

THE COMMONWEALTH

1. The Commonwealth is a major force for progress in the world.
2. The Commonwealth offers great opportunities for the UK and fellow member states.
3. The British Council's work across the Commonwealth brings direct benefit to UK and Commonwealth prosperity and security.

A force for progress

The Commonwealth member states share unique ties of history, language and institutions with the UK and each other.

The Commonwealth is an important advocate for human rights around the world. Countries aspire to join the Commonwealth and its role spreads observance for human rights and the rule of law.

Commonwealth members are united through a commitment to democracy, freedom of expression, peace and international co-operation, the rule of law and opportunity for all.

The Commonwealth offers great opportunities for the UK and fellow member states

With a combined population of over two billion, including leading economies such as Australia, Canada, India, Malaysia, South Africa and the UK, the Commonwealth offers immense economic opportunities to member states.

- The Commonwealth offers new market opportunities for the UK with a significant demand in the fields of science, sustainable development, engineering, higher education and services where the UK is a world leader.
- The growing wealth and cultural aspirations of the middle classes in Commonwealth countries offer natural opportunities for UK-based cultural and educational institutions, artists, writers and creative entrepreneurs based on historic cultural ties.

Our work across the Commonwealth brings direct benefit to UK and Commonwealth prosperity and security

- We build links between higher education institutions in the UK and Commonwealth member states, improving the exchange of scientific research and innovation.
- We provide access to English language teaching to millions of Commonwealth citizens, enabling them to access international opportunities and building trust and opportunity for the UK.
- We showcase the best of the UK's arts and creative industries in Commonwealth countries, generating opportunities for both new talent and established artists and businesses to create new work and access new markets.
- Our work in fragile and post conflict states across the Commonwealth is supporting demilitarisation and promoting the rule of law; building capacity in government institutions, education systems and civil society; and giving millions of people opportunities for development and learning.
- The opportunities we provide for learning, creativity and exchange of ideas give young people, creative entrepreneurs and academics from the UK and across the Commonwealth the chance to imagine and shape a better tomorrow.

FACTS

We have been working in Commonwealth countries for decades. We opened our offices in Australia and Malaysia in 1947, India in 1948 and South Africa in 1959. We are also present in the newest countries of the Commonwealth, Mozambique (1995) and Rwanda (2009) and have opened in South Sudan which has applied for membership.

In **Pakistan**, we are working with the Pakistani government to equip teacher trainers with the skills to train 20,000 government school English teachers. We have also recently launched the 'Fun and Learn' campaign which aims to reach large numbers of learners of English in Pakistan.

As part of our INSPIRE programme we are supporting 13 partnerships between **Bangladeshi** and UK universities, covering curriculum development, collaborative programmes, teacher and student exchanges and research co-operation.

In **India** we have trained 7,000 master trainers who have in turn trained 750,000 English language teachers to date. The UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI), which started in 2006, now has 182 partnerships between UK and Indian institutions across higher education and research; 600 institutions involved in schools and professional and technical skills; and 55 individual awards scholarships and fellowships.

The British Council is supporting UK higher education institutions to expand in new markets. **Malaysia** is the top country for transnational (TNE) provision of UK qualifications in the world, with around 58,000 students currently studying for UK qualifications. Five of the 25 UK university overseas branches are based in Malaysia and more UK universities and higher education institutions are planning to set up a presence in the country. The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, based outside of Kuala

Lumpur, has over 4,000 students from Malaysia and 70 other countries.

In Northern **Nigeria** and the Niger Delta, we are delivering a reconciliation and stabilisation programme funded by the Department for International Development (DFID). This programme looks at the reasons behind conflict, helps improve conflict management mechanisms and supports the role of women in building peace.

Through the DFID-funded Justice for All programme, we strengthen the rule of law and its institutions in **Nigeria** (e.g. police, courts) and make justice accessible to everyone in society, particularly the poor and marginalised.

South Africa will be celebrating 20 years of democracy in 2014 and to mark this anniversary we are organising Connect/ZA, an arts exchange and showcase to encourage cultural collaborations between South Africa and the UK, renewing the foundations for the next 20 years of UK engagement with this fast-changing country.

In **Canada** the Language Assistants Programme saw 32 English Language Assistants from the UK travel to Québec and 22 Foreign Language Assistants come to the UK to teach French in 2012–13.

We are bringing the best of the UK's arts and culture to **Australia** through the GREAT arts 13 season. With exhibitions featuring the work of Anish Kapoor and Francis Bacon, and the National Theatre's *One Man, Two Guvnors*.

In 2011–12 across the Commonwealth we worked with almost 3.5 million people face-to-face; welcomed over one million visitors to our exhibitions and festivals; and reached audiences of over eight million through digital outreach and 171 million through broadcast and publications.