



Assessing the Value of the UK-Iran Season of Culture

A British Council – Open University
Research Partnership

Final Report

1st September 2015

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1. Introduction

The Open University (OU) was invited to undertake an evaluation of the British Council's 2015 UK-Iran Season of Culture based on a Learning Monitoring and Evaluation (LME) approach called the Cultural Value Model (CVM). The CVM is based on two decades of OU research on participatory evaluation methodologies. It has been developed over the last two years and tested on several projects in close collaboration with British Council's staff.

The CVM is a collaborative, multi-disciplinary methodology and is unique in taking into account the interests and perspectives of the full range of people involved in the Iran season. These included funders, managers, producers, partners, artists, writers, dramatists and others who contributed to and/or delivered the season. The CVM also evaluated the responses of the target audiences – the diverse participants at the events, and the partners and users of the materials produced as part of the season.

The CVM assesses the extent to which the season matched the British Council's own initial objectives and expectations. It combines rich data and evidence (qualitative and quantitative) gathered inside and outside the organisation. It is a framework for thinking about and doing evaluation that uses existing British Council evaluation data and performance measures. Our evaluation also involved a supplementary data gathering process and analysis in order to plug data gaps and provide a comprehensive assessment. It facilitated an openly self-reflexive analysis among British Council staff during the season and afterwards. This report offers an independent assessment by the OU that takes into account the full range of data gathered, including self-assessment data that we gathered among British Council staff.

The overriding objective of the Season was 'to create opportunities for greater cultural engagement, improve mutual understanding, and increase trust'. The CVM evaluation offers a snapshot of its value in its immediate aftermath. A longer-term process of evaluation would be required to assess its value over time. Nevertheless, even at this stage we can assess the potential that season engendered for longer-term benefits and cultural relations. The OU team plan to do follow-up research on the impact of the season in the future.

Within the British Council, staff participated openly and honestly in the reflective approach that the CVM encourages. The Iran team displayed a high level of professionalism in their intercultural skills and expertise. Their willingness to engage with the CVM was impressive. As a result the evaluation has given valuable pointers to areas for possible improvement in future projects, especially the need to reassess existing practices around the conceptualisation, planning, organisation, resourcing, co-ordinated delivery and evaluation of seasons as an approach to doing cultural relations. This evaluation focuses on the Iran season but the organisational context and culture in which it evolved is inseparable. Therefore when and where appropriate, we make reference to organisational features which we consider enabled or constrained delivery of the season.

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1st September 2015

2. Main Findings

The evaluation found that overall the season was a success. It represented the most significant cultural intervention in promoting better UK-Iran relations in recent memory. The British Council's senior staff and the producers must be congratulated for taking this initiative.

A wide range of intrinsically interesting and rich cultural activities events in the UK reached over 2,400 active participants and over 10,000 festival and exhibition visitors.

- The Council's Iran website recorded over 15,000 new visitors, 3.4 million individuals received tweets on their Twitter feeds and the campaign's Facebook page registered a high level of engagement.
- There were a number of other outputs and activities, such as the Nowruz Schools Pack, which was available to schools across the UK and is hoped to have a lasting legacy.
- The Iran team seized an important opportunity and the right moment to create a diplomatic rapprochement via cultural relations.
- The season was successful in securing attention from several Iranian government ministers and other influential contacts.
- Many of the events and activities were highly praised by users, participants and partners. Particular successes included, among others, the Nowruz exhibition and education pack, the Iran in Writing event and the Modern Poetry in Translation Special Issue on Iranian Poetry, New Year Iranian Jazz, the Evolution Architecture exhibition and the partnership with the Edinburgh Iran Season (see Appendix 2 on Iran Season Highlights: Creating Waves of Sharing for further details).
- One positive outcome for the Higher Education sector is the creation of a career early researchers' network that will connect scholars in Iran and the UK. A launch event will take place in October and it is hoped that this will have an enduring legacy.
- Links with the Iranian diaspora in the UK were strengthened through Iranian jazz, fashion, architecture, arts and other cultural activities
- With respect to the British Council's data gathering on participation and engagement, the evaluation process was constrained by a lack of comparative information. It was not clear whether and how figures such as those given above matched prior expectations.
- As regards the running of the project, we identified some important areas where lessons can be learnt, both from the areas where all went well and from those that could have been better. These findings are set out below under five broad headings.

2.1. Strategy and planning

- Significant differences were noted in how senior managers, producers/project workers, partners and users understood and acted upon the main objectives of the season, leading to a lack of clarity about the nature, scope and scale of the season.
- In general, the season would have benefited from greater realism and clarity about what such a season can and cannot achieve in the way of improvements to Iran-UK relations via culture.
- Advance planning was difficult because of uncertainty about budgets and staffing until a late stage. There was a mismatch between the resources devoted to the season and wide range of activities undertaken which contributed to the feeling amongst staff that they were overstretched.
- It would benefit the British Council to assess existing organisational constraints, hierarchies and modes of management in order to make best use of the full skill-set of all staff and ensure equal opportunities for career development.
- Care must be taken to keep diplomatic and security agendas distinct from cultural relations work because if these lines are blurred it can harm relations.
- Planning for Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation is a strategic issue that needs urgent attention by senior managers and directors of SBUs to put an effective system in place.

2.2. Production

- Staff involved in organizing events and producing materials for the season should be congratulated for working under significant organisational constraints. For most of the people involved the season represented substantial extra workload and effort in addition to their normal work; many of the staff were noticeably exhausted at certain moments and felt that they were overstretched and that the quality of the planning and some of the outputs suffered as a result.
- The deployment of the British Council's resources in the season might have been better. For example, the book *Didgah*, though interesting in itself, lacks a clear readership, purpose, consistency and was produced very late in the season without a launch or a sense of connection to the wider season.
- Senior staff dealt very effectively with potential problems and pitfalls associated with political and cultural sensitivities, although some partners felt the British Council's approach was at times rather timid and risk averse.

2.3. Partnerships

- One of the most important features of the season was that it was largely based on partnerships between the British Council and external organisations. On the whole these partnerships were successful but there were some that did not go so well especially when there was a lack of clarity about objectives and how to achieve them.

- Nearly all of the partners interviewed praised the excellent working relationships they enjoyed with British Council staff and outcomes of these top events but in one or two cases it was felt that the British Council did not listen to the advice of experts.
- Mutuality was evident in projects like the Modern Poetry in Translation special issue where there was a genuinely rich and sustained collaboration between poets and translators in Iran and the UK. It was a unique but resource intensive project. Like others, it raises questions about the number, selection and sustainability of projects.
- The British Council should try harder to adapt to the timescales of the arts and cultural sector (funding, events, rhythms of work, process and outputs) rather than assume that these organisations can work to its tight timelines and funding opportunities.

2.4. Participation

- Many of the events and activities in the UK were targeted at people who already knew a lot about Iran and hence will not have contributed a great deal to the objective of challenging assumptions about Iran or raising awareness of Iranian culture among the wider British public.
- Sometimes it was not clear to users what the role of the British Council was in events – whether events were ones that would have taken place anyway and were badged as part of the season or whether they were initiated by the British Council.
- The season made excellent progress in helping to consolidate UK-Iranian cultural relations among British and diasporic Iranian cultural producers and laid good foundations for future cultural relations.
- There were severe limitations on the extent to which people in Iran could be directly involved with the season because of risks to the security of people who were seen to be working with the Council. This was inevitable, and should have been reflected in the stated objectives for the season.
- It is not clear how effective the digital media were in reaching people in Iran or even whether this was a key objective though there were clearly obvious difficulties in reaching, tracking and analysing digital data in Iran.
- A more carefully planned digital and social media strategy would have benefitted the season despite these difficulties.

2.5. Learning, monitoring and evaluation

- The CVM evaluation approach is designed to look beyond overall outcomes in two important ways: first, in assessing the data on participation, digital engagement etc., not simply at face value but in terms of what was expected of the project; secondly, by examining the working of the project itself, through interviews and discussions with the people involved.

- Not enough time or resource was built into planning a systematic data gathering process to feed into the evaluation process due to constraints in resources and the pressures of organising such a large number of events.
- The CVM highlighted limitations in the British Council's LME processes. Event participation numbers, participant feedback forms, digital metrics and other evidence such as unsolicited emails did not provide enough evidence to offer a clear or comprehensive assessment. The CVM works best where there is context data (e.g. from similar events) that permits an assessment of how performance compares with expectations, and little such context data was available in this case.
- Future activities would benefit from a more systematic collection and comparison of participation and feedback data across the range of British Council activities; it would also be worth investigating methods for collecting qualitative feedback from a range of participants to understand the cultural value of specific events and the season as a whole.
- While we have been able to assess the cultural value of events, it has not been possible to say anything about whether the season was value for money. In future assessments, it would be beneficial to bring assessments of cultural and economic value into closer dialogue.

3. The UK-Iran Season of Culture

The UK-Iran Season of Culture 2015 was precipitated by recent improvements in UK-Iran relations and was the first major cultural diplomatic intervention for decades.

Between January and April 2015 the UK-Iran Season of Culture put the spotlight on the 'dynamic culture of the modern Islamic Republic of Iran, and its ties with the UK in the areas of arts, education, and languages'.

The British Council invited audiences in the UK and the Islamic Republic of Iran to participate in the season through online engagement and by attending events in the UK.

The aims of the season, according to the British Council's initial concept note (see Appendix 1), were to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding, and foster new relationships to open the way for increased cultural collaboration between the UK and Iran;
- Acknowledge the UK as seeking a bilateral relationship with Iran through cultural exchanges for mutual benefits and growth;
- Raise the profile of the British Council's work with Iran, reaching new audiences across the UK;
- Expand networks and strengthen relationships with influential stakeholders who would contribute ideas, expertise and resources to future programmes.

It sought to reach Iranian ministers, academics, teachers, cultural leaders, programmers, producers, artists, exhibition attendees, community leaders, young people, the media, internet and social media users.

The season began on the 6th February 2015 with the Edinburgh Iranian Festival. The main part of the season culminated in April, but some events continue beyond then or are scheduled to happen later in 2015, and the British Council hopes that many of the materials produced as part of the season will form a lasting legacy.

Full details of the season can be found on the British Council website at <http://www.britishcouncil.ir/en/underline/season>.

