

# Considering Co-Creation

An International View

A report produced by  
Heart of Glass & Battersea Art Centre — April 2021

**heartofglass**

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# An International View

By Chrissie Tiller and Patrick Fox

As part of our research, we felt it would be important to offer a snapshot of current thinking and practice in other state and national funding schemes Internationally. What follows is a snapshot of some current discourse, thinking and support available in different territories.

## Scandinavia

### Norway: Arts Council Norway ([kulturradet.no](http://kulturradet.no))

Arts Council Norway is the main governmental operator for the implementation of Norwegian cultural policy. Arts Council Norway functions as an advisory body to the central government and public sector on cultural affairs. The Arts Council is fully financed by the Ministry of Culture. Allocations from Arts Council Norway provide funding for a variety of projects and activities within the performing arts, visual arts, music, literature, archives, museums and more.

Although there are limitations to what appears is available in England, from connecting with colleagues and looking at online materials there does not appear to be specific programmes that fund socially engaged, collaborative arts practices on the governmental level in Norway. There appear to be some smaller/ad hoc schemes in the communes in Norway (local authority), which in many cases have funding for cultural activities for themselves, but there exists no full, up-to-date overview of all these local schemes. In the Arts Council Norway, artists and organisations can apply for financial support from a number of funding schemes, including Project funding, Funding for organisers, Dissemination and mediation, Festival, Production funding and annual funding for artist groups and institutions.

Several of these schemes are open for projects that use socially engaged, collaborative arts practice as a tool and/or aim, but none of them is exclusively aimed at supporting such projects. The closest thing might be the schemes that are aimed at supporting local and regional outdoor theatre productions that use both professionals and local participants in the production.

Informal insight from colleagues operating in Norway suggest that *“private foundations offer grants and funding for cultural projects but none of them have this as their exclusive purpose”*. Another insight shared was that *“as none of the programmes/schemes in the Arts Council Norway are specifically aimed at supporting such projects, they have to compete with all of the more traditional art projects that also apply. As all the schemes receive a lot more applications than there are funding for, there is a risk that these projects quite often are not prioritized, as they are a bit off of the criteria for assessing and prioritizing that apply in the schemes”*.

More recent work has been undertaken on how to create a more inclusive cultural sector in the Nordics and this appears to be a developing piece of work.

Led by Arts Council Norway, the project titled An Inclusive Cultural Sector in the Nordics from 2017–2019, has aimed to identify challenges and find ways to create a more inclusive cultural sector. Throughout the project, seven Nordic networks of artists, libraries, cultural centres, schools and other cultural organisations have worked together. They have shared methods and experiences, initiated new projects and developed knowledge on how to make the cultural sector more inclusive and relevant for cultural and ethnic minorities in the Nordic countries. The final project report is available at the link below and it does contain references to work in the UK and Ireland, most specifically Creative People and Places, and a series of recommendations have been put forward.

**An Inclusive Cultural Sector in the Nordics Report →**

### Sweden: Swedish Arts Council ([kulturradet.se](http://kulturradet.se))

[support@kulturradet.se](mailto:support@kulturradet.se)

Swedish Arts Council is a government authority whose principal task is to implement national cultural policy determined by the parliament. They state that, “Everyone should be given the opportunity to access high quality art and culture. This is the basis for our remit as a government authority”. The remit is based on the national cultural policy objectives, decided by the Swedish parliament. Through their grants and other operations, they contribute to the fulfilment of the cultural policy objectives.

The Swedish cultural policy objectives are formulated as follows:

*Culture is to be a dynamic, challenging and independent force based on the freedom of expression. Everyone is to have the opportunity to participate in cultural life. Creativity, diversity and artistic quality are to be integral parts of society's development.*

To achieve the objectives, Swedish cultural policy is to promote:

- Opportunities for everyone to experience culture, education and develop their creative abilities
- Quality and artistic renewal
- A dynamic cultural heritage that is preserved, used and developed
- International and intercultural exchange and cooperation in the cultural sphere
- Equal access to arts and culture for children and youth

In 2018 they did launch a Creative Places programme heavily inspired by Arts Council England's Creative People and Places programme but it is unclear if this programme is still in operation. A blog about the programme is included on the Creative People and Places portal outlining the ambition of the programme, as described by the lead officers.

