the USA, the National Arts Marketing Project attempts to offer artists the skills to effectively market their work and engage audiences, while the city of Seattle has a leadership development scheme for artists and art professionals. In Europe, the Crowdfunding4Culture hub is aimed at cultural and creative professionals who wish to learn more about this practice.

A wish for more inter-disciplinary opportunities and work spaces is also evident among SCAN members. Institutions such as the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in Canada or the Danish Arts Workshops were named in the VAR data. The Banff Centre offers residencies in all artistic fields, encouraging practitioners to collaborate and network, with the inter-disciplinary aspect being particularly important. The Danish Arts Workshops, under the umbrella of the Danish Ministry of Culture, provide a wide variety of working facilities for arts practitioners, as well as guidance in using the equipment and materials from trained professionals. In the Netherlands, several post-academic institutes for research and production in the fields of fine art, design and art theory offer opportunities for artists, such as funded residencies within academic-type environments. Examples include De Ateliers, Rijksacademie and Jan Van Eyck Academie. The Rijksacademie for example has more than fifty studios available for residencies.

In the UK, there are no specific social security measures governing the cultural sector. Support for artists differs markedly from, for example, the social welfare approach of Nordic countries. Support primarily comes through the Arts Council system or agencies such as the Crafts Council in the form of grants, or bursaries and commissions, via support for projects from foundations, or in the form of sponsored prizes, however the Inland Revenue has ruled that many grants and awards to artists are taxable. Freelancing artists are also permitted to average their profits for two successive years in case of significant fluctuation, to help reduce the overall tax bill. Insurance costs can also become a burden on visual artists. Many studio complexes will not insure the personal or creative contents of each individual studio, and artists often find they have to take out their own exhibition insurance where owners or administrators of premises do not. Artist organisations such as a-n and the Scottish Artists Union offer insurance packages as part of their membership offers. In 1980 there was a voluntary Exhibition Payment Right (EPR) scheme in England and Wales, which remunerated artists for the exhibition of their work in public galleries, however by the late 1990s this had disappeared. The Scottish Artists Union has been campaigning on fair payment for many years and in 2017 a-n concluded the first phase of their Paying Artists Campaign and launched a new suggested payment structure and guidance. The main UK art councils have supported the recommendations. Additional income sometimes comes from DACS, which collects and distributes royalties to visual artists and their estates through Payback, Artist's Resale Right, Copyright Licensing and Artimage.

## Distribution of State Funds

In many of the countries included in the study, funding for the visual arts is dispensed according to the ‘arm’s length’ principle via a cultural body or foundation that is independent from governmental involvement. A basic principle of the Dutch government for example is to remain neutral in assessing arts issues and to focus on policy only, so they support the visual arts and cultural heritage through the Mondriaan Fund which acts independently. The fund aims to encourage innovation and excellence in these fields by supporting outstanding artists, cultural heritage and art organisations and projects, both in the Netherlands and abroad. As well as managing a wide variety of funding schemes, the Mondriaan Fund can also implement initiatives such as the Private Art Buyers Scheme [KunstKoop] which aims to stimulate the private market for art. Under this scheme, people can buy art on credit at over a hundred galleries spread across the Netherlands.

In some countries, the regional and local authorities have a greater degree of autonomy. This is particularly true for countries that function on a federal model. In Germany, the individual federal states can transfer budgetary resources for culture to the municipalities at their own discretion. So, although Germany has several national funding bodies for the arts (Stiftung Kunstfonds, Kulturstiftung des Bundes), it also had a large number of regional and local initiatives that maintain the vitality of the sector, including individual federal states foundations for art and culture. In Belgium the French, Flemish and German-speaking communities have enjoyed cultural autonomy since the 1970s. Although the federal state has retained responsibility for the main cultural institutions based in Brussels, the three communities each have their own funding bodies and cultural initiatives. For example, the Flemish community purchases works of art for the collection of the Flemish museums of contemporary art and for its own collection. In France, in the context of budget austerity, a number of ‘cultural pacts’ have been drawn up, in which the State committed to maintain its level of cultural financing to territorial authorities as long as the authorities committed to do the same regarding its own cultural budget.

To support the visual arts at national level, percentage for art schemes are also fairly common. They are based on the principle that a certain percentage (usually between 0.5 and 2%) of the total amount spent on the construction, renovation or extension of a public building must be reserved for contemporary artworks specially conceived for the building in question. Some countries push the envelope by expanding the remit of the scheme. In the Netherlands, as a result of the percentage scheme the Government Buildings Agency (Rijksgebouwendienst) is the biggest commissioner in the field of the visual arts. More recently they have included increasing numbers of works of an experimental or conceptual nature, and the scheme has been applied for the first time in a large-scale infrastructure project, the High Speed Line South, with photographers being awarding commissions to record the cultural and social consequences of the new train line. In Ireland, the Per Cent for Art scheme was first introduced in 1978, whereby 1% of the cost of any publicly funded capital, infrastructural and building development can be allocated to the commissioning of a work of art. The publicart.ie website carries not only a directory of all commissioned artworks, but also all the latest news and opportunities for artists, video interviews with artists and commissioners, and reading material on all things from how to commission an artist, through to excerpts from the latest art world publications and discourses.