3.1. Seasons as a strategy for cultural relations

Relations between the UK and Iran have deep historical roots that are often obscured by contemporary diplomatic tensions. When in 2009 the British Council had to close its office in Iran it sought to maintain a minimal level of cultural relations even though this was difficult. The diplomatic mood changed in 2013 with the election of President Rohani who is seen by the UK government as much more open-minded than his recent predecessors. He is a Glasgow University alumnus, and according to one member of British Council staff

'He is keen to get Iran to catch up with rest of world and has no problem with foreign investment in Iran. But he is however constrained by hardliners in power.'

The British Council is making a serious and sustained effort to work with Rohani's ministers at the cultural level. In this context, there is extra pressure on the British Council 'from above' to work with Iranian contacts in ways that bring diplomatic and soft power value to the UK.

3.2. Seasons as a new way of working at the British Council.

For many of the staff we spoke to seasons are about opening up the different cultures of the world to each other, but each season is very different in character and operates in a very different diplomatic context¹. In this section we present some of the insights offered to us during the interviews with British Council staff about working on seasons.

Most of the staff welcomed the opportunity to work on the UK-Iran season. But if seasons were seen to be an inherently good strategy for cultural relations in a 21st century context, it was also evident that there was an urgent need to get a better grip on organisational arrangements around seasons.

Seasons are a good thing if publicized well. They are better than normal British Council activities. They create a buzz.

They create more sustainable impact and value.

They transcend Special Business Units and the Iran season included architecture, writing, debates, fashion and lifestyle.

The season allowed a novel focus on positive intercultural exchange, for example, Nowrooz.

Seasons can help change cultural attitudes.

From the above quotes it is clear that seasons are accompanied by a considerable investment of money, staff time and energy but also by sets of expectations which, if not clearly defined and translated to a practical level, can create tensions and misunderstandings.

3.3. The UK-Iran Season of Culture

The emphasis given to the main purpose of the UK-Iran season varied somewhat according to perspective. For senior managers the strategic goals were uppermost in their minds. For example:

¹ For example, it is useful to compare and contrast our evaluation on the South Asia and Iran seasons, although the differences in character and context, as well as their resourcing, mean that there is limited common. See our final report (scroll down to end of page) at <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/cvp>

The purpose of the Iran Season was mainly to build relationships, to bolster our ongoing work with future partners and key stakeholders, increase interest in it and create something that opened people's minds about Iranian culture. Also, we wanted to find opportunities for people in the UK to see Iran in a new light – outside the prism of conflict. In the long term I hope the season will help build trust and understanding between the UK and Iran.

For the producers, reframing Iran and representing its cultural diversity was the primary goal.

The season made people inside and outside the British Council more aware of the diversity and richness of Iranian culture – we could all see that Iran is not a closed culture – it is more open than many think – this season has shown that.

The Iran season covered all possible cultural bases and mediums – the organisation did the job beautifully. Successful advertising seemed to attract all sorts of different cultures and peoples and participation was broad.

But these differences of emphases in purpose and objectives sometimes led to confusion:

I'm not quite sure what the overall aims of the Iran Season are.

Among British Council staff, a strong belief in the power of culture to bridge political divisions – an essential part of the British Council ethos – was evident in many of the interviews:

Iran is opening up to the world – but there are two streams – the political and the cultural streams of thought. Culture is inherently open. Politics might want to eclipse that openness but eventually culture trumps politics.

However, the human investment in making the season work well took its toll:

It was a productive, busy four months. Very intense. There was a very limited number of staff so we were quite overstretched. With overstretch there comes compromise. So the [season] model [of working] was not sustainable – it only would be if British Council put more resources and staff in [...] I wouldn't recommend doing it all again unless more planning and resources were put in before embarking on such an intensive project. I would suggest a set of better quality, fewer events, with more money for monitoring and evaluation.

Exhausted ... and not doing the business as usual stuff. Need time to catch up.

It has been a whirlwind ... it has stretched me quite a lot. Budget management side of things was pretty intense. I had a lot of development opportunities. I had support. There were a lot of expert colleagues to draw down from.

The question is whether the costs of delivering the season outweigh the benefits for users, partners and participants – the primary target audiences that the British Council hopes to reach. But we also need to understand the value of the season from the perspectives of the funders and stakeholders.

It is important to bear in mind that seasons are not stand-alone projects but part of the long-term process involved in cultural relations work. Some of the benefits of the season will only come to light in the future. The season increased awareness in Iran and the UK of the British Council – its purpose and work and that will have repercussions over time. Since the season ended two foundations have made contact with the Iran team to discuss future partnerships and projects. The Modern Poetry in Translation project led to a high-profile partnership that produced public events at the Southbank Centre. The British Council will continue to distribute outputs, like Didgah and the Nowruz education pack and this will be of real value in solidifying partnerships over time. In these myriad ways the British Council is slowly but steadily increasing the overall engagement between the UK and Iran. Nevertheless, it is important to carry out Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation exercises as seasons evolve and to gauge carefully as they proceed.

We now investigate in greater depth the value of the Iran season using the Cultural Value Model as an approach that can help us to untangle some of the contradictory insights in the executive summary above and to understand the value of the season from different and competing perspectives.

4. The Cultural Value Model

The Cultural Value Model (CVM) involves a collaborative approach to evaluation that is unusual in taking into account the interests and perspectives of all major groups involved in the season.

The cultural value of an organisation such as the British Council has many facets and 'value' can mean many different things depending on one's perspective; for example, the aspects which are important to funders may be quite different to those which matter to producers, to senior managers and audiences.

In order to evaluate the success of a project like the UK-Iran Season we need to go beyond linear, reductionist performance metrics, impact indicators and the like. The approach we use invites the different people involved in the season to identify the different components of value that matter to them via an initial workshop. It takes into account the differing perspectives of funders, producers, managers and users, and presents the components of value in an holistic way - allowing them all to be considered together in one frame.

An essential feature of the CVM evaluation process is that it is collaborative throughout. The aim is to review the extent to which the season matches up to the Council's own objectives and expectations, using data and evidence from within and gathered independently outside the organisation. It enables an openly self-critical analysis of the process of delivering the season and its outcomes. The evaluation takes place in partnership **with** the organisation rather than being imposed **on** it and this participatory method is in itself a process of learning. The assessment of the season is made according to the organisation's own criteria and the findings are the joint product of all of those involved. That is why we refer to the CVM as a methodology for Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME).

4.1. Components of value

Through extensive previous work with the British Council we already had in place a detailed description of the key **components of value** relating to the aims of organisation as a whole. Each component is defined by setting out what would represent good performance by the organisation and represents its essential aims. For example, one component, labelled 'Partnerships', is described as follows:

'British Council uses partnering success to further reputation and commercial capability. British Council is recognised as a good partnering organisation. It reaches a large number of people in target areas, delivers high quality outputs and actively pursues new creative partnerships that bring benefit to its customers, the UK and to the organisation.'

In order to evaluate the UK-Iran Season it was necessary to adapt and refine the components so that they described what would represent good performance and outcomes for the season, and hence could set a standard against which the actual performance could be assessed. This was done at a workshop with the British Council and partners in November 2014. At the workshop those attending were invited to define the specific components of

value for the season – to translate organisational aims into project objectives that could be assessed.

Our method asks participants to define the most important components of value for the season in a drawing. This method has been tried and tested over 15 years at the OU. The resulting visualisation is called a Rich Picture. Encouraging participants to think visually, it moves away from ‘business as usual’ approaches to more creative thinking, performing the necessary translation from organisational aims to measurable objectives for the season.

Below is one example of a Rich Picture drawn by one of the groups attending the final workshop. Further Rich Pictures are in Appendix 3 together with a commentary.

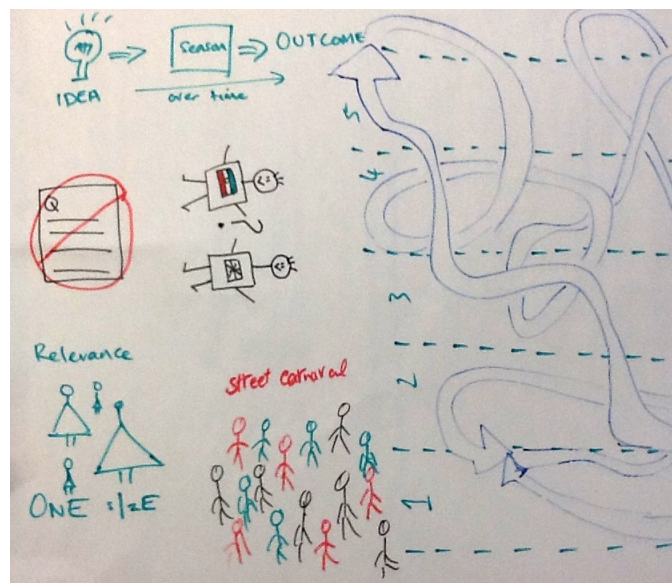


Figure 1: Example of a rich picture

The workshop produced 20 components of value in all; these are grouped into four **segments** reflecting the different categories of people involved in or affected by the season:

<p>Users, participants and partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility • Relevance • International • Quality • Participation 	<p>Producers, advisors and cultural intermediaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Citizenship • Interculturality • Creativity • Professional
<p>Senior management, strategy and planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality • Technological • Strategy • Mutuality • Reputation 	<p>Funders and stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diplomatic • Development • Transnational • Partnerships • Sustainability

The component definitions are set out in full in Appendix 4. These definitions are crucial to the LME process as they define what gets measured and evaluated. The short labels given above are mere descriptors, not definitions.

The grouping into segments is useful in practice but is not a strict division, and there are overlaps; for example, people who perform at a musical or theatrical event may be seen as 'producers' and/or as 'participants'. Again, for convenience we will refer to the four segments in this report using the short labels *Users, Producers, Managers* and *Funders*. However in our evaluation we take into account overlaps and we also cross-reference evaluations data and scores

4.2. Scoring

Scoring each component is an essential part of the CVM process. The score indicates the extent to which an assessment of actual performance matches the aspirations set out in the component definitions.

In order to arrive at a score, we must first turn the definitions into a set of questions against which we put a score; the overall score for the component is then calculated by averaging the scores for the separate questions.

The scores are arrived at in collaboration with the British Council on the basis of evidence from a range of different sources, the chief ones being:

- participant feedback forms handed out at events;
- in-depth interviews with
 - people who participated in events
 - people involved in producing content and organising events;
 - managers
 - representatives of funder and stakeholder organisations;
- data on levels of attendance at/participation in events;
- digital analytics data for online content and activities.