**Creative People Places Sweden Blog →**

### Denmark: K-Danish Arts Foundation

[post@slks.dk](mailto:post@slks.dk)

They are Denmark's largest arts foundation. Their mission is “to spread the arts to a wide audience all over Denmark, to promote Danish art internationally, and to pave the way for talented artists”. They support creative thinking and innovative ideas by funding more than 6,000 artists and art projects every year. Through more than 60 different funding programs, they fund the production and promotion of both visual arts, film, literature, music, performing arts, architecture, crafts and design – and all that transcends the borders of these art forms.

Their largest federal funding scheme is

The Danish Arts Foundation: [www.kunst.dk/english](http://www.kunst.dk/english) →

The Foundation has been focusing on outreach programs for the last many years and is currently involved in several projects in smaller communities. From the active funding list which can be found here - [www.kunst.dk/english/funding-1](http://www.kunst.dk/english/funding-1) →, there does not appear to be a specific layer of support in relation to Co-Creation or an equivalent term, but rather broader principles about wide audience that exist as a high level aim.

Besides federal funding, there are a number of large private funding schemes that support the arts, and have in the past supported projects that have strong collaborative/co-creation/participation elements, they include:

**[augustinusfonden.dk/projekter](http://augustinusfonden.dk/projekter) →**

Augustinus Fonden

**[www.carlsbergfondet.dk](http://www.carlsbergfondet.dk) →**

Ny Carlsberg Fondet

**[www.apmollerfonde.dk](http://www.apmollerfonde.dk) →**

A P Møller Fonden

**[realdania.dk](http://realdania.dk) →**

Realdania (architecture and city planning)

### **Finland: Taike - Arts Promotion Centre Finland**

The Arts Promotion Centre Finland (Taike) is a national funding, expert and service agency for promoting the arts. Taike together with its arts councils and boards awards grants to professional artists and subsidies to communities in the field of the arts. Annually, Taike allocates 40 million euros as grants and subsidies.

Some relevant funding streams include supports for a range of schemes that include:

- Percent for Art
- Children and Young People
- Accessibility, Participation and Well-being
- Cultural Diversity and combating racism

Full details can be found at the link below:

**[www.taik.fi/en/subsidies-for-communities](http://www.taik.fi/en/subsidies-for-communities) →**

### **Iceland: Ministry Of Education, Science And Culture**

The Icelandic government considers it part of its role to create the conditions for artistic variety, creativity and initiative to flourish. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is responsible for the arts and general cultural affairs in Iceland. The objective of the state's support of the arts and culture is to afford everyone residing in Iceland the opportunity to enjoy arts and culture regardless of their social status, and to ensure a favourable working environment for artists. Government involvement in the arts focuses primarily on the operation of state-run artistic institutions and support for professional artists.

### **Iceland: Icelandic Arts Centre**

**[info@icelandicartcenter.is](mailto:info@icelandicartcenter.is)**

**[Klara Þórhallsdóttir klara@icelandicartcenter.is](mailto:Klara Þórhallsdóttir klara@icelandicartcenter.is)**

The Icelandic Art Centers' role is to introduce and support Icelandic visual arts abroad. The Center assists artists and art professionals in realizing projects through means of funding, networking and cooperation with public and private associations, organizations and enterprises. The Icelandic Art Center commissions the Icelandic Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

There is no special fund or support to engage with or make collaborative work with communities in particular, nor are any comparable organization or agency for collaborative arts in Iceland. Most art funds are project based, so there is of course possibility to apply for a collaborative project. The Icelandic Art Center manages the Visual Art Fund which is for Icelandic based artists. Key organisations and networks operating in Iceland include: community based project Art without Borders **[www.listin.is/eng](http://www.listin.is/eng) →**. This is focused on disabled artists but does not necessarily have a focus on collaborative work.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture provides an overview of ambitions in this area, and there is a broad commitment to cultural democracy but as described it appears to channel support through artist and state venue support. More information is available at the link below

**The Arts, Cultural Heritage,  
Sports and Youth affairs →**

## North America

### USA

#### Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

Funded Helicon Collaborative's research Mapping the Landscape of Socially Engaged Practice and has a funding stream Artists as Activist

[Artists as Activist →](#)

[Mapping the Landscape of Socially Engaged Artistic Practice →](#)

#### Barr Foundation & Americans for the Arts

[swong@barrfoundation.org](mailto:swong@barrfoundation.org)  
(E San San Wong Director of Arts and Creativity)

Focus is New England civic society but funded Animating Democracy's 'Art in the Public Realm Scan'. This is a scan of programmes and funders funding community and other civic society programmes.