In addition to this, countries also invest in their own national collection of contemporary art. In Austria, the government purchases works by contemporary fine artists as a support measure. Purchased works are administered by the federal Artothek and made available to federal offices and other public institutions, or loaned out to exhibitions. Since 1981, photographic works have also been included in the purchases, giving rise to the most important national photographic collection in Austria. In France schemes exist at both national and regional level to fund the acquisition, distribution and conservation of contemporary artworks. Since their creation in the 1980s within the context of devolution policies, the Regional Funds for Contemporary Art (FRAC) are now present in almost all French regions. Intended for the purchase of contemporary art works, these funds ensure regular publishing activity and educational initiatives and affirm the role of local and regional authorities in the field of contemporary art. They also cooperate on inter-regional projects within the association Platform.

With the decrease in available public funding, sponsorship-building initiatives have also been implemented in a number of countries. In Belgium, the Promethea association acts as an interface between the business sector and the cultural sector, promoting mutually beneficial exchanges and even running a competition that rewards cultural patronage. In Australia, Creative Partnerships is a government body whose functions embrace all aspects of corporate and private philanthropy and engagement and explore new models of investment in arts and culture. They are working to develop funding programmes for the cultural sector based on new funding models such as micro-loans, crowd sourcing and matched funding. In Austria, the Business Committee for the Arts (Initiativen Wirtschaft für Kunst) is dedicated to increasing awareness and acceptance of culture sponsorship in the economy, and to communicating the significance of art and culture to the economy. It has launched several incentives to promote arts sponsorship, such as the Maecenas sponsorship award, and also conducts studies in the field. In the Netherlands, adjustments to tax regulations have made it more attractive for individuals and companies to give to culture and to support this initiative, the government created the campaign Care about Culture in to stimulate giving, targeting not just businesses but also culture loving-citizens.

The UK Government traditionally funds the arts through an arm's-length principle whereby the government sets an overall arts funding figure but, in the main, does not interfere with how it is distributed and leaves this to the local authorities and various culture-form councils. However, the art councils are expected to report on and adhere to government set targets and priorities. Budgets for culture at local authority level are in year on year decline and many grant programmes for artists and visual arts activity have totally disappeared. Local authorities in the UK have traditionally supported one or a small number of key culture institutions within their boundaries but this varies quite dramatically from area to area. Public art commissioning in Britain lags behind other countries and there has never been a national ‘Percent for Art’ policy, although some Scottish councils, such as East Lothian or Aberdeenshire, are leading the way with their own ‘Percent for Art’ schemes. A UK based website Public Art Online that offered advice, resources and support for public art activity has recently closed and the Scottish equivalent Sited.info which was the result of an 18 month research project into the future support needs of public/sited artworks hasn’t been updated for a number of years. The UK lacks a national or regional strategy for the acquisition of contemporary art, which happens on a case by case basis in various institutions with many regional collections struggling to maintain or develop contemporary collections. However, the British Council and Arts Council England maintain and exhibit significant contemporary collections. Until 2002, there was no central resource uniting artworks in public collections and it was a private initiative that resulted in the Art UK website and its ongoing digitisation programme. In terms of sponsorship-building initiatives, Arts & Business and Arts & Business Scotland (with similar branches in Wales and Northern Ireland) are initiatives that aim to encourage and stimulate business support of the arts via partnerships, investment, advice and leveraging corporate expertise. There is also a long-running scheme, Own Art, that offers interest free loans to the general public for purchasing contemporary art.

## Cultural Mobility

A changing political climate can affect the opportunities that arts professional have for international exposure and cultural mobility. To maintain a cultural presence abroad, some countries maintain international networks of cultural organisations that promote their culture and engender cultural exchanges and initiatives in the field. Examples are Germany’s Goethe Institute, the Danish Cultural Institute and the Austrian Cultural Fora. One of the most successful examples is the French Institute, which even sources its own sponsorship in certain locations.

Some countries ensure mobility opportunities for artists exist by setting up regional or bilateral initiatives. This is a practice used by France, which contributes together with international partners to the creation of bilateral art funds. Particularly successful has been ‘Étant Donnés’, the French-American Fund for Contemporary Art which has made it possible to develop French projects across the United States. Since its inception, Étant donnés has developed an international reputation by allocating over $3 million to fund more than 300 projects and 16 curators. Since 2010, a Franco-British fund has also been in existence: ‘Fluxus Art Projects’ is dedicated to supporting exhibitions by contemporary artists from both countries. It intervenes at a decisive point in their career, when they start to emerge from their national scene and need support to exhibit overseas. Australia has created AsiaLink, a non-academic centre within the University of Melbourne that runs a wide range of programmes fostering engagement between Australia and partners in Asia. Since the centre’s founding in 1991, its arts component has provided opportunities for professional exchange between artists and arts organisations in the Asian region. On a larger scale, the Nordic Cultural Point links together several countries in the Nordic and Baltic regions to promote cultural mobility and exchanges for artists and cultural workers in the region.

Opportunities for international development and cultural mobility are also provided by individual organisations, some of which have developed a reputation for well-managed and innovative residency programmes. La Cité des Arts Paris supports professional artists who want to develop artistic work in France. The Ministry of Culture, the City of Paris and the Academy of Arts are among the French bodies that support this foundation, which has links with 135 organisations in France and abroad. Every month the foundation hosts more than 300 artists in all disciplines in its two Parisian locations. The City of Paris also joined forces with the French Institute to renovate the Récollets Convent, a historical building in Paris on the banks of the Canal Saint-Martin and, since 2003, to make it a residency for artists and researchers from all over the world. The Swedish International Artists Studio Programme (IASPIS) offers artist in residence grants to visiting artists and supports artists from Sweden exhibiting abroad. It aims to 'formulate and explore topical issues in contemporary visual art and design from an international perspective’. IASPIS is connected to the Academy of Arts in Stockholm and to other cities in Sweden.