We use all the relevant evidence both quantitative and qualitative to arrive at a score for each question on a scale from 1 to 7: a score of 4 represents a balanced assessment of sustainably good performance; higher scores indicate areas for which performance was seen as being excellent but perhaps over-ambitious or unsustainable by excess; scores below 4 indicate that performance was disappointing and unsustainable by deficit.

In the in-depth interviews with users, producers, managers and funders interviewees were asked to give scores for each of the questions relevant to them and the overall scores were calculated by averaging the responses of the interviewees. For other evidence, such as participant feedback forms and digital analytics, the scores were arrived at by a more complex process of comparing the results with what one would have expected or hoped to see. We also compared these scores with roughly comparable events as no clear or consistently produced benchmarks were available for us to be able assess with any accuracy or reliability good performance.

The use of a common scale for all components, whatever the form of the underlying data and evidence, means that a wide variety assessments can be brought together and summarised by comparing outcomes with the aims and prior expectations of the organisation. This has clear advantages over other methods that rely exclusively on numerical data that can lack cultural sensitivity.

4.3. The CVM constellation

The overall scores for components are displayed together in a diagram referred to as a ‘constellation’. The diagram below is a simulated example based on random data.

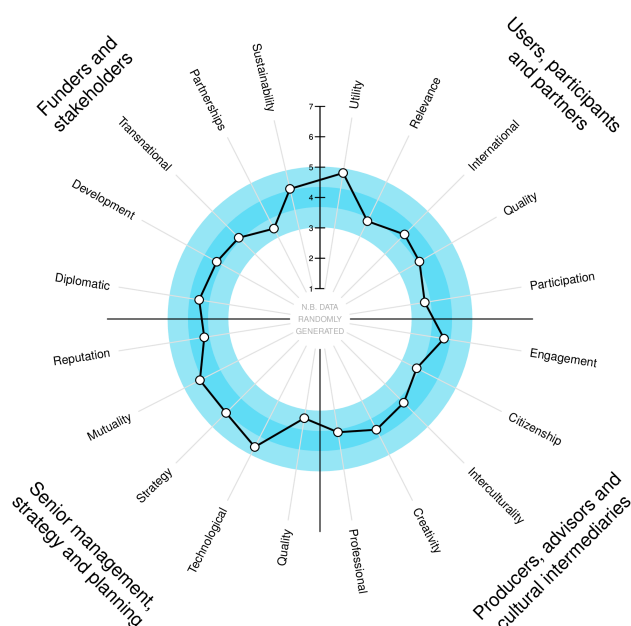


Figure 2: Constellation with simulated data

As noted, in calculating the component scores we are looking for a balanced and sustainable outcome for each of the 20 components assessed. The calibrated seven-point scale provides a point of balance at the scale point 4. This is the ‘ideal’ but we consider scores between 3 and 5 to be acceptable and we show this range on the diagram as the **Band of Equilibrium** (BoE) or scores that fall within the range of balanced and sustainable performance levels.

From the diagram it is easy to see where the scores for specific components have deviated significantly from the BoE. In this way we can see at a glance which aspects of performance have shown up in the evaluation as balanced and sustainable and which have not.

Inevitably, though, there is a loss of detail in this summary diagram. Each component score is based on a number of different questions and the evidence used to score each question typically involves many people, often with differing opinions. The findings in this report are based on all the data, including interview and observational data gathered during the interview process. The constellation cannot tell the whole story, but it provides a valuable visual point of reference and helps the story to be told based on evidence.

5. Findings in detail

The constellation below shows the overall results for the season.

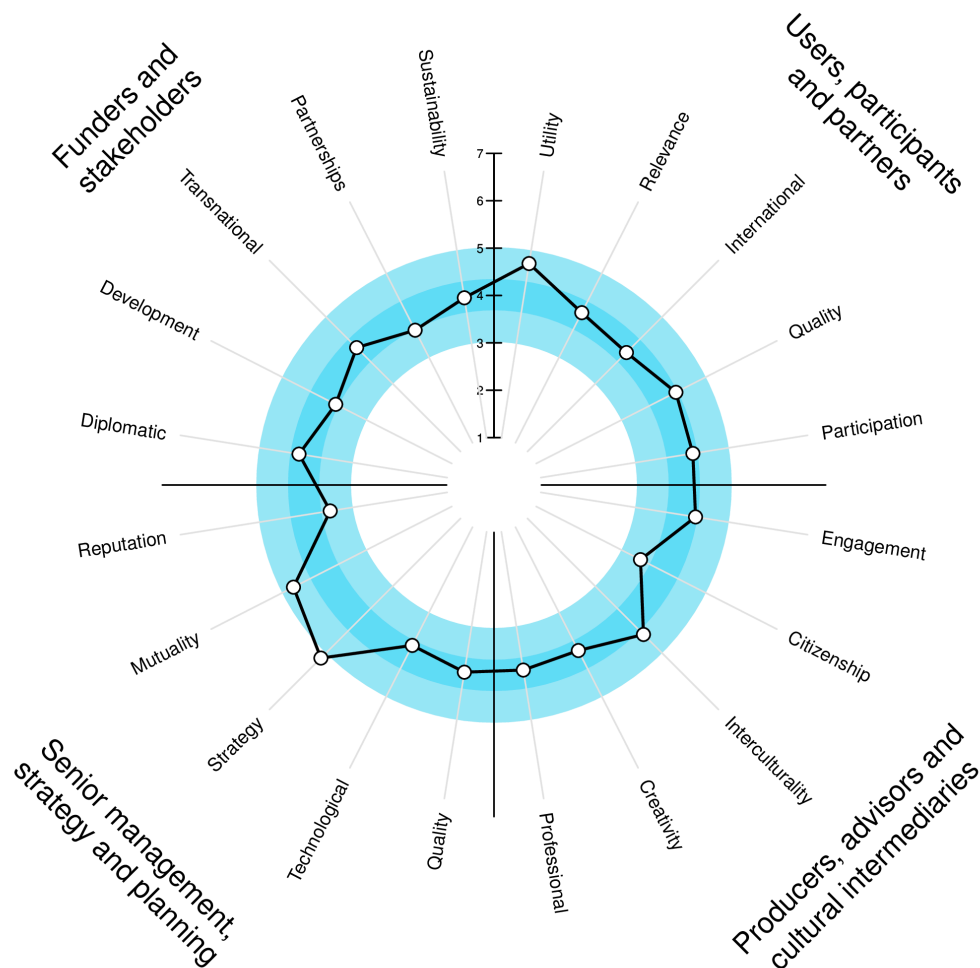


Figure 3: Constellation with final results

The UK-Iran Season was an overall success when evaluated on the British Council’s own criteria. Our multi-perspective assessment provides a snapshot of the value of the season from a range of different perspectives. Of the 20 components of value, 19 were assessed to be in within the BoE (in the scale range 3 to 5) and therefore sustainable.

The scores we see in this chart are averages of averages: each is averaged across a range of questions and respondents, as well as across qualitative and quantitative data. This averaging tends to push the scores towards the middle and so for a more insightful analysis we can sharpen the focus by reducing the BoE to a narrow band around score 4:

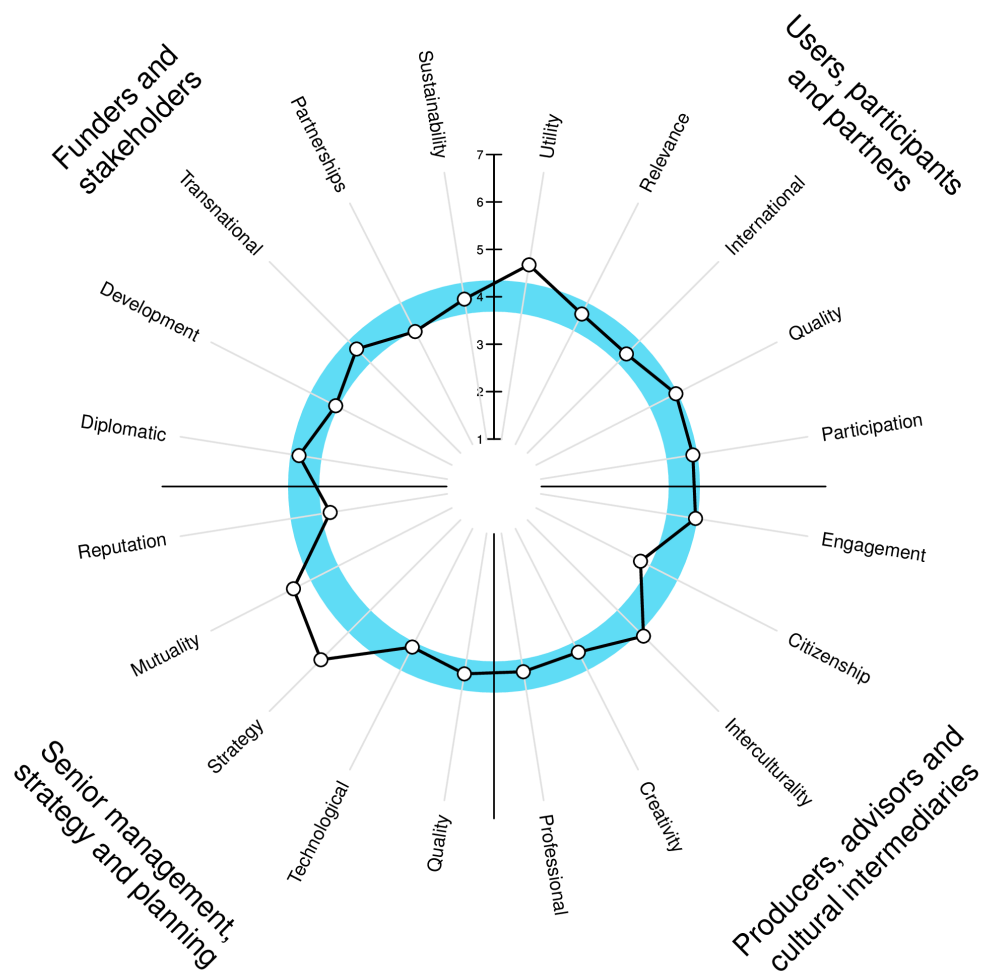


Figure 4: Constellation with final results – narrow BoE

Even when we narrow the focus 14 of the 20 components within the band, confirming the assessment that overall performance was good and sustainable. Nevertheless, the model shows a number of areas where there is room for improvement. We set these out below, looking at each segment in turn.

