

# A cultural relations response to the war in Ukraine

---

# Introductions to Working Groups

## School education and language

The impact of the war on schooling, following years of disruption as a result of Covid, is significant for young people in their most formative years. This stream will explore how to ensure continuity of education at a distance for those displaced, and what is needed to support institutions in Ukraine, while also building on the work of the New Ukrainian School reform, which aims to transform basic education, making it more learner centric. The role of language (including English) for displaced people is important, as is how we support teachers through CPD and better digital offers. These discussions will be supported by some new British Council survey data from Ukrainian teachers about their current experiences and needs.

### Objective of working group

To explore immediate and longer-term priorities with key sector stakeholders from Ukraine and hear more about the specific characteristics of the situation for language learning and/or schools. To discuss with the UK ELT sector what tools or processes could contribute to maintenance and recovery of learning.

Participants are asked to come prepared to discuss the following questions (where these are relevant to their role):

- What are the most significant priorities for students and teachers in and outside Ukraine?
- What are key responses until now? How, specifically, could Language for Resilience experience be applied?
- How could expertise and knowledge held by the UK sector contribute to addressing the priorities of Ukrainian counterparts?
- What are the objectives of the UK sector in seeking to develop collaborations with Ukraine?

# Higher education, science and research

Before the war, the Ukrainian university sector was thriving following innovative and comprehensive reforms, and the UK was working with Ukraine to support its priorities to drive up quality standards in teaching and learning, and to build stronger international links. Since the war began, the UK and Ukrainian tertiary education sectors have been proactive in identifying the key needs of the sector and proposing opportunities for collaboration that draw on UK support to address both the immediate and longer-term needs of the Ukrainian tertiary education system. These include the impressive twinning programme launched by UUKi and Cormack Consultancy Group, which has catalysed more than 70 partnerships between UK and Ukrainian academic institutions, the Researchers at Risk Fellowships scheme being delivered by the UK National Academies and the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA), and numerous other initiatives at the level of individual institutions.

The British Council is delighted to be contributing to the twinning initiative to support collaboration between UK and Ukrainian academic institutions working together through the partnerships established under the programme. The working group will explore how to harness the strong appetite for meaningful and mutual collaboration and the significant momentum and energy generated through initiatives like the twinning scheme to maximise the impact of the relationships being forged and will consider how to use collaboration between the UK and Ukraine to support the longer-term reform priorities of the tertiary education system in Ukraine, as well as seeking to generate additional and complementary ideas.

Possible themes to be explored include: leadership of tertiary education during crisis and conflict; access to education for those displaced by the war; distance education; the role of digital technologies; the role of universities in countries hosting Ukrainian refugees around Europe; quality assurance; teaching and learning excellence; professional development for teaching staff; tertiary education's responsiveness to the needs of communities and society; research collaboration; and, employer engagement to promote graduate employability.

Participants are asked to come prepared to discuss the following questions (where these are relevant to their role):

- What is the current situation faced by the sector in Ukraine?
- How have the Ukrainian and UK tertiary education and research sectors responded to date?
- What are the priorities of the tertiary education sector in Ukraine – immediate, intermediate and longer-term reform priorities?
- What role can collaboration between the UK and Ukraine and internationally play in supporting these priorities?

# Arts and culture

The objective of the working group is to explore the immediate needs of the cultural sector in Ukraine, including institutional capacity, support to artists, and cultural protection interventions, but also to look at longer term policy and strategies, including around the creative economy, and future artistic and cultural collaborations which will connect Ukraine and the UK.

We will have 4 conversations on the following themes, and participants are asked to come prepared to discuss these questions:

## Institutional Capacity

- How can we ensure that the arts / cultural institutions of Ukraine are preserved and safeguarded during the war?
- How can we support the resilience of organisations and connections beyond emergency response?
- How can the process of institutionalisation of the sector be supported?

## Survival vs Development Mode

- How can we balance survival mode for the sector vs longer-term development?
- How can we emphasise the role the cultural eco-system plays as protecting the fabric of society?
- Where is the place for UK-UA connections in supporting the creative economy to be a driver of rebuilding the country?
- How can international collaboration support the cultural ecosystem of Ukraine?
- How can we preserve the cultural ecosystem of Ukraine?

## Cultural heritage

- What kind of immediate emergency cultural heritage support is the priority?
  - emergency support focused principally on protection, or removal to safer keeping where possible, of material heritage (buildings, artefacts, archives) in which the British Council Cultural Protection Fund is engaged through an alliance with other organisations (a pool of funding)
  - emergency for artists/arts organisations who are active in raising awareness
  - other forms of support?
- Wider kind of longer-term support and conversation around cultural heritage is needed?
  - We are keen to discuss the importance of both material and intangible heritage in exploring identities and different narratives (this relates directly to the values of

pluralism and independent critical discourse which are at stake in the conflict) and this directly involves the formal heritage sector (museums etc.) but connects with contemporary arts practice across all disciplines.

- How to ensure that the cultural voice is not silenced and Ukraine is not affected by “absence” on the global cultural map?

## UK/UA collaborations

- How can the Ukrainian artistic voice be heard in the UK?
- What should Ukraine and the UK know about each other to encourage collaboration?
- How can we approach showcasing? And how can we ensure that the momentum of showcasing grows into longer-term collaborations?
- How can we tackle the decolonisation narrative through this work?

# Youth engagement

The Ukraine Government’s flagship decentralisation reform programme was already devolving responsibility and resources to local authorities across Ukraine in order to promote social cohesion and growth. At this time of war, the importance of local solutions is enhanced, and the role of young people in finding these is paramount. This stream will explore how to maximise the involvement of young people at this time but also in the post-conflict reconstruction, building on the growing interest in volunteering and community engagement in Ukraine and learning from the longstanding tradition of volunteerism in the UK.

Participants are asked to come prepared to discuss the following areas (where these are relevant to their role):

- Capacity development: Institutional capacity development needs. Youth policy development in new context. Opportunities for collaboration with counterparts in third countries who are providing support to Ukraine in various capacities.
- Support for youth network existing and emerging through the war beyond emergency response: Engagement of young people to volunteering initiatives. Needs of youth groups / initiative groups / volunteering groups / etc.
- Community cohesion, resilience, post-war work in communities: Inter- and cross-community work. Collaboration with counterparts in UK and third countries.