Access to information is the first step in pursuing such opportunities. The cultural mobility network On the Move aims to encourage and facilitate cross-border mobility and cooperation, contributing to building up a vibrant and shared European cultural space that is strongly connected worldwide. Their website provides information on residencies and funding opportunities in countries worldwide, as well as guidelines on navigating the administrative aspects of cultural mobility, such as visas, social welfare and taxation policies. Their country-specific mobility funding guides include sections on both outgoing (for nationals of that country going elsewhere) and incoming (for foreign nationals going to that country) mobility. In some cases individual countries also provide information hubs. Austria is particularly active and has compiled a mobility guide that summarises all regulations and issues relevant for artistic work. It is designed to provide information for creative artists coming to Austria, as well as for organisers of cultural events who extend invitations to Austrian artists, and support them in realising their artistic projects. The Austrian government is also responsible for commissioning a handbook for the EU-funding period 2014-2020 that offers concrete and practical support for Austrian artists, cultural workers and institutions. It presents profiles of all current programmes in Austria, gives pointers to project development and applications and answers numerous questions, as well as providing a glossary of EU funding terms.

The British Council (which is part-funded by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office) is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities with offices in 110 countries. The British Council Scotland has also fostered some international cultural initiatives including development opportunities for artists and national representation in the Venice Biennale and other curatorial exchanges with various countries prioritised within UK and Scottish government foreign policy objectives. International collaboration has also been encouraged by Visiting Arts, a quasi-independent body, now an independent charity, funded by the British Council, the Arts Councils and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, with an emphasis on support for the presentation of international work in the UK. A recent initiative is World Cultures Connect, a global cultural information site that allows artists and cultural organizations across the globe to promote their work, make new connections, identify opportunities and discover new partners, new markets and new audiences. a-n, the largest artists’ membership organisation in the UK has over 21,000 members. a-n supports artists and in practical ways, providing access to news, advice and support as part of their membership scheme. Another successful support initiative for UK based artists has been the Artquest programme at University of the Arts London. Initially providing predominantly online advice and information for visual artists about their careers, it has broadened to include internships, graduate studio and research residencies, legal advice, artist career case studies, a free international studio exchange programme, mentoring, discounts, publications and debates.

## Equalities, Diversity, Inclusion & Education

Countries with an indigenous population have been actively seeking solutions for fostering an inclusive environment in the cultural sphere. In Australia, following a formal apology in 2009 by the government to its Indigenous people, programmes were established supporting Indigenous people within the Arts portfolio. As well as funding programmes that support contemporary Indigenous artistic creation and Indigenous heritage, the Government set up a new Indigenous Australian Art Commercial Code of Conduct developed after extensive consultation with Indigenous communities, art galleries and dealers, and with the state and territory government. Additionally, Australia has a range of multicultural arts associations dedicated to bringing arts from its diverse ethnic communities to the public, such as the Brisbane Ethnic Music and Arts Centre (BEMAC) and Multicultural Arts Victoria (MAV). MAV in particular has evolved over four decades into one of Australia’s most important bodies for the discovery, development and promotion of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) contemporary art, heritage and cultural expression. Over 1 million participants are engaged in their programmes which includes long-term initiatives for career development and creative capacity building for over 2,000 artists and 500 communities from diverse and emerging backgrounds. The organisation also offers expertise in audience development, community engagement and artistic excellence with CALD communities.

In many countries, awareness of the need to promote intercultural dialogue is growing. In Austria for example, the 'Outstanding Artist Award for Intercultural Dialogue' is awarded for artistic and cultural achievements that contribute to dialogue and the understanding of people from different countries of origin living in Austria. In France, a specific taskforce was created in 2004 – Mission Vivre Ensemble – which gathered 32 cultural institutions to work for the inclusion and participation of unfamiliar audiences to culture. Additionally, many festivals and events celebrate foreign cultures everywhere in France. It is estimated that 5,000 festivities and events relate to the issue of immigration, but are systematically open to everyone, according to the French law and conception of citizenship.

Gender equality is also on the cultural agenda of many countries, with some particularly noteworthy initiatives that support women arts professionals. In Austria, a mentoring programme by female artists for artists, whose core idea is the transfer of expertise from experienced, established female artists to younger, up-and-coming artists has been further developed after excellent results. Mentoring pairs were established in the branches of video and media art, fine art, fashion, artistic photography, performance, music, performing arts, film and literature. In Germany, the Goldrausch Künstlerinnenprojekt is a comprehensive programme devoted to the professionalisation of women in the arts. The one-year postgraduate course addresses the facts that women artists and their achievements are still underrepresented in the public sphere. The goal is for each participant to develop skills for confidently managing a career in the fine arts. Germany also awards the prestigious ‘Gabriele Münter Prize’ for professional women artists over the age of 40 and is home to GEDOK, the largest interdisciplinary association of women artists in Europe.

Arts education in primary and secondary schools appears to be a contested territory in many countries. To address some of the problems, the Netherlands have introduced the 'Cultural education with quality' programme, carried out by the Fund for Cultural Participation, which aims to strengthen the quality of cultural education in primary education. The scheme aims to stimulate connections between schools and their cultural environments and to increase the skills of teaching professionals. The state will invest EUR 10 million through the fund annually and municipalities and provinces will be expected to match this amount. In Austria, KulturKontakt is a non-profit European competence and resource centre for cultural education in Austrian schools and international educational cooperation particularly with Eastern and Southeast Europe. It supports cooperation between schools, cultural professionals and cultural institutions and also runs Artist-in Residence programmes for artists from abroad. The principal funding bodies of KulturKontakt are the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and the Austrian Federal Chancellery.