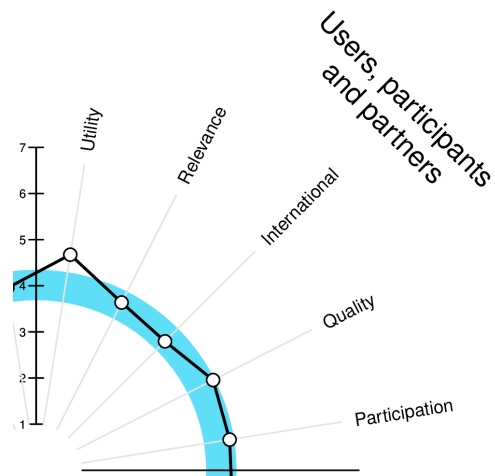
5.1. Users, participants and partners

Scores in the 'Users' segment were all well within the BoE and four of the five were in the narrow band.

For **Participation**, the overall score of around 4 is based on a review of all the data on attendance at UK-based events and on engagement with digital content.

UK events

A wide range of intrinsically interesting and rich cultural activities events in the UK reached over 2,400 active participants and over 10,000 festival and exhibition visitors. Overall attendance figures are considered to be in line with or above expectations for the events as planned.



Many of the events and activities in the UK were targeted at people who already knew a lot about Iran and hence will not have reached the wider UK public that they would need to in order to contribute a to the objective of challenging assumptions about Iran.

Sometimes it was not clear to users what the role of the British Council was in events – whether events were ones that would have taken place anyway and were badged as part of the season or whether they were initiated by the British Council.

There were a number of other outputs and activities, such as the Nowruz Schools Pack, which had a wide impact across the UK and are hoped to have a lasting legacy.

Website and social media

The Council's Iran website recorded over 15,000 new visitors; 3.4 million individuals received tweets on their Twitter feeds in connection with the Spirit of Nowruz exhibition; and the British Council's Iran Facebook page registered a 36% increase in followers and a high level of engagement. Full details of all the data from digital metrics is given in Appendix 5.

Impressive as the figures sound, it is difficult to judge how they compare with expectations because of a lack of directly comparable data. For example, large as the figure for tweets may be, it is an uncertain measure in that does not tell us how many people actually engaged with the tweets; the hashtag #SpiritOfNowruz was mentioned on Twitter only 697 times which by external comparative standards is small.

Nevertheless, where there are comparisons the results of the digital metrics are better than for previous activities of this sort; for example, the number of people receiving tweets for the exhibition was much higher than for the previous (and at that point most successful) exhibition at Spring Gardens, for which fewer than a million people received tweets. Further there is evidence that after the season engagement has not dropped back to pre-season

levels. For these reasons performance on these activities is judged to have met expectations overall.

The British Council's internal report on the digital activities² notes that there were some missed opportunities. In the original marketing strategy there had been plans to create a podcast and an article on the 'Voices' blog, which could have heightened the impact of the exhibition; these activities did not happen because of limitations on budget and human resources.

It is not clear how effective the digital media were in reaching people in Iran (even bearing in mind the considerable constraints on access by Iranians due to internet and social media blockages and censorship) or even to what extent this was a key objective of the season. Within the British Council there was some disappointment about this despite the fact that it is very hard to get accurate data:

The proportion visiting the website from Iran was lower during the season than in the previous period: 50% of websites are blocked in Iran – people use proxies which hide your location, so you can't tell if someone's accessed it from Iran.

We were disappointed that digital reach into Iran via Social media has not met the goals shared at start of season. Maybe we did not get a clear view of what success would look like – that's something senior management needs to work out with a core evaluation team.

For **Quality, International, Relevance** and **Utility**, the scores are based on event feedback forms (an example of the form is included in Appendix 6) and on in-depth interviews with visitors, participants and partners for UK events, with the two types of evidence being given equal weight in the overall scores.

In the responses to the feedback forms, most people agreed with the positive statements that they were presented with. This is often the case with such feedback and so it was important to set the results in context. The British Council provided for comparison the results of customer satisfaction forms for 67 events around the world organized within the Arts SBU; data were collected from these forms for three questions, including two which correspond directly to questions on the form used for the UK-Iran Season. We used the data from these events to establish the normal range of scores and thus to re-cast the responses on the agree/disagree scale into scores in our standard 1 to 7 range.

Compared with feedback from the 67 events for which we have data, the scores for the UK-Iran season were somewhat lukewarm. When the results are 'normalised' by comparison with the data from other events the scores are generally toward the lower end of the BoE. However, since the scores used for comparison are for events outside the UK it could be argued that the 'normalisation' process gives a pessimistic view, since it does not take

²'#SpiritOfNowruz Social Media reach and engagement', report dated 15 May 2015

into account the very different cultural contexts and differences in how users respond to feedback forms.

The feedback from the in-depth interviews with event visitors, participants and partners was very positive and tends to counterbalance the lower scores from the forms.

Relatively low average scores were recorded on the feedback forms for the statements '*The event challenged my assumptions about Iran and Iranian culture*' and '*It opened up new opportunities for me (for networking, business, new interests)*'. This is understandable in the light of the fact that many participants at events already knew a good deal about Iran. In retrospect, the statements (which were created in collaboration with British Council staff) may reflect some confusion about who the key target audiences were for particular events and/or that there was a plethora of different kinds of events for different audiences.

This may account for some of the negative responses among those we interviewed to the questions about whether the season succeeded in challenging assumptions about Iran:

No – I've been to Iran and had the experience of trying to understand Iranian culture. Whatever assumptions I have it didn't really challenge them, just reinforced my thoughts on things.

Responses of course vary according to the particular kind of event and activity. In some cases Iranians in the UK did find events useful in opening their to new artistic and cultural trends, for example, in fashion and design:

As an Iranian I was surprised that I personally learned new things about Iran – saw museum samples of vintage Persian textiles and had interesting discussions with museum experts: textiles/fashion but from historical angles I didn't know about before.

The Iranian participants that we interviewed were very aware of the usefulness of the season in reshaping perceptions of Iran among UK citizens:

I got the impression that UK people started to realise that they could feel at home in and enjoy Iran if they were brave enough and interested enough to visit – widespread fears about going to Iran.

There was a strong appreciation for how the season might lead to a new more hopeful sense of opening up of international relations between UK and Iranian citizens – albeit slowly and tentatively. For some, it represented an important shift and a new era of cultural and diplomatic relations:

It shifted perspective away from Iran's association with terrorism and current affairs. Showed that there is more to Iran, a deep, rich culture.

There was a very efficient Iranian team at the British Council, they created an impressive outcome that exhibited Iranian culture in modern, positive light.

Particularly in the field of arts and relations between Iranian and UK artists, the sense of improved understanding and mutuality was strong:

[The season] gave me a deeper understanding of what it's like to make art and theatre happen in Iran and what it's like for immigrants and exiles [in the Iranian diaspora].

The Edinburgh Iranian Festival mobilised a huge effort from all parties involved and definitely reaped more interest in and discussions about Iran.

Most of those we interviewed saw the events in and around across different art and cultural forms as representing British Council values and, via association, values that Britain tries to promote.

The people at the Festival were all – although it was a cross-discipline event – immersed in the idea of advancing active citizenship. The event really reinforced those values.

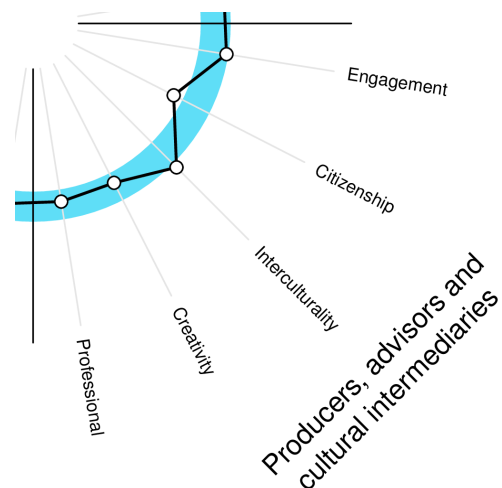
British Council are essentially telling Iranians that ‘we care about your culture and status’ – this is bound to have a positive outcome in the UK.

The huge number of events and their diversity made the task of overall evaluation quite difficult. It is clear that the staff involved felt that managing the season and undertaking the usual British Council style evaluation was too much. They also strongly argued that existing evaluation methods do not capture the various dimensions of cultural value for users, participants and partners. And these categories in themselves are not clear-cut. The British Council would be well advised to re-think of existing methods of assessment to get at the complexities of cultural experiences and their value over time. This would be a very valuable outcome of this LME exercise.

5.2. Producers, advisors and cultural intermediaries

The CVM scores in the ‘Producers’ segment are based on in-depth interviews with people directly involved with the creation of content and organisation of events.

The scores are all well within the broad BoE and generally in or near the narrow band around 4, reflecting the fact that the people who were interviewed felt that the season was a success, particularly in engaging audiences and users, and in fostering good intercultural cultural relations. These were areas that producers felt were particularly successful. As these are core British Council values this was regarded as an important achievement. There were, however, some important aspects of the organisation of the season that could have been better planned and resourced from the producers’ perspective, and this negatively affected their professionalism and creativity.



Staff involved in organizing events and producing materials should be congratulated for working under significant organisational constraints. For most of the people involved, working on the season represented substantial extra workload and effort in addition to their normal work; many of the staff were noticeably exhausted at certain moments. They felt that they were overstretched and that the quality of the planning and some of the outputs suffered as a result.

Where the responsibility lies for this overstressing and lack of resource management is unclear. It could be seen as a reflection of the enthusiasm and conscientiousness of producers even if it resulted in trying to offer too many events to too many diverse audiences. But it is also a reflection of the uncertainties around resources from the outset and the cultivation of partnerships that evolved at very different rates. Clearly, not enough time was devoted to planning the season and it suffered from a clear strategy for achieving what were multiple aims for diverse audiences.

The CVM score for **Professional**, in the middle of the BoE overall, includes low scores on two specific aspects: producers did not feel that they evaluated their work enough, either individually or collaboratively – except through the CVM process itself, which they appreciated – and they did not feel that they had received appropriate training and career development opportunities in the course of the season, given the time constraints.

The score for **Cultural Citizenship** was relatively low. One aspect of this was that the producers did not feel that the season achieved its aim to enable UK and Iranian citizens to represent themselves and be represented in the cultural sphere or ‘to promote freedom of expression, digital citizenship and enable voices in/from Iran to be heard more widely’. Clearly given the blockages in participation from Iranian citizens this was perhaps an aspiration rather than a realistic goal. There was disagreement about whether the season was intended to promote freedom of expression – this being seen as too political an ambition for the British Council. Nonetheless, the articulation of such an aspiration towards cultural representation/citizenship is an important part of the CVM process and may guide future planning of seasons.