[Art in the Public Realm Scan \[PDF\] →](#)

#### Animating Democracy

Part of Americans for the Arts with resources focused on – Community Arts, Civic Engagement, Arts and the Public Realm, Cultural Equity, Social Justice, Creative City Making

Their links page has most of the main organisations working in these fields:

[animatingdemocracy.org/resources/links →](http://animatingdemocracy.org/resources/links)

## Canada

### Canadian Council for the Arts

[engageandsustain@canadacouncil.ca](mailto:engageandsustain@canadacouncil.ca)

The Canada Council for the Arts 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. Cultivating strong Canadian creative communities

Engage and Sustain fosters a vibrant foundation for the arts in Canada by supporting arts organizations at the heart of Canada's creative communities. This program funds organizations that are dedicated to developing excellence in arts practice, advancing the arts through programming, and exposing a diverse public to a range of artists and creative works. The Artistic Catalysts component of Engage and Sustain funds Canadian arts organizations that play a pivotal role in nurturing artistic practices and respond to the evolution of creative communities across Canada. Grants support the activities of organizations that facilitate interactions among artists and connections with the public.

#### Art for Social Change

Some interesting work being led by ICASC  
[www.icasc.ca](http://www.icasc.ca) → national team of academic researchers and community partner organizations, hosted by SFU's International Centre of Art for Social Change (ICASC.ca) who received a \$2.5 million grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) to run a six-year national collaborative study — the ASC! Project — on the current state and future needs of arts for social change (ASC) in Canada. Report is here:

[ASC! Research Project Final Report →](#)

## Central And Southern America

Some relevant work being undertaken by Ibera Scena [www.iberescena.org](http://www.iberescena.org) → although it's mainly theatre – which has always been very much at the centre of more socially engaged practice in this part of the world.

The IBERESCENA Program is currently made up of 16 countries that finance the Program: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal and Uruguay; and by the Ibero-American Secretary General (SEGIB).

IBERESCENA is headed by the IBERESCENA Intergovernmental Council (IIC), for which each member country designates a Performing Arts authority as its representative. These Country Representatives for Programs and Initiatives are called REPPI. This Committee defines the policy, the modalities of aid and makes the decisions, in accordance with the rules set forth in the Operating Regulations of the IBERESCENA Program. At least two regular annual meetings of the IIC are held, as well as all those considered extraordinary, to decide the projects they support and the amount of them. Its main focus is performing arts but has particular inclusive and community focus in many projects.

There is a link to all partners and their ministries of culture/arts councils below:

[www.iberescena.org/institucional/puntos-focales](http://www.iberescena.org/institucional/puntos-focales) →

## Brazil

### Funarte

Created in 1975, the National Arts Foundation - Funarte is the body of the Brazilian Federal Government whose mission is to promote and encourage the production, practice, development and dissemination of arts in the country. It is responsible for federal public policies to encourage Brazilian artistic productive activity; and acts so that the population can increasingly enjoy the arts. Currently, Funarte, is linked to the Ministry of Citizenship and reaches the circus, dance and theatre areas; music, concert, popular bands; and visual arts; and also the preservation of the memory of the arts and research in the artistic sphere.

It is the only institution in the Brazilian State with the necessary duties and specialties to deal with these fields of activity. This kind of practice still seems to be funded under Integrated Arts but can't find any useful contacts.