In the UK, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport seeks to ensure that cultural diversity is considered in all its areas of activity. Promoting cultural dialogue is also one of the core ambitions of all four national Arts Councils and is integrated into their day to day work, with the aim of encouraging an environment where the arts reflect the full range and diversity of contemporary society, ensuring that everyone has access to quality arts activity. The Arts Council England, for example, has commissioned a range of reports in recent years on the state of diversity within the cultural sector and has used the findings to inform cultural policy. Creative Scotland provides a toolkit and various other resources for embedding equalities, diversity and inclusion policies within cultural organisations. In the field of cultural education, Creative Partnerships was the UK's flagship creative learning programme for many years. It supported thousands of innovative, long term partnerships between schools and creative professionals. As a result, schools in England saw significant improvements in pupil attendance, behaviour and attainment, as well as in parental engagement. In 2010, facing huge cuts in Government funding, Arts Council England withdrew support for the Creative Partnerships programme. Although there is now no formal support for creative learning in England, schools continue to develop programmes based on the approaches developed.

# CASE STUDY: BEST PRACTICES IN THREE KEY GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

The surveys undertaken suggest that visual arts practitioners in Scotland do look to other countries as a benchmark for cultural policies. Some of the key areas mentioned are the Nordic countries, Germany, and Canada, so a more in-depth overview of these regions will be provided below.

## Nordic Region

### Overview

The Nordic region is joined together by a formal ‘Nordic co-operation’ initiative, which involves Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland and the Åland Islands. It has its own Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers which work together to foster regional development and synergies. Cultural policy in the Nordic countries is both centralised and decentralised. The basis for cultural policy is mostly provided by the state, although considerable responsibilities for the shaping and implementation of cultural policy are delegated to local and regional authorities. With respect to cultural expenditure the national and municipal levels are the most important, with the regional level playing only a modest role. Additionally, a considerable amount of authority is also delegated to arm's length institutions and expert bodies that support cultural activities at national level, such as the Arts Council Norway or the Danish Arts Foundation. Nordic co-operation extends to promoting the culture of the Nordic countries outside the region through ambitious collaborative projects, such as the year-long Nordic Matters project which took place at the Southbank Centre in London in 2017. Featuring a wide variety of artistic and cultural events, it was supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Nordic embassies in London and the national cultural agencies in each of the Nordic countries, Greenland, Åland and the Faroe Islands.

The Nordic countries have developed comprehensive social welfare policies, which, although not directly aimed at the arts sector, have been an important source of support for artists and arts professionals with fluctuating incomes. Nonetheless, changes are afoot and in recent years government policy has been shifting towards the so-called ‘work first principle’, redirecting the unemployed to employment in new lines of work. In Sweden, changes in the unemployment insurance rules have been criticised as harmful to artists and other cultural professionals typically engaged on short-term employment contracts which lead to repeated periods of unemployment.

However, Sweden has been a pioneer in respect of its Exhibition Payment Rights (EPR) scheme, adopting the so-called MU agreement in 2009 which covers payment to artists for display of work. This is additional to other kinds of financial compensation for an exhibition, such as transport, installation, publication, etc. The agreement makes it clear that all work the artist undertakes at exhibitions – before, during and after the show – is to be governed by a written contract and remunerated outside the framework of the exhibition fee. In 2013, the Norwegian government introduced a pilot programme in a number of state-run institutions to test a remuneration agreement based on the Swedish model. Since then, 24 state-run museums and galleries have participated in the pilot programme and an evaluation of the project is under way which may result in the scheme being extended to all institutions financed by the state. In Finland and Iceland, although progress has been slower, working groups initiated by artists’ organisations are collaborating with policy makers to develop EPR agreements.

Some Nordic countries have supported artists through tax legislation. Denmark’s 2002 act on tax equalisation of income from artistic creation makes it possible for artists to split their income over different tax years in order to cope with fluctuations. Additionally, awards given as a sign of recognition of the artist's merits are tax exempt. This can however lead to other difficulties, as exemplified in Finland where self-employed artists and freelancers whose work has been financed for long periods by non-taxable grants have been unable to make pension and social security contributions. In 2009 a Bill was passed whereby self-employed artists and those on short-time grants are given an opportunity to enroll in the pension and social security systems of agricultural entrepreneurs. Finland also has a comprehensive artists’ pension system which provides flat monthly payments to recipients.

Nordic countries are also known for their generous funding programmes for artists, many of which include long-term schemes that provide increased financial security. A regional body, the Nordic Culture Point, is part of Nordic Co-operation and has a wide range of grant schemes for encouraging mobility, networking, artist residencies, as well as the involvement of children and young people. Additionally, countries have their own organisations that support the contemporary arts sector. One of the best known is Frame Contemporary Arts Finland, financed by the Finish Ministry of Education and culture. Frame supports international projects, awards grants to artists and art professionals, facilitates professional partnerships and exchanges, and acts as an information centre for Finnish contemporary art, as well as coordinating the country’s participation in the Venice Biennale. The Arts Promotion Centre Finland (Taike) is not focused solely on the visual arts, but provides a wide range of grants and subsidies for cultural professionals and organisations, including non-project specific artist grants that can last from six months to five years. Recipients essentially receive a monthly ‘salary’, which includes contributions to pension and health insurance schemes. Norway’s government grants for artists, administered by the Arts Council Norway, include work grants that can last up to five years and grants for established and senior artists which are awarded for ten years. An example of funding body that supports cultural mobility is Iaspis, the Swedish Arts Grants Committee's international programme for Visual and Applied Artists. Iaspis offers residencies in Sweden and abroad, grants for travel and international exchanges for artists and curators, as well as a public programme of activities which, according to the organisation itself, ‘formulate and explore topical issues in contemporary visual art and design from an international perspective’.