Examples of feedback from the qualitative interviews provide substance and rich insights into the judgements informing the scores (the names of interviewees are not given to respect confidentiality and this allowed producers to speak freely).

In general, all the core staff working on the season felt that their professionalism was undermined by the lack of planning and human and material resources and, at times, most staff were notably distressed:

We did not have time to turn all our plans into action. We could have done better.

There were great costs in the delivery of project – [the season was] very under-resourced – there was no time to stop and think, a very limited number of staff. Over 8 months, the season was not necessarily understaffed but, during the period of the season, there was too much weight falling on too few shoulders. The British Council management are relying on staff professionalism and commitment but ultimately exploiting our commitment to British Council values.

The British Council is more “activities-focused” – it’s not paying enough attention to monitoring and evaluation. The British Council is fixated on delivering activity – not enough time or thought is given to monitoring so we need external as well as internal evaluators to make this happen – to do less and evaluate more.

Staff reported that they constantly feel the need to juggle ideal versus pragmatic decision-making and solutions because of pressure to deliver:

We all want to achieve and have best intentions but we can’t fulfil our ambitions. To be honest, some outputs events are not of the highest quality due to lack of resources to pay for the best musicians or singers, for example, or to have the right expertise or planning to assess the market

Some also felt that cultural and political as well as resource constraints combined to limit opportunities for innovation and creativity. The season required huge tact and skills in cultural sensitivities so important trade-offs had to be made between creative risk-taking and cultural sensitivity:

The whole point of the season was dialogue so compromises were made to deal with political sensitivities but they were negotiated with the best interests at heart for best outcome.

Innovation and creativity is a big part of our work but there were so many restrictions – for example, all writers had to have pseudonyms to protect their identities because being involved in the season posed serious risks for them and their families and their safety.

Confidentiality was of critical importance in all forms of communication. For example, you always had to blind copy names (British Council) in all emails. Absolutely no disclosure, ever, could be made of any participant’s identity.

The sharing or publishing of pictures had to be done with extreme caution. It required huge cultural sensitivity – we had to make sure that we didn’t show any faces as that could create problems for people.

The season involved artists, performers, photographers – some for example were from Iraqi Kurdistan so that is a potentially huge risk given relations between Iran and Iraq and the high profile nature of press coverage.

The season opened the British Council up to huge potential criticism, on the one hand from those who consider that it is not critical enough of the Islamic Republic of Iran and on the other from those who say it is too critical.

Some argue that we are opening up beyond tolerable levels. Someone will always be offended

We don't talk or do politics – promoting human rights or freedom of expression – this not our role.

For some partners, though, the British Council 'overly risk-averse approach' went too far:

I think the British Council went too far in not providing alcohol at Nowruz – after all even if there was an Iranian Minister there, the Iranians have to learn to appreciate and tolerate cultural differences too – it has to be mutual. There were other small examples of that attitude too.

Staff made good use of their transnational connections in their attempts to go beyond the 'usual suspects' and to involve new artists, cultural producers and intermediaries in the season and to provide them with opportunities and platforms:

Artists weren't just from big organisations – there were 40 independent artists participated. The South Bank event (20 March) involved diverse acts, not just the obvious ones. We were offering opportunities for cultural engagement for Iranian artists – we provided the platforms.

An excellent example of high levels of engagement was the Nowruz photo competition and exhibition that promoted intercultural dialogue at a very personal level – a feature of good British Council cultural relations work:

The availability of the photos online and via social media led to so much sharing of photos – enabling dialogue around artists from different places and regions – for example, from Tajikistan to Tehran – but at the British Council we don't talk about politics – we talk about culture- people to people, individuals to individuals – that's the British Council way – particularly through social media.

A particularly good example of good British Council 'cultural relations in action' which strengthened creativity and dialogue at the same time – and good translation practice – was the Modern Poetry in Translation Special Issue on Iranian Poetry:

It created an unprecedented dialogue between poets in Iran and in the UK Iranian diaspora and not just among Farsi speakers – the project went beyond that to create a novel dialogic translation practice – a toing and froing between poets and translators that all too rarely happens and that provides a good model of practice for the future. What was published was a product of these translation practices. And some poems were truly beautiful – this was time-consuming and may not be sustainable practice but it paves the way by creating an interest in Iranian poetry which is not well known and even ignored here in the UK and the season helped do that.

For some partners, the season did not live up to their expectations:

At the outset, we imagined poetry on the tube, we imagined that if UK citizens understood that Persia and Iran were the same place and that Persians were not Arabs and if they had a greater awareness of Nowruz then the Season would have achieved its main objective – as I understood it – which was to educate the UK public about Iran but that didn't happen.

There was poor communication and publicising of events – I wasn't made sufficiently aware of the span of events in the season and what was included in the season or what was subsumed as part of it – it was all very confusing trying to navigate the key events that the British Council was involved in.

*The quality of some of the outputs was not very high. Take for example the book *Didgah* – it is very uneven in quality – and how is it being distributed – was there a launch? I don't know? It's a mishmash. Who is it even for?*

The British Council needs to think very carefully about how they treat their partners and who represents them and the attitudes of their staff. A small number of British Council staff are clearly vestiges from the UK's imperialist past – like the worst kind of liberal Brit – making excuses for the autocrats – that kind of colonial condescension and liberalism is out of place in the 21st century.

Working relationships were fraught at times and some staff felt that senior managers might have pre-empted and forestalled some of the tensions that arose:

People got angry much quicker due to stress levels [...] there were misunderstandings [...]. We have been under a period of stress. It was very challenging [...]. Group dynamics were working against the project at times. There could have been more sensitivity[among senior staff] to when issues were starting to build up.

In the early stages of planning there was some concern expressed from some managers that they were not being communicated with enough. [...] but we did not learn.

We got negative feedback about the literature event at BL. A member of audience did not like one of the poets. One academic made a very aggressive attack on British Council. This was passed on to Danny.

There was negative feedback from the British Council on Twitter. One Persian journalist tweeted that it was a great initiative and another journalist replied and said it was a huge missed opportunity. The Twitter exchanges were all about the unimaginative British Council. But Twitter arguments get you nowhere. Best to keep a dignified silence.

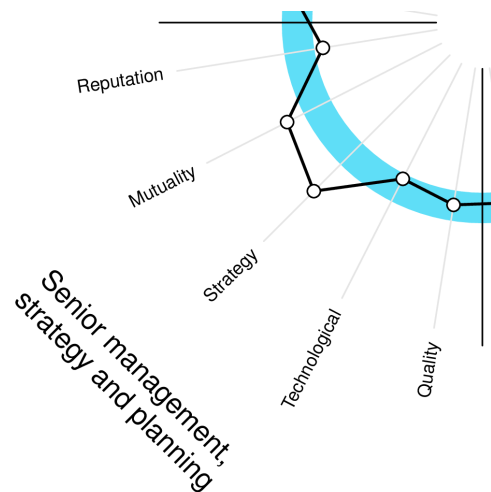
The LME process actively and closely engaged with the British Council staff delivering the season. What we found were reflexive, creative, passionate, committed, highly professional individuals who had a truly impressive grasp of the British Council’s ethos and wider strategic aims. But the British Council is a very large organisation and sometimes its organisational processes and poor communication across levels and hierarchies means that the staff delivering the season experience intense pressure points. This is something that senior management needs to anticipate and take into account in their strategic planning of seasons – to which we now turn.

5.3. Senior management, strategy and planning

Scores in the ‘Managers’ segment are based on in-depth interviews with senior managers within the British Council.

Four of the five scores in this segment are inside the BoE and three are in or near the narrow band. There were two very high scores, one outside the BoE (Strategy) and one within it (Mutuality), reflecting aspects of performance that were seen by the people interviewed to be very good, but possibly not sustainable. Some of those we interviewed felt that senior staff dealt effectively with potential problems of sensitivities with regard to the representation of The Prophet.

Others felt that the British Council’s timid, risk-averse approach to creative freedom of expression undermined the ethos of the season. This balance of creative risk taking and risk aversion was an issue that aroused strong feelings, inevitably. The value of the season in advancing the British Council’s reputation in Iran, predictably given the constraints, scored lower, as did innovative uses of technology to widen participation. Whether the British Council’s senior management team could have done more at a strategic level to engage Iranian social media and internet users is a question that they will have to answer (via a discreet partnership with or at least advice from BBC Persian Services perhaps?). Certainly, given Iran’s vibrant social media and diasporic digital culture, a more innovative digital and social media strategy could have been put in place to overcome the obstacles. Again, it appears that organisational constraints conspire against creating a team with all the required skills and expertise and the necessary resources to work together to develop not just an effective digital strategy that can widen participation but also an intertwined digital LME process to know whether or not the British Council had succeeded. Is it enough for the British Council to be satisfied by success in its own terms and according to internally set criteria or should senior management be seeking a more realistic benchmarking of what counts as success and failure?



Although those working in strategy reported that the season was a success, the OU team noted significant differences during the interviews in how senior managers, producers, users and participants understood and acted upon the main objectives of the season. These differences in defining the core objectives of the season led to a lack of clarity about the nature, scope and scale of the season. Moreover, advance planning was difficult because of uncertainty about budgets and staffing until a late stage. As the season progressed it became clear there was a mismatch between the resources devoted to the season and the wide range of activities undertaken. This explains the perceived and strongly felt sense among staff of being overstretched.

One key lesson to take away for strategic management teams at the British Council might be, in the words of one participant, that **“a big elephant can’t dance anymore”**. The British Council is a very large organization and there is a risk that if its organisational structures become too big – if its hierarchies become too entrenched and its lines of communication don’t flow in all directions – then it cannot be creative. Senior management need to be clear about and communicate the key aims and goals of a season like this from the outset and manage and monitor resources accordingly.

There is a need for the British Council management to get a better grasp of the organisational constraints, hierarchies and modes of management that inhibit creativity. They also need to make best use of the full skill set of all staff (especially minority ethnic staff) in order to ensure equal opportunities for career development promotion. Great care must be taken at the top of organisation to keep diplomatic and security agendas distinct from cultural activities. To blur the lines can harm fruitful cultural relations. Diplomatic value should always be understood as a by-product and not an end in itself.