## Australia

### Australia: Australia Council for the Arts

The Australia Council for the Arts is the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body. Their mission is described as follows:

*"Our focus is on increasing the visibility of Australia's vibrant arts and culture, and recognising the evolving way that Australians make and experience art. Our role is to support the unimagined along with the reimagined, the unknown and experimental along with the keenly anticipated. We are a champion for Australian arts both here and overseas. We invest in artistic excellence through support for all facets of the creative process, and are committed to the arts being accessible to all Australians. Community arts and cultural development encompasses collaborations between professional artists and communities based on a community's desire to achieve artistic and social outcomes. The Australia Council supports community arts and cultural development artists, practitioners, organisations, projects and programs through a range of grants and initiatives. Our support is focused on priority areas including regional Australia, disability, young people, cultural diversity, emerging communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and remote communities, as well as specific critical social and cultural issues requiring focused attention."*

Spoke to Rebekah Robertson  
R.Robertson@australiacouncil.gov.au  
Artists Services

Community arts and cultural development is distinct from other arts practice as it is the creative processes and relationships developed with the community to make the art that defines it, not the art form or genre.

The projects that receive funding in their core grants round are publicly available, and can find the projects that received funding in [this spreadsheet here →](#). Similarly, they have a repository of case studies of significant socially engaged arts organisations on their [website here →](#). While Community Arts and Cultural Development is an art form that they fund, this refers specifically to a **methodology of engagement →** and they encourage socially engaged practice across all art forms. Although not associated with the Australia Council, this publication appears to be referenced in a number of areas as a significant publication in the realm of co-creation/participation:

**The Relationship is the Project →**

### New Zealand: Creative Nz

Creative New Zealand is a Crown entity governed by the Arts Council. The council encourages, promotes and supports New Zealand arts to benefit all New Zealanders. It upholds the right to artistic freedom and promotes a New Zealand identity in the arts. Creative New Zealand encourages, promotes and supports the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders through funding, capability building, our international programme and advocacy. They connect high quality New Zealand art and artists with international markets and audiences through presentation, touring, relationship building and collaborative projects including cultural and artistic exchanges.

**Engaging with Communities [PDF] →**

## Asia

### Malaysia

Interesting piece of research by  
Professor Janet Pallai from Malaysia:  
Socially Engaged Arts in Asia Today (up to 2016)

[http://alfpnetwork.net/en/e-magazine003\\_01/](http://alfpnetwork.net/en/e-magazine003_01/) →

Through conversation with Professor Pallai, she offered some interesting summaries:

In the Asian Region the terms community-engaged arts and socially engaged arts are gaining popularity. Earlier terms such as people's theatre, cultural collectives and participatory arts or theatre would have been more common.

*Japan - Municipality funding and funding from triennial arts festivals in depopulated areas*

*Malaysia - Poor funding sources. Some small funding available from corporate social responsibility funds given out by certain private companies.*

*Taiwan - Funding is available from arts and culture department and other government departments with community-development agenda*

*Singapore – support is channelled largely through Singapore Arts Council*

*Thailand - community based arts projects are known to be funded by international and diplomacy funds, health ministry or ministry dealing with community development*

## CULTURE 360 Association Asia and Europe

Culture 360 ASEF (association connecting Asia and Europe through culture)

<https://culture360.asef.org/> →

Lots of the work in this region is led/supported by Japan Foundation Asia Center supporting independent art spaces and these are mainly where participatory/ collaborative work exists.

Social Circus seems to be strong here too, as in Baltics and Nordic regions, France and Africa. See Asian Social Circus Association

<https://ascassociation.wordpress.com> →

## China

This report below is an amazing resource for links. Have made contact with Bo Zheng, based in Hong Kong BOZHENG@cityu.edu.hk who is the main artist/researcher in this field - who also set up this site <http://seachina.net/seachina-intro> → which outlines a range of socially engaged projects in China, but less information is available about how projects are resourced.

## Hong Kong: Hong Kong Arts Development Council

The Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) is a statutory body set up by the Government to support the broad development of the arts in Hong Kong. Its major roles include grant allocation, policy and planning, advocacy, promotion and development, and programme planning. A whole groundswell of political/ socially engaged art has emerged from the protests.

This is a useful article with names and organisations involved by Hong Kong based Frieze magazine editor En Liang Khong:

[Hong Kong and the Art of Dissent](#) →

and this:

[Socially Engaged Arts: Luke Ching's Practices for Hong Kong](#) →

## Japan: Arts Council Tokyo

Arts Council Tokyo develops a variety of programs to encourage the creation and dissemination of arts and culture and to promote Tokyo as an international city of artistic and cultural attractions.