Percent for art schemes are widespread in the Nordic countries, stipulating that a certain percentage of the construction costs of public buildings is invested in the acquisition of works of art. Although such schemes are not uncommon in other European countries, the Nordic initiatives go above and beyond similar endeavours. In Sweden, the scheme has been expanded to include art in open public spaces and to increase the percentage allocation for buildings engaged in care. Thus, the construction of Sweden’s new Karolinska Hospital has yielded an unprecedented budget of SEK 118 million to devote to public art between 2010 and 2017. Norway has created KORO, a professional body that manages the percent for art scheme, as well as looking after the government’s collection of art in public spaces and offering training and professional networking for the artists and curators involved in its projects.

### Interviews

Three arts professionals were interviewed, bringing a variety of perspectives. Aukje Lepoutre Ravn is an art historian, writer and curator who was recently involved with Copenhagen’s annual Arts Week. Agnes Nedregård is a visual artist based in Norway and the co-founder of the art group Alt Går Bra. Mikkel Carl is a visual artist, writer and curator based in Denmark. The expertise of our interviewees encompassed not only the conditions for freelance arts professionals in the Nordic region, but also several institutional perspectives, such as being involved in peer review for national grant-giving bodies. Below are some key points that emerged from these conversations.

* Although there are many grant programmes for artists, these are still competitive and artists must be prepared to apply repeatedly. One of the interviewees revealed that at the beginning of their career only one in ten grant applications was successful, but experience and support from peers have helped to increased their success rate. Another interviewee wondered whether this generous grant system is sustaining artists who may lack the impetus to sustain themselves and creating a project-focused cultural environment.
* Welfare conditions for freelance professionals can vary. A minimum state pension and access to healthcare are usually provided, however the additional tax burden usually associated with employers has to be assumed by the freelancers themselves. Accessing unemployment benefits can also be problematic. In Norway, this is only possible if a person has already been in employment at some point in their career. In Denmark, income from occasional projects is not permitted while receiving unemployment benefits. One solution has been for artists’ organisations to act as intermediary and collect such occasional fees on behalf of their members.
* Positive initiatives exist at municipal level. For example, in recent years the city council of Bergen has been offering arts professionals the opportunity to advise them on their arts policy. This has led to a growth in artist-led initiatives in the city and a more vibrant cultural life. The city council also offers training courses aimed at supporting the development of freelance professionals. As a counterpoint, municipalities sometimes prioritise short-term projects that ensure maximum visibility, such as free events and festivals, to the detriment of building stronger institutions.
* The commercial and non-commercial sectors exist in separate spheres, due in particular to the interdiction for publicly-funded spaces to engage in commercial activities. Thus, both commercial galleries and non-commercial artist-run spaces tend to maintain the status quo rather than finding new strategies to evolve.
* Philanthropy and sponsorship are not sufficiently developed to compensate for the effect in funding cutbacks. Danish institutions lack strategies for engaging in dialogue with potential sponsors and building networks, due in part to the historical reliance on public funding and a negative perception of private funding and its more commercial aspects. Nonetheless new opportunities have also emerged, due to private foundations that are choosing to increasingly direct their focus towards the contemporary arts.
* Public art is increasingly a key focus area. In Denmark, public institutions such as schools or hospitals can apply to borrow existing works from a database or can decide to commission new works through a grant board within the Danish Arts Foundation. The Foundation’s funding for Copenhagen Arts Week included a focus on producing art in public spaces and artists are increasingly being invited to collaborate from the early stages of projects. Recently, during the extension of the Copenhagen metro, art has been a fully integrated element from the planning stage. Nonetheless, the Danish Arts Foundation must get better at celebrating its successes and those of the Danish cultural sector in order to continue to be supported by the public and the government in a climate of austerity.
* Some recent initiatives are perceived as being detrimental to the cultural sector. In Norway, the practice of grant juries being peer-based may be changed, potentially leading to less diversity and innovation among the winning entries. In Denmark, the current policy of decentralisation has been perceived as happening too rapidly and may lead to loss of job and unnecessary expenditure when important institutions are moved away from Copenhagen, leading to loss of job and unnecessary expenditure. One such example is the Danish Arts Workshops which have been based in Copenhagen since their opening in 1986.
* Arts education does not have sufficient support at governmental level and some of the national schemes have different outcomes than intended. For instance, a Norwegian programme that sees artists vising schools has led to arts teaching being neglected at other times. In higher education, Danish art schools could do more to attract a more diverse student body and to prepare students for how the international art world functions.
* Despite the Nordic region being frequently seen as a cohesive and collaborative space, the art scene in each country can be quite local, with fewer regional exchanges than might be expected. Equally, institutions within the region are not making enough efforts to share knowledge and learnings despite facing similar challenges.

## Germany

### Overview

Cultural policy in Germany is based on a federal model with different tiers of government: the Bund (Federal Government), the Bundesländer/ Länder (federal states) and the municipalities (cities, towns, counties). The Federal Government has jurisdiction over foreign cultural policy, education and legal initiatives that affect culture. However, the sixteen federal states and their municipalities are the main actors responsible for cultural policy in Germany. The scope and priority areas can vary greatly from federal state to federal state and from municipality to municipality. The individual federal states can transfer budgetary resources for culture to the municipalities at their own discretion. All levels of government are supposed to cooperate within one another on cultural matters by jointly supporting cultural institutions and activities. In reality, there is a high degree of competition among the different federal states and municipalities, which has perhaps fostered Germany’s vibrant arts scenes at local level. The federal model has also had its detractors, especially in the light of the economic crisis: in 2012 a book entitled ‘Kulturinfarkt. Too much of everything and the same everywhere’ became a best-seller, suggesting that resources are being spread too thinly on too large a number of similar organisations and that widespread state support can lead to a homogenised arts scene.