Qualitative interviews revealed that soft power ambitions were often very much in the foreground for senior managers but not among producers; this can create tensions if soft power becomes the objective rather than a by-product or consequence of the activities:

The Season needs to be seen from the perspective of the benefits it brings to the UK soft power and all the cross-cultural activities and cultural immersion that the Season generated clearly brought benefits to both UK and Iran – this is what we do at the British Council.

A greater awareness of the history of diplomatic relations might have helped British Council calibrate their ambitions and expectations:

One has to understand the British Council’s role in Iran. The British Council has always been seen as an arm of the British Government and it still is. The Brits may see it as soft power but Iranians see it in much more conspiratorial lens – as an attempt to influence Iranians and they resist that.

Related to the problem of the role of soft power in British Council activities is whether as an organisation it seeks mainly to engage influential social strata:

The British Council as an organization doesn’t really reach the poor – it’s mainly the middle classes and upwardly mobile – we are not yet stimulating grassroots.

Planning for Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME) is, for some staff, a strategic issue that requires an overall organisational approach that is at present lacking:

I'm not sure that the British Council does evaluation, or if it does, it doesn't do it very well or very consistently.

Each production team is supposed to do LME. There should be a dedicated team on LME - comparing the Iran season with other seasons and events, establishing baselines and benchmarking – there should be one or two dedicated and properly trained LME staff from a central British Council team who advise and design the LME for each season and then there should be designated staff for each season to tackle the different forms of LME around digital, around audiences at events.

LME should be integral to the entire process – from the conception to the completion of a season. There should be proper systems in place. It's too much to expect project teams to undertake this on top of their regular duties and extra work that Seasons involve.

Every project manager should receive LME training but if some staff are on short-term contracts this may not be seen as good investment.

The CVM should be used at British Council alongside the ABD (score cards).

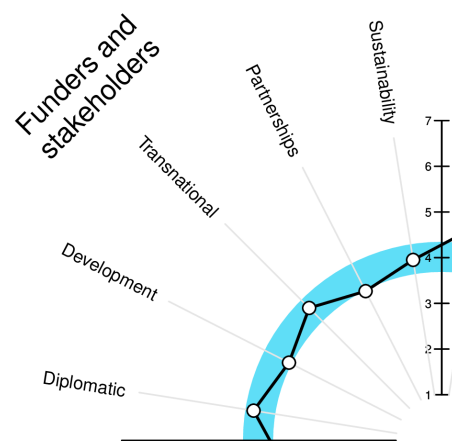
Time possibly a factor but also it's the kind of approach we need to take – British Council is more activities focused - not paying enough attention to LME – so fixated on delivering projects – there's not enough time or thought given to monitoring so we need to employ external evaluators - someone from outside the team to assess the Season over a couple of months and beyond – The OU approach is innovative – I really like the stakeholder mapping – it's interesting.

We now target different audiences and types of people and so we need to identify what kind of learning or benefit for each type audience or user – we need to evaluate whether and how partnerships work and whether media reports are good.

5.4. Funders and stakeholders

Scores in the 'Funders' segment are based on in-depth interviews with people in funding organisations. Additional qualitative information comes from interviews with other stakeholders.

The scores are all within the narrow band around 4, reflecting a high level of satisfaction with the season on the part of the people interviewed.



Within this overall picture, though, there were a few low scores on specific aspects.

Funders did not feel that there was ‘evidence that as a result of the season overseas publics will be more likely to find Britain an attractive place to study, visit or work’ (part of the Transnational component that is also related to the ‘soft power’ value of the season). They also did not think that ‘the season’s digital and social media activities reached a large number of people in Iran’ (included in Partnerships).

Perhaps in retrospect one might not have expected to achieve a great deal in these areas in the first place. If that was indeed the case, it might have been preferable to set lower expectations in framing the objectives of the season.

There were severe limitations on the extent to which people in Iran could be directly involved with the season because of risks to the security of people who were seen to be working with the Council. This was inevitable, and should have been reflected in the stated objectives for the season.

In general, the season would have benefited from greater realism and clarity about what such a season can and cannot achieve in the way of improvements to Iran-UK relations via culture.

On the other hand, the season made excellent progress in helping to consolidate UK-Iranian cultural relations among British and diasporic Iranian cultural producers and laid good foundations for future cultural relations.

One of the most important features of the season was that it was largely based on partnerships between the British Council and external organisations. On the whole these partnerships were very successful but there were some that did not go so well. Nearly all of the partners interviewed praised for the excellent working relationships they enjoyed with British Council staff and outcomes of these top events.

Our qualitative interviews offer further detailed insights from the perspectives of funders and stakeholders into some of the key points raised above.

The fact that the season took place was considered an achievement in itself and a point not to be forgotten in any evaluation:

The fact that we have a season of culture on Iran at all does send a powerful message to those who want to hear it.

Funders emphasised the value of the season in terms of setting a new tone to the UK-Iran relationship but were very wary of making any great claims about soft power benefits which are deemed to take place over time and to be somewhat intangible and difficult to measure or document:

I thought the season an excellent idea. Well executed. There was very positive feedback from others. The Iranians who came over from Iran thought it very positive. Just doing it was positive. This said a lot about the UK and the tone of the relationship. But it is a stretch to go from that to more concrete benefits. This is part of long, sustained engagement. It will only be after a long time that the effect can really be seen. The longer term is key – years not months – to see the softer influence. Anecdotally, yes, it had some influence but that's very hard to measure in concrete terms. It was well received. It was an incremental step. It's much too early to say. This kind of work has indirect benefits. The important thing for the British Council is how to capture the value of their work over time and in future.

The difficulties of working in Iran and engaging Iranian citizens were well recognised:

The British Council has very limited public exposure in Iran. There's no evidence of influence or of soft power benefits – The Iran season was a very useful piece of public diplomacy – a point of reference for the future. Soft diplomacy issues are more complex. They [the British Council] work very effectively with the FCO. The FCO is a key partner. In terms of commercial benefits ...I'm less sure. Not seen much evidence of any commercial or economic benefits but that wasn't the purpose, I suppose.

Our interviewees among funders and stakeholders were generally positive about how the British Council worked with partners particularly the FCO:

The British Council worked effectively with partners – yes they did. There was lots of reaching out to FCO.

British Council and FCO policy makers have different objectives. They understood the red lines but they [the British Council] did engage with FCO ... but only once all the big decisions had been made.

The benefits of the season were not deemed to be mutual – there was more benefit to the UK than to Iranian citizens

From a UK perspective the season most definitely had a positive effect. Not so sure it is the same the other way round. So much of the season was focused domestically – UK based. It's hard to know the effect abroad in Iran. Hard to measure. It will certainly have a positive effect in the UK.

UK stakeholders were at heart of the season. Every element had a UK cultural relations partner. Some of the digital work on cataloguing [cultural works] was innovative and appealed to stakeholders. The school stuff [Nowruz school pack] was very 'fresh'.

They could have done more to engage the wider Iranian diaspora.

The perspectives of stakeholders working in the education sector – where most commercial gains and benefits can be identified – did not go unrecognised:

British Council engagement has been quite a major factor for those in the education sector – the commercial effects of that have been substantial. One thing that struck me was the variety in the season. Very interesting. Others noted this too. Very interesting ... surprisingly so. One can imagine that the season would have had a powerful effect.

However other stakeholders were less content with what was seen as a confused and confusing set of projects aimed at very different audiences:

If the audience was trilateral: a) the Iranian government ministers - well that was misconceived and not achieved; b) the UK Iranian diaspora – they didn't strike good relations with key diaspora organisations; and c) UK citizens - and they did little or nothing to educate UK citizens

Some stakeholders felt a sense that there was an inner circle of power and diplomacy from which some partners are excluded:

There is a sense in which some events are open and then suddenly the doors shut – especially for high-level meetings and that's fine to some extent but the manner in which the British Council communicates this is not very courteous. They need to improve the way they communicate with partners. They must make them feel valued.

Some Iranian stakeholders suggested that there was a lack of understanding at the British Council of the distinctive features in the manner in which Iranians conduct diplomacy that made their UK counterparts seem at times naïve.

There a lack of understanding of the way Iranians do diplomacy – there are certain cultural conventions around negotiations – a certain indirectness if you like – they never say directly what they mean or intend – for example, if a junior minister says the British Council can return to Tehran and have an office – you just can't take that at face value! It's the job of junior ministers and diplomats to be nice to the Brits but it's totally unrealistic to believe British Council can have an office again in Tehran now or even in the near future but some at the British Council didn't get that.

It seems to me that the season was too ambitious if it thought that it would have any impact whatsoever on current diplomatic relations. That would be naïve. Of course it's a step in the right direction – a softening but perhaps the British Council need to learn to listen more.

The interests and goals of some funders and stakeholders – for example, soft power and cultural diplomacy – may not match those of users, producers or even some senior managers. How competing interests and goals are negotiated can be extremely tricky and very much at the core of the work of senior managers.

6. Conclusions

The season has been successful so far in establishing much stronger relationships between the UK and Iran than anyone at the British Council might have expected, so gains are clear. However, for the people who organised events and created content the season was additional work on top of their regular workload. The biggest challenges were lack of financial and human resources, and lack of time to plan, and to monitor and reflect on progress. Staff displayed high levels of professionalism and a strong sense of ownership of the season. However, the weight of responsibility on their shoulders was heavy and unsustainable.

6.1. Lessons for future seasons

The findings set out above are specific to the UK-Iran season but they also have wider implications. There are emerging themes that will be of interest to those involved in the planning for future seasons.

It became apparent during the process of scoring the components that there was no explicit description of what the season was expected to achieve, and that different people had different expectations as to the outcomes. For example, the components of value that were agreed for the CVM did not allow for long-term benefits that could not be assessed during the season itself, such as the continued use of the Schools Pack in later years.

Advance planning for a season of this sort, indeed for any major project, would benefit from some time being spent translating British Council's overall aims into specific objectives for the season/project and setting out a clear picture of what success would look like. This picture would include a realistic assessment of what impact the season could have amongst the target population as a whole. For the UK-Iran season such an assessment would have recognised that political conditions and security issues limited the degree to which Iranian citizens would be able to engage directly with the season.

The list of specific objectives would include details of what evidence would be used to evaluate the extent to which the objectives had been achieved, and what good performance would look like in terms of the metrics that were to be used (see *Implications for evaluation* below).

