UK/Australia Season 2021-22

Education Expression of Interest Brief

About the UK/Australia Season

The Season is a joint initiative by the British Council and the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to strengthen and build cultural connections. The Australian programme will take place in the UK from August to November 2021, and the UK programme in Australia from September 2021 to March 2022.

Under the theme ‘*Who Are We Now?*’, and particularly in light of the COVID pandemic, the Season will reflect on both nations’ shared history and culture. The Season will explore the UK and Australia’s current relationship, and imagine our future by bringing together artists, universities, and civil society leaders from both countries in a diverse and inclusive way.

The UK and Australian higher education sectors have extensive and historic links, shared academic values and support high quality, globally recognised mass systems of higher education. The UK/Australia Season provides an opportunity to focus on areas where there is substantial common ground between the two sectors in terms of priorities and interests and explore and identify ways in which cooperation and collaboration can be enhanced in order to achieve long-term mutual benefit.

The Theme: Who Are We Now?

The UK/Australia Season will support the development of closer links between the UK and Australian higher education (HE) sectors through a series of events and activities which align with the overarching theme of *Who Are We Now?* by focusing on four key areas of common interest and where they intersect. The sub-themes include but are not limited to:

* **Innovation:** 4th industrial revolution, science and health, arts practice and creative industries
* **Environment:** collaboration on sustainability, climate, green growth, biodiversity, sci-communications
* **Equality, diversity & inclusion:** decolonization, structural inequities in sectors, public engagement
* **Cultural relations:** ‘national identity’, soft power, future of cultural policy and international collaboration.

The Education programme will provide a platform for the two HE sectors to showcase their expertise, share ground-breaking research, exchange ideas, explore opportunities for new collaborations and areas of cooperation and to announce new joint initiatives. It will also provide an opportunity to bring researchers together with artists and policymakers to investigate in greater depth some of the themes in the Season’s main programme. The Education programme will help enhance audiences’ understanding of *Who Are We Now* as well as providing a thought-provoking perspective on the nexus between the arts, science and education.

Objectives

The Education programme will:

* Support and deepen the ties that already exist between the UK and Australian HE sectors.
* Provide a platform for the UK and Australia to explore and to share knowledge about some of the key challenges of our time.
* Help identify opportunities for new partnerships, research collaborations and student/youth mobility and exchange.
* Complement and enhance the impact of the main Season programme by deepening audiences’ understanding of *Who Are We Now?*

What are we looking for?

In this call we invite UK and Australian HE institutions to put forward proposals for compelling activities, events and happenings to be delivered in Australia that speak to and explore the core theme and the sub themes of the UK/Australia Season.

We are looking for:

* thought-provoking public engagement events that will appeal to general audiences;
* interactive activities which will attract and inspire younger audiences;
* specialized events which bring together academics from the UK and Australian sectors – from graduate students and early career researchers through to senior faculty – and which may result in ongoing partnerships.
* Ideation events that seed new collaborative research projects and focus on bringing together early career researchers from the UK and Australia.
* Examples of events include (but are not limited to): symposia; panel discussions; ‘TED’ – style talks; workshops; interactive installations; performances; exhibitions; innovative use of digital technologies and ICT, such as AR or VR.
* Proposals must demonstrate excellence and innovation in research, thought leadership, community engagement or teaching and learning, or excellence and innovation in another aspect of HE activity not listed above.
* We welcome proposals from any academic discipline.
* We are interested to hear about joint projects which are interdisciplinary and/or which bring together the arts and sciences in an innovative way, and/or bring together participants from other sectors including the arts, government and industry.
* We are particularly interested in ideas for events that focus on key areas of common interest such as epidemiology; space; climate and the environment; gender and economic empowerment; diversity and inclusion; and innovation.
* Please also make us aware of any joint initiatives between UK and Australian HE institutions which are scheduled to be announced/signed during the Season period, such as bilateral agreements, MoUs or the publication of joint research findings. We would like to use the Season platform to celebrate and raise the profile of these.
* Proposals can be for face-to-face or digital and/or an innovative combination of the two. **However, it is important that all proposals have a contingency plan for how activity will be delivered digitally/remotely should the current Covid-19 crisis continue into the Season period.**
* All or part of the event/activity must be presented in Australia between 1 September 2021 to 13 March 2022.

Seed Grant

Small one-year grants will be available to fund joint initiatives/events focused on key climate and/or environmental challenges facing ODA countries[[1]](#footnote-1) presented by UK and Australian universities in partnership with universities from one or more ODA eligible countries. Funds available for each project will be in the range of GBP10,000 to GBP25,000\*. The proposed activity must promote welfare and economic development of ODA countries and be aligned to Sustainable Development Goal 13 and other related SDGs[[2]](#footnote-2). The event/initiative needs to have a high level of involvement of ECRs and be designed so that it has two distinct parts (which can be delivered in either order):

1) a component which can feature as a core part of the UK/Australia Season, which can be delivered in Australia or online between September 2021 and March 2022.

2) a component which can be delivered or featured at COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021.

\*More information about the grants will be published alongside eligibility criteria and T&Cs w/c 5October 2020. The outputs and impact of this initiative must be delivered in ODA countries to qualify for the funding. Contracts will be issued to successful grantees in December 2020/Jan 2021.

Partnership model

The British Council will provide a platform for HE institutions to participate in the UK/Australia Season which will include the use of the UK/Australia Season brand and some limited PR and marketing support. Universities will benefit from the Season’s high international profile and critical mass of cross-sector programming, as well as opportunities to tap into the British Council’s extensive networks.

With the exception of the seed grants, no financial support will be available from the British Council for university partners. It will be up to the university partners to decide how much they wish to invest in presenting an event and these investments will not be channelled through the British Council’s financial structures. We will expect participating university partners to appoint a ‘champion’ who will oversee the development and delivery of the event.

1. See for list of ODA eligible nations: http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2020-flows.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UN’s Sustainable Development Goals: https://sdgs.un.org/goals [↑](#footnote-ref-2)