At the federal level, support to artists is provided through the German Federal Cultural Foundation. It receives a fixed amount of 35 million euros annually through the budget of the Federal Commissioner for Cultural and Media Affairs, making it one of the largest publicly funded cultural foundations in Europe. The Foundation promotes and funds art and culture across the whole country, as well as initiating international projects. It supports long-running events such as documenta and the Berlin Biennial, and funds artists, museums, galleries and curatorial projects. Additionally, since the 1970s, there has been a federal programme for art purchases and a federal collection of contemporary art, the Bundeskunsthalle. Support from the Federal Government for so-called ‘landmark cultural institutions’ has been both welcome, as the financial burden on federal states was too great in some cases, and contested, as federal involvement has thus increased at local level.

At federal state and municipal level support for artists is provided through a wide variety of instruments. The individual federal state foundations for the arts and culture play a particularly important role in this context. Widespread forms of support include financial assistance for art projects, the purchase of works of art, the commissioning of artwork, the awarding of scholarships, the provision of facilities for exhibitions and performances as well as studios and workshops, the awarding of monetary prizes and the granting of publication subsidies. German artists also benefit from a comprehensive infrastructure of arts organisations that are present in each federal state. A Kunsthalle or a Kunsthaus is a non-commercial institution and is devoted to presenting national and international contemporary art. Most Kunsthallen are publicly financed or operated by foundations. A Kunstverein is an art association. There are around 300 such associations, devoted to the promotion and presentation of contemporary art. They are supported by their members, and their programme is both local and international. Additionally, many German cities have a Künstlerhaus or artists’ house. These organisations support artists by providing working scholarships, or studio apartments and workshops that are available for a limited period of time. As places where art is produced, artists’ houses often also serve as a platform for the presentation and communication of current trends in contemporary art.

Grants and awards for artists are thus coming from a number of varied public sources, not to mention the private sources such as arts foundations. Tools exist to help artists find the relevant financing. The web portal Kulturpreise Online and the Deutsches Informationszentrum Kulturförderung provide information on the range of individual support funding available from awards and foundation grants. Additionally, the Handbook of Cultural Awards has been published regularly for several decades and the 2010 edition listed over 2500 awards and scholarships. Of these 13% were specifically addressed to the visual arts. Additional support is available for women artists, such as the ‘Gabriele Münter Prize’ awarded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth to professional women artists over the age of 40 for their works. Germany is also home to the largest interdisciplinary association of women artists in Europe: GEDOK, the federation of woman artists and patrons of the arts, which offers awards in a number of cultural disciplines.

Artists in Germany enjoy comprehensive social security coverage. When employed, they are covered under the general social security regimes. Self-employed artists are obliged to join the Artists' Social Insurance Fund (KSK). The special protection for self-employed artists provided for under the Artists' Social Insurance Act (KSVG) encompasses statutory health, long-term or old age care and pension insurance. Like employees, the artists and writers must only pay half of the social insurance contribution. Sixty percent of what could be labelled an ‘employers’ share’ is paid by the companies that regularly exploit and market the work of artists and writers, such as theaters, broadcasters and publishers, galleries and art dealers. To that effect, the enterprises are charged with an artists' social insurance levy (Künstlersozialabgabe) on all fees and royalties paid. In addition, the Federal Government provides a subsidy to help fund the ‘employee's share’ with 40% of the expenditures of the Artists' Social Insurance Fund.

The Internationale Gesellschaft der Bildenden Künste (IGBK), the German branch of the International Association of Art (IAA), is very active is providing support for artists, in particular where issues of cultural mobility are concerned. They provide services for dealing with the red tape associated with exchange and exhibition projects abroad and organise workshops on relevant themes, the most recent one being about social security in relation to European mobility for visual artists. Together with the International Theatre Institute in Germany (ITI) and with support from the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, IGBK created the Touring Artists website. The project provides information on visas, residence, transport, customs, taxes, social insurance, and copyright related to cross-border mobility for artists working internationally. Federal initiatives for cultural exchange are also numerous. The Goethe Institute is not only a language centre, but also an international network for cultural events and festivals, while the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) runs the 'Artists in Berlin' programme which awards grants to foreign artists, in visual arts, literature, and music, to work in Berlin for one year. The Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa) promotes art and cultural exchange in exhibitions, dialogue and conference programmes, as well as providing comprehensive information on its website to help foreign artists navigate Germany’s cultural sector.

### Interviews

For an expert opinion on German arts policy and opportunities, Berlin-based curator and writer Ellen Blumenstein and curator and current interim director of Bonner Kunstverein Kyla McDonald were interviewed. These are some of the findings that resulted from the conversation.