The feedback from people directly involved in the season indicated that it required a significant workload on top of their normal activities. That they achieved what they did in spite of this is a tribute to their professionalism; but it would be wise to consider whether this approach is sustainable or desirable in the long term.

6.2. Implications for evaluation

The evaluation itself highlighted limitations in British Council's own monitoring and evaluation processes. It was the intention that for data and evidence about the 'users' – people reached by and engaging with the events and activities of the season – the

evaluation would rely heavily on the data collected as part of British Council's normal monitoring processes. These were

- Numbers of participants for most, but not all, UK events;
- Feedback forms completed by event participants;
- digital metrics
- other evidence such as unsolicited emails

These did not provide enough evidence to meet the needs of the CVM approach fully. Evaluation of performance is much sharper when there is context data (e.g. from similar seasons or events) that permits an assessment of how performance compares with expectations, and little such context data was available or organized in such a way as to enable comparisons to be made.

Future activities would benefit from a more systematic collection and comparison of participation and feedback data across the range of British Council activities; it would also be worth investigating methods for collecting broader and deeper feedback from event participants.

There was little time or resources built into the planning of the season for sufficient or systematic data gathering to feed into the evaluation process due to the number of events and constraints in resources.

Appendix 1: UK-Iran Season concept note

The text here comes from the British Council's Concept Note for the Iran Season, which was shared with the OU research team in November 2014.

Context

Relations between the UK and Iran go back many centuries. Although the British Council closed its office in Iran in 2009, we have continued our cultural relations work to support the aspirations of Iranian stakeholders who wish to maintain dialogue and contact with the UK. The British Council has responded to the recent improvements in the bilateral relationship by exploring new models of engagement with and in Iran, identifying opportunities for individuals and cultural relations organisations in both countries, and strengthening mutual understanding and cultural ties.

UK-Iran season of culture

Between January and March 2015, the British Council will lead a series of activities focusing on the cultural links between Iran and the UK. This season will spotlight the rich and dynamic culture of modern Iran, and its ties with the UK in the areas of arts, education, and languages, climaxing in a celebration of Nowruz, Persian New Year. Through nationwide exhibitions, performances, discussions, workshops, and seminars, the UK Iran Season of Culture will explore Iran's cultural heritage and vibrant contemporary creativity, enabling the people of the UK to experience and re-interpret Iran. The British Council will work with a wide variety of partners to deliver the season and reach diverse audiences in several regions.

Outcomes

We will showcase the best of contemporary creativity and knowledge and stimulate opportunities for individuals, communities, and organisations in all fields of cultural relations. The UK Iran Season of Culture will lead to greater cultural relations engagement between the UK and Iran, addressing misunderstanding and misrepresentation, and building trust.

The UK Iran Season of Culture will:

- Increase knowledge and understanding, and foster new relationships to open the way for increased cultural collaboration between the UK and Iran;
- Acknowledge the UK as seeking a bilateral relationship with Iran through cultural exchanges for mutual benefits and growth;
- Raise the profile of the British Council's work with Iran, reaching new audiences across the UK;
- Expand our networks and strengthen our relationships with influential stakeholders who will contribute ideas, expertise and resources to our future programmes.

Audience

Ministers, academics, teachers, cultural leaders, programmers, producers, artists, exhibition attendees, community leaders, young people, the media, internet and social media users.

Diversity

All participants and consultants have been selected in line with our EDI policy.

The programme extends across the UK and participants from Iran are invited to take part in person or via skype.

The programme includes an exhibition on Nowruz with eight participating countries and celebrates the cultural diversity and ethnic minorities within these countries.

The programme includes a Women of the World event.

Appendix 2: Iran Season Highlights: ‘Creating Waves of Cultural Sharing’

As part of the research we conducted interviews with audiences, producers, senior managers and funders during and after the season to get a different angle on the value of specific events, outputs and associated working practices. This was regarded as necessary by both OU and the British Council to overcome some of the limitations of the British Council’s main data-capture methods for events, feedback forms. Feedback forms allow (anonymous) users to respond to an event during or immediately after it. In the case of the UK-Iran Season we had produced a set of carefully constructed, relevant statements with which audiences/users could agree or disagree (see Appendix 6). Useful as feedback forms are for mapping broad responses to events, the very nature of artistic and cultural events, both as a creative process and product, means that it is difficult if not impossible to capture the many dimensions of value through such forms. We need to find alternative ways of capturing the cultural value of events and outputs from diverse perspectives.

It is also important not to underestimate the difficulties of working with Iranians in Iran and in diaspora given the actual and potential dangers for those involved, and the surveillance carried out by the Islamic Republic of Iran. We therefore present the quotes anonymously in order to protect the identities of interviewees. Where possible we indicate the nature of the role the interviewee played in the season but even that is sometimes risky. Many of the people involved in the season already assumed pseudonyms. The security dimensions for staff involved in working on the season should not be underestimated.

Below we present insights into the cultural value of the season in the form of quotations from the interviews and an interpretative commentary. It is not a comprehensive outline but it provides substantial qualitative feedback and responses to events from a range of actors and complements the responses in Chapter 4 on constellations of value.

The Spirit of Nowruz event, exhibition and schools pack

The spirit of Nowruz launch event and exhibition were regarded by most of those we interviewed as one of the season’s most successful highlights because they helped to reflect the new more open, hopeful contemporary mood in UK-Iranian diplomatic relations. They showed how Nowruz is celebrated across the region and in the diaspora. The launch event, in particular, gave a very rich image of Nowruz as a transnational festival and a diversity of participants from different countries attended it. For producers it allowed for important networking to take place with Iranian invitees, especially through the pairing tactic described below, although there was criticism among some staff that it was mainly British Council staff of white British ethnicity that were asked to take the lead in networking. This raises a question about the colour of the public face of British Council and the extent to which diasporic staff might act as useful cultural intermediaries. The launch sought to create a very personal relationship with key stakeholders and reflected the pivotal importance of culture as a diplomatic tool:

People here [in the UK] were united by the festival of Nowruz and although much of the exhibition focused on Iranian traditions the photographs also drew on intimate celebrations of the festival throughout South Asia, Central Asia and North Africa. This part of the world was presented in a positive light. Something that particularly struck me was the speech by Danny Whitehead, Director of British Council Iran. There was a focus on the importance of cultural relations and how culture can, despite adapting to the current day, transcend time in a way that politics cannot. The mood was positive towards bringing Iran and the UK together through culture in a non-politicised way. I felt that the focus on the present day rather than the past brought a modern view of Iran and by not talking about history managing to look forward positively. (Funder/stakeholder)

The launch of the Nowruz Exhibition included a very diverse group of people from about 7 different countries – not just Iran. Each country (e.g. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kurdistan) submitted a guest list which included each country's own stakeholder. It was a great networking event - the most important people were invited e.g. for Afghanistan, journalists who cover Afghanistan or people interested in Afghan art came along. We figured out who we should invite and why we should invite them: what's the link with British Council. It was selective but also open for suggestions and we built up the guest list for months. We wanted people to have a chance to meet British Council key staff so we asked the partners their suggestions. For every 10 people outside we invited 1 British Council staff member. British Council staff were paired with guests so they'd engage with outsiders. This was a successful technique to facilitate networking: everyone mixed well because they had a task – nobody was to be left alone. It was integrated and British artists could meet Iranian artists and think about collaborations in the long term etc. (Producer)

I have never worked with so many different country offices and was surprised at how effective we managed a complex set of correspondence. (Producer)

Various artists in the exhibition are much better known in Iran than in the UK so exhibition helping to bring them to attention of the UK artistic community. (Producer)

There is some evidence on social media and also, for example, an interview for Uzbek TV that the season did act as a catalyst to develop relationships between Iran and UK on the cultural front. (Producer)

The photographic exhibition was regarded as a great success. It invited widespread participation from around the world through the online photo competition and created **'waves of cultural sharing'**:

There was an open-call for photographs, of which the standards were very high. Now the exhibition has been launched this spirit of sharing and mutual understanding, alongside self-representation in the digital sphere, the hashtag #SpiritOfNowruz has become a new platform to share in the lead up to and the festival of Nowruz, in a positive way. The curator of the exhibition suggested that it could act as a sort of wave of cultural sharing and raising awareness of how different people celebrate through a series of intimate and special photographs of celebrations between family, friends and neighbours.

The Nowruz Schools Pack formed an important part of the ambition to challenge assumptions about Iran in the UK. It was a tricky and complex set of materials to get right and required a good deal of intercultural skills and political sensitivity at the level of design and artistry:

Personally I had to be politically sensitive and make sure that the design did not appear to be promoting Nowruz as an Islamic festival, as it is not. This meant that stunning images of Central and South Asian architecture and art could not be used in the pack. (Producer)

My colleagues sourced content in collaboration with schools in Central and South Asia, as well as the UK, and ensured that the pack reflected the diversity of the festival of Nowruz as not only an Iranian tradition. This has meant that during the UK-Iran Season of Culture, Iran is being presented as a country that does not operate as an individual entity, but shows interculturality – its positive interactions between people in different continents of different faiths and backgrounds. The pack has also engaged with the diaspora and UK citizens in showing how countries celebrate Nowruz widely.

Primary school pupils are encouraged to be creative and to learn about Iranian culture and some other places where Nowruz is celebrated.

The education pack has promoted the artwork and creative talent of the UK and Iran, especially Kat Forouhesh.

I think that the Nowruz pack will act as a bridge between different cultures; between teachers and school pupils in the UK, parents and children across Central and South Asia who were represented within it through personal letters. The pack encourages 'world openness', discovering new things or gaining a new perspective on things that are already familiar.

Some users, mothers and school teachers, were frustrated, however, that, having heard about the pack, it arrived very late, and in some cases too late to integrate into the UK school curriculum.

It was shame that there was so little information about the pack until very late on and its late delivery meant that it was not as widely disseminated and used as it might have been – hopefully next year it can be used again and it will be easier for teachers and schools to prepare to use it in advance. (User/parent)

We can see from the above responses to the Nowruz Festival that this was an enlightened approach to cultural relations but the organisations constraints, timing and lack of resources meant that the schools pack did not manage to achieve the reach that it might have done. Also, in future, better tie-in with media outlets (for example, the British Council or local radio) would help to disseminate the work of the British Council to wider audiences. The British Council must integrate itself into wider cultural and media landscapes to reach wider audiences – both live, via traditional media and digitally. Whether such widening of participation is regarded as a primary goal of the British Council remains unclear. The British Council seems to be caught between on the one hand operating according to established principles of creating strong interpersonal friendships at an individual level, and on the other hand reaching wider audiences. In future seasons it would be wise to decide well in advance which events and outputs are intended to reach which audiences and what might count as success. At present, we have very little information or criteria on which to establish baselines of success.