In order to improve the infrastructure and environment for new artistic and cultural creation, Arts Council Tokyo plays a key role in Tokyo's cultural policies by implementing programs that explore Tokyo's originality and diversity, promoting international cultural exchange, and providing opportunities for promising young people who engage in a variety of artistic and cultural pursuits.

They commissioned an intriguing report through TART - *An Overview of Art Projects in Japan: A Society that Co-creates with Art*

### A Society that Co-Creates with Art [PDF] →

This is another really useful regional report by TART, describing all individual arts centres in region, from Philippines to Cambodia, recommended by Judith Staines:

### Southeast Asia Research Trip [PDF] →

## South Korea: Arts Council Korea

ARKO aims to enrich the lives of the population by increasing accessibility to arts and cultural activities, making the arts a meaningful part of everyday life in Korea. ARKO endeavours to provide a strong platform to support artistic work in diverse disciplines, including performing and visual arts, by increasing funding opportunities for artists and arts organizations, undertaking outreach initiatives, enabling Korean artists to reach the world stage, and encouraging cultural exchange.

## Singapore

### National Arts Council, Singapore

The National Arts Council champions the arts in Singapore. By nurturing creative excellence and supporting broad audience engagement, our diverse and distinctive arts inspire our people, connect communities and profile Singapore internationally. We preserve our rich, cultural traditions as we cultivate accomplished artists and vibrant companies for the future. Our support for the arts is comprehensive – from grants and partnerships to industry facilitation and arts housing. The Council welcomes greater private and corporate giving to and through the arts so that together we can make the arts an integral part of everyone's lives.

They have a number of 'community arts programmes' under title arts in the neighbourhood:

### Arts in the Neighbourhood →

*Brack is a Singapore-based platform for socially-engaged artists in Southeast Asia - a network of artists, writers, and artistic and social intermediaries. They are interested in practices of gathering, and in dialogical exchanges across mediums, disciplines, and communities. They seek to understand how socially engaged art can activate a community or society, and seek to experiment in those very activities—through the way they write, work with artists, and engage with audiences. We're interested in how it can address an issue of importance and create a significant space for individual and collective agency. At the same time, a post-analogue ethos is challenging old notions of hierarchical mediation—Brack enables artists and the community to shape this new space.*

## India: KHOJ International Arts Association

The idea of Khoj began in 1997 as a gift of possibility given by Robert Loder (the visionary founder of the Triangle Arts Trust) At a time when Indian artists felt isolated and unsupported, Khoj provided the possibility for young practitioners to create an open-ended, experimental space for themselves on their own terms. Khoj would be a space where they could make art independent of formal academic and cultural institutions and outside the constraints of the commercial gallery. It offered the chance to establish international networks without institutional support. The rapidity of change in the years since Khoj's foundation has not left it unmarked. With no models to emulate, Khoj, as an 'alternative' space for contemporary art practice, has traced a distinctive, if sometimes lonely, course. It has been a journey of shifting definitions – a freedom 'from' and responsibility 'towards' From its modest beginnings fifteen years ago as an annual workshop, Khoj has built an international reputation for outstanding alternative arts incubation. Today, Khoj plays a central role in the development of experimental, interdisciplinary and critical contemporary art practice in India, constantly challenging the established thinking about art.

This looks like a great resource for what they identify as community arts programmes:

[khojworkshop.org/program\\_cat/community-art/ →](http://khojworkshop.org/program_cat/community-art/)

## Asia Archive in America

[info@aaa-a.org](mailto:info@aaa-a.org)

Asia Art Archive in America (AAA in A) is an independently established and operated U.S. 501(c)3 and the first overseas mini hub of Asia Art Archive (AAA) in Hong Kong. AAA's mission is to collect, preserve and make information on contemporary art from and of Asia easily accessible in order to facilitate understanding, research and writing in the field. AAA in A strives to be proactive in instigating dialogue and critical thinking through a series of regular educational programs, and hopes to raise awareness of and support for the activities of Asia Art Archive in Hong Kong.

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