* The German model is strong in fostering communication and creating social networks and intellectual exchange. Nonetheless, at institutional level the federal model can create an inflexible system with little space for freelance curators and an insufficiently wide range of artists being involved. Budgets can also differ between regions and cities, depending on their economic situation and affluence, causing similar institutions to receive different levels of funding support depending on their location. On a positive note, a federal model is perhaps more geographically inclusive overall and can sidestep the issues associated with perceived over-centralisation or decentralisation.
* For international opportunities, the world-wide network of the Goethe institute can be helpful for freelance arts professionals. In some cases, the offices in various countries have sufficient flexibility to develop projects directly with artists or curators who approach them. Schemes that invite groups of curators for longer planned visits to network with local artists and institutions can also result in a wide range of international outcomes and collaborations, something that the Nordic countries and Belgium are particularly good at doing. In many cases, however, cultural mobility is aided mainly by informal networks and peer groups, especially in cities such as Berlin that draw a large number of visual arts practitioners. The links forged in one city or another can lead to opportunities in other parts of the world.
* Public funding for artists in Germany does exist, but is primarily directed at younger artists and can be difficult to access at a more mature state of one’s career. The process can also be quite bureaucratic for both individuals and institutions, entailing an administrative burden. Increasingly freelance arts professionals rely on family support to sustain their career, as well as teaching jobs. Private foundations also offer funding opportunities, but can be conservative in their choices.
* The acclaimed social security scheme for creative professionals in Germany is unfortunately not open to curators, whose work is considered more organisational and managerial. The reluctance to expand the scheme comes from the high cost it incurs and there are periodical attempts by political groups to abolish the scheme altogether. This would be a great loss for artists and writers on fluctuating incomes, as they can currently access healthcare and other benefits based on relatively low contributions.
* In schools, arts education sometimes suffers due to the wide variety of subjects available: students can avoid the visual arts altogether. Moreover, outreach programmes in museums and galleries are felt to be not as well developed and wide-ranging as those in the UK.

## Canada

### Overview

The national cultural policy model adopted by successive federal governments in Canada has been one of "cultural affirmation" through sustained intervention, arm's length relations within the public sector, inter-governmental co-operation and consultations and mixed public-private sector partnerships. Some decentralisation of federal cultural policies and programmes is effected through regional and local offices: there are ten provinces in Canada and three territories. Nonetheless, federal spending in culture is higher than provincial and municipal spending, with these two areas contributing similar amounts. Some of the larger provinces do implement support programmes in many areas of cultural development, with Quebec being a particularly good example.

The province of Quebec was in fact the first and only province to have its own status of the artist legislation in 1987, preceding the federal law which came into force in 1995. The Status of the Artist Act officially recognises the contributions artists make to Canadian cultural, social, economic and political life and establishes a policy on the professional status of the artist. However, as Labour Law falls under provincial jurisdiction in Canada, the Status of the Artist Act applies only to artists engaged by the federal government. Recently other provinces have introduced Status of the Artist-enabling legislation and efforts continue to be made to encourage more provinces to consider enacting similar legislation.

At the federal level, the arts are supported through the Department of Canadian Heritage and through the Canada Council for the Arts. The Department of Canadian Heritage “promotes an environment in which all Canadians take full advantage of dynamic cultural experiences, celebrating our history and heritage, and participating in building creative communities.” The Canada Arts Presentation Fund supports approximately 600 professional arts festivals and performing arts series every years, as well as other activities related to art presentation, in more than 250 cities or communities across Canada. The Canada Cultural Spaces Fund supports the improvement, renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities, as well as the acquisition of specialized equipment, improving physical conditions for artistic creativity and innovation. As part of the 2016 budget, the federal government announced that over the next two years it will be investing an additional CAD 168.2 million in cultural infrastructure through this Fund. The Canada Cultural Investment Fund aims to strengthen the organisational, administrative and financial effectiveness of cultural, arts and heritage organisations. Supporting both the infrastructure and the organisational capacity of the cultural sector should ensure its sustainability and vitality in the long-term.

The Canada Council for the Arts, a Crown corporation within the Department of Canadian Heritage’s portfolio, is Canada’s public arts funder, with a mandate “to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts.” The Canada Council for the Arts offers a broad range of grants, services, prizes and payments to professional Canadian artists and arts organisations. In 2016, the federal government announced a significant funding increase to the Canada Council of CAD 550 million over five years (2016-2021), which will effectively double the organisation’s annual budget. The Canada Council has a new funding model launched in April 2017 that consists of six non-disciplinary, outcome-focused granting programs. Also, following a national summit on the Arts in a Digital World in March 2017, the Canada Council launched a CAD 88.5 million Digital Strategy Fund to run from 2017 to 2021. The fund encourages an overall approach that helps support Canadian artists, groups and arts organizations in understanding the digital world, engaging with it, and responding to the cultural and social changes it produces.

Canada has had an Exhibition Payment Rights scheme in place since the late 1960s. Canada’s professional association for visual artists, The Canadian Artists’ Representation/Le Front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC) has issued its exhibition fee schedules, the equivalent of minimum wage for artists, since 1968. The fee schedules are updated yearly through negotiation and usage, and reflect increases in the cost of living. All fees are considered minimum payments for the use of the copyrights and/or the professional services of visual and media artists and CARFAC also provides a fees calculator for artists.

Nonetheless, artists and cultural workers do face many issues relating to income and accessing the welfare system. In respect of tax, deductions are available for reasonable expenses for self-employed artists, yet some have found these cannot be accessed if their low income prevents them from being classed as professionals by the Canada Revenue Agency. As freelancers, they are eligible to join the national pension and employment insurance programmes, however the contributions can be prohibitive for those on lower incomes. There are a number of not-for-profit organizations, particularly in larger cities, that provide various types of support to artists. For example, the Artists Heath Alliance works together with the Al and Malka Green Artists' Health Centre at the Toronto Western Hospital to offer both medical and complementary care to professional creative and performing artists and to offer funding for artists of limited financial means to access medical care. Senior artists also benefit from the Canadian Senior Artists Network (C-SARN), launched in 2011 through a collaboration between artists’ organisations from different disciplines. Following a research project that revealed the issues facing older artists, C-SARN was created to focus exclusively on assisting professional artists to live out their senior years in dignity and respect.

Further support is available from the Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC), which brings together representatives of arts disciplines and cultural industries in the cultural sector to address the training and career development needs of employers and cultural workers including artists, technical staff, managers and all others engaged professionally in the sector. As well as providing job listings in the cultural sector, it also offers on-line courses on career management specific to several disciplines, including visual arts and crafts. Canada has many other excellent professional training programmes, from the National Theatre School, to the Banff Centre and the Canadian Film Centre. The federal government’s Canadian Arts Training Fund provides essential funding to many of these. They also receive substantial support from the private sector and other levels of government.

### Interviews

To better engage with Canadian arts policy, three arts professionals were interviewed, each bringing a different perspective. Michelle Kasprzak is a Canadian curator, writer, and scholar currently based in Europe. Nigel Prince is the executive director of the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver. Marie-Michelle Deschamps is a Montreal-based visual artist. Some of the key points that emerged from these conversations are outlined below.

* The Canadian art scene can feel isolating and isolated due to geographical distances and even links with the neighboring US seem to be limited. Canadian arts professionals find connections to Europe beneficial, such as organized visits to different countries for curators, which frequently result in collaborative projects. In general, cultural mobility happens due to networks of peers rather than any large-scale policies. Furthermore, geographical distances can also lead to prohibitive costs for travelling exhibitions, an issue that funding at federal level has been known to tackle.
* The Status of the Artist legislation does not appear to have any direct effect and is not common knowledge amongst arts professionals. It may however have the indirect effect of promoting a more arts-friendly environment in general. The CARFAC minimum fee schedule, by contrast, is very important and universally applied by publicly funded institutions, even though it is not legally enforceable. It helps to supplement income from art sales which can be intermittent, as there are too few galleries for the number of artists and the art market is not large.
* Welfare provisions for freelance professionals can vary. Healthcare is mostly free and there is a minimum state pension, however maternity benefits can be very low, requiring support from other sources.
* Public funding in Canada, although offering widespread support, is not always the most accessible solution. For instance, it can be more supportive of mature artists than emerging practitioners. In the case of institutions, the amount received can often represent only about a third of the required income, with the rest coming from trusts, foundations, earned revenue, individual giving and corporate sponsorship.
* Donors and private funding are more accessible in Canada due to tax incentives and legislation that supports these practices. Private giving is encouraged at all levels of society. In Europe, there is felt to be a lack of recognition at the higher political levels that such a model needs time and support in order to develop and cannot be a quick fix for funding cuts.
* The provinces can pursue quite distinct cultural policies, as the local authorities hold a significant amount of decisional power. They can also be the main funder for artists and organisations in that area, depending on their priorities. For instance, Quebec has been known to have a larger cultural budget than the Canada Arts Council. However, provincial policies can also be too inward looking, supporting artists who stay within the region, a model that may be at odds with an increasingly global arts scene. Increasingly new artist-run spaces are opening that operate without public funding, in order to find alternatives to this model.
* Institutional peer support can be quite strong, with institutions at local level collaborating. For instance, Contemporary Art Canada recently teamed with two other Vancouver galleries to put in an application for Canada Arts council’s new digital strategy fund. CAMDO, the Canadian Art Museums Directors' Organization, organizes twice-yearly themed meetings that allow museum professionals to share best practices and find solutions to sector-wide issues.
* Canada is increasingly making efforts to acknowledge the country’s problematic heritage and to improve equality and diversity, particularly as 2017 marked the sesquicentennial of Canadian Confederation. Some art schools advertise positions specifically for indigenous applicants and, thanks to a growing grass roots initiative, many cultural events open with an acknowledgement of the indigenous territory on which they are taking place.

# CONCLUSION

The report has outlined a variety of cultural policies and initiatives that support the visual arts sector in Europe and North America. Although this is far from an exhaustive study, it can hopefully constitute a tool for considering the challenges that the sector is facing locally, regionally and globally. While some useful policies are being phased out, such as guaranteed income, others are opening up new possibilities, for example the increasingly diverse percentage for art schemes. The interviews conducted also indicate that the wider cultural landscape is perpetually shifting and that those involved in the visual arts sector experience often very similar challenges and opportunities, in equal measure, no matter their geographical location. Likewise, it is important to remember that new ideas or transferrable practices may well be found outside the sector, such as the highly successful devolved funding model developed by the African Women’s Development Fund in collaboration with Comic Relief in 2011-2015, suggested by one of the interviewees.

Positive feedback emerged from the project regarding Scotland and the contemporary visual arts. Some of the interviewees who participated in the research had studied or worked in Scotland and spoke very positively about how their experiences compared to their current locations. They particularly appreciated the high standard of arts education and support for early career arts professionals, mentioning the availability of studio spaces and a perceived higher grant application success rate. The vibrancy and diversity of artist-led spaces was also mentioned, as well as the opportunities for networking and cultural mobility, with interviewees remarking that the professional connections made in Scotland led to other projects further afield. In general, the UK was perceived as being ahead in arts outreach programming, as well as equalities, diversity and inclusion practices.

Ultimately, as well as highlighting effective policies and initiatives, this research project has revealed that even countries seen to champion the visual arts have their challenges and no perfect solutions for the sector currently exists. There is much to learn from other models, but without forgetting to celebrate the achievements of Scotland’s own contemporary visual arts sector.

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