<http://www.britishcouncil.ir/en/underline/season/spirit-of-nowruz>

<http://www.britishcouncil.ir/en/underline/season/nowruz-schools-pack>

The Edinburgh Iranian Festival

The Edinburgh Iranian Festival is a Scottish Charitable Organisation. The festival “aims to increase understanding of Iranian culture, history and people, at a time when perceptions of the country in the Western world are heavily skewed by politics. [...] With over 5,000 Iranians currently living in Scotland, and given the celebrated tradition for cultural festivals in the Capital, Edinburgh is a natural home for this Festival. One of our key objectives is to provide a platform for new and up-coming artists and encourage interaction between British and Iranian artists, performers and historians.”

In this section we focus on Persian Chic Fashion Show as it highlights the excellent partnerships that the Iran team created in reaching out beyond London and engaging with already existing, major, relevant cultural activities. This is very important strategy for the British Council’s future where finding will have to come from very diverse sources

The insights below are mainly from the point of view of the fashion designers and some members of the audience involved in the Fashion show – see

<http://www.ediranfest.co.uk/pages/fasion.php>

Great experience! It was first time I have worked with other Persian/Iranian artists/musicians etc – as well as Scottish – to deliver information about/experiences of my (Iranian) culture. Showed a different side to Iran, not just the negative political things everyone knows about from the news. People wanted to learn more about Iran and they were surprised we have fashion design – given burka stereotype. (Iranian Fashion Designer)

It really helped my business in terms of new contacts and confidence/brand identity. New people now know me and my brand and I've been contacted by more magazines and boutiques because of it. After the event I became brave enough to take my collection to more shops/boutiques, more confident about opening my own Cardiff shop. It helped me realise that there is a market for handmade Persian fashion. (Iranian Fashion Designer)

Many Iranian people were coming to me and saying they wanted to do something similar in their UK city, and they want to find a group to do it with, discover more Iranian designers and artists to work with to teach British people about and share with them all the good things about our culture. (Iranian Fashion Designer)

As an Iranian I was surprised that I personally learned new things about Iran – saw museum samples of vintage Persian textiles and had interesting discussions with museum experts: textiles/fashion but from historical angles I didn't know about before. (Visitor)

Looking at Iranian culture in conjunction with Scottish made me see a unique cultural exchange and find amazing cultural similarities. It felt like we are all part of a shared humanity, we all feel love, fear, and challenge things in our own ways and in our own languages. We're all the same. (Visitor).

The interviews carried out with partners and participants express the pleasure and value that they derived from working on the Persian Chic Show. A similar pattern was found in interviews with those who worked on and contributed to a path-breaking special issue of *Modern Poetry in Translation* where, for the first time, Persian and UK poets worked together in a unique way.

Modern Poetry in Translation: Special Issue on Iranian Poetry

Modern Poetry in Translation (MPT) is an international poetry journal, long established and well-renowned in international literary circles. It was set up by Ted Hughes and other poets to build international understanding in the post-World War Two period. A number of interviews with those involved allow us to document its value and significance. The MPT Project offered a chance to present Iranian poetry in a prestigious magazine. Articles were translated about the poetry of Iran and Iranian and UK poets and translators worked together in highly innovative and novel ways. It was the very first time that some of the poems had been translated into English. The long-term collaboration between the poets and translators can be considered an end in itself.

It managed to bridge the divide and worked with poets based in Iran – although they had to work under pseudonyms. It gave Iran based poets a chance to work with established writers outside Iran. This created without doubt quite a novel experience in the professional literary sphere.

In general terms, was great to promote positive image of Iran. Reservation. MPT zoomed into human rights/political issues, following on from all the politics hype. This is OK, just would be nice if this wasn't always the focal point. [...] Chance to exhibit translations on a new and prestigious professional platform, learned new things [...] in the process of working with MPT translating, redrafting and editing I learned valuable news.

This special issue dovetailed extremely well with the wider programme of events around Iranian literature (see <http://www.britishcouncil.ir/en/underline/season/iran-in-writing>). An interesting feature of the season was a number of high profile public events involving conversations across disciplines in the arts and sciences. These events certainly contributed to fostering intercultural dialogue and while they may not have reached large numbers of people, arguably they reached key influencers who could set in motion a longer-term train of value that would unfold over time. A good example of such innovative intercultural dialogues was Iran in Writing and Junctures (below).

Iran in Writing: Daljit Nagra in conversation with leading Iranian writers

This project involved a partnership with the British library. The aim of the event was to explore how classical Persian literature might help us understand life in Iran today. It included some prominent contemporary Iranian writers in conversation with a Punjabi writer, Daljit Nagra who claims to be a passionate reader of Persian Poetry. We interviewed some of the producers and participants at this event:

It had good turn out and response from both specialists and generalists.

This is an interesting new cultural frontier, and it makes a difference to be at the forefront of it.

We selected writers who sensitively explore the political sensibilities often through domestic scenes. We wanted to show Iranian life beyond the headlines.

The BL made use of the digital archive of Persian illuminated manuscripts, but were unable to sustain a promotional partnership – the British Library was going through cuts to staff (particularly on their website) and so promotion was challenging and possibly not sustainable, but the BL is committed to developing the partnership – the poets not included in the Modern Poetry in Translation issue have been in touch with British Council about submitting to future issues.

There could have been done more digitally with the British Council/BL partnership – a positive initial response on Twitter and by those at the event, though this is relatively small in relation to the broader cultural perceptions.

Again, we find here a pattern of response – more could have been done with digital outreach.

JUNCTURES: A day of debate and provocations exploring innovation and collaboration across the arts and sciences

The Junctures event involved a novel collaboration with 30 Bird. (see <http://www.30bird.org/project/junctures>) and ZENDEH (part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio of Organisations that values "creative collaboration, sharing and the imagination.") The project's online information is very well presented and packaged (see the Nowruz long table, gallery and overview). The project lived up to its goals according to not just the partner and participant below:

Through Junctures, the British Council gave us opportunity to get back into the groove, to get project moving again with an Iranian theatre company [...] it was great to explore our common bond with Iran as well as the fascinating differences [...] I learned much more about modern Iran and its culture. Couldn't fault the event.

Such positive sentiments about this kind of exchange, sharing and collaboration were consistently expressed. However one important issue that was raised by a number of interviewees was that the British Council should try harder to adapt to the timescales of the sector (funding, events, rhythms of work, process and outputs) rather than assume that partners are always able and willing to adapt the British Council timelines.

Iranian Harmonies: New Year's Jazz

On the eve of Nowruz, British-Iranian bands played two improvisational sets using jazz and other musical styles to celebrate New Year at the Southbank Centre in London. From the point of view of the musicians involved the cultural exchange element came to the fore but also some of the difficulties of working with multiple partners at the same time:

I played illegal/underground rock music in Iran as a teenager. Got interested in Sufi music, travelled to rural villages and learned ancient songs. Played around with Western music when came to London. My music is a mix of genres, fusing traditional Iranian with dance, classical and jazz. Very good outcome, a lot of people came to the concert – evidence of good communication on the part of the organisers – and the audience were from all over.

I hoped the concert would show the best of Iranian music and culture, a full mixing pot, to new/wide audiences. Not an Iranian concert for Iranians only – that already happens amongst ourselves! Communication with British Council was fine. But we had problems with South Bank – we were not taken seriously, they provided poor equipment, and an amateurish sound tech.

We learned much from feedback of participants/artists/musicians and audience members – useful for me as critical feedback [...] showing what Iranian culture and music is capable of – for example, my performance showed that traditional Persian songs can sit alongside jazz.

I learned more about how to approach professionals in the field. Of course [I feel empowered] – I'm now trying out new collaborations, I got good feedback – it was helpful for refining my next performance in terms of the balance between Western and Iranian styles.

What stands out in the above quotes is the combined artistic and professional value derived by the musicians themselves – and the excellent communication with the British Council.

The Imaginary Festival Cards

A Festival of Imaginary Events for Rooftops in Tehran and London involved a valuable collaboration between 14 Iranian and British independent artists to create a festival of imagined performances on rooftops. None of the events will ever be realised – the idea was that they would exist only in our shared imagining of them. This was a creative way of adapting to the challenges of bringing artists and audiences from the UK and Iran together, not having to worry about the difficulty of travel or visas.

The Imaginary Festival was a pack of cards connecting Iranian and other artists through their imaginations. Art challenges – it helps develop mutuality and respect. UK and Iranian artists do not meet every day. There is a process of engagement. ... challenging preconceptions was the main goal. Sometimes the differences we assume are not actually there so that's why such projects can explode myths.

It worked well but there wasn't enough time allocated to support the project. A struggle to develop the project due to lack of time. More time would have made problems non-issues.

The networking was really useful at the conference.

The cards were distributed at the opening reception [...] The cards were quite niche .. not open to wide appeal. We decided not to use social media so Iranian artists are 'safe'. The cards worked really well as a way of doing this. We don't want this to feel like the project is a marketing exercise. Handing out cards could feel like marketing. This did not feel like that. I have used this model in lots of conversations within and outside the British Council.

There was an ongoing conversation between the Iranian producer and the digital producer but there was a lot of potential to do a lot more online - to create and develop an online conversation. We did not have time to do this.

It was almost impossible to hear voices of young independent Iranian artists. We were targeting a particular group - not everyone.

Working with Iran opens up question of freedom of expression. There was more freedom in this project than is normally possible with Iranian artists. But this is still a very unresolved issue. This is a critical point for the British Council to get to grips with. Some UK art had to be cut – effectively censored for fear of offending (albeit for reasons some might understand) but the British Council may have been too careful. What are these projects for? Not to push artistic boundaries perhaps.

One artist produced a text – it was very testing – it would have been deeply offensive to many people. Clearly ramifications. Some did not agree it was decided to hold it back. It did not meet the brief and it was not appropriate for British Council to distribute. There was another example too. So this raises the question of artistic censorship and how to manage staff and the artists .. it's very difficult.

We achieved a lot. Very definitely ... Really pleased with response from the cards. Really, really valuable project

Clearly the battle between creative innovation and risk taking and the management of risk and reputation mean that the British Council has to walk deftly across a tightrope and this was perhaps no more evident than in this project.

Evolution: Architecture Exhibition and Film

This innovative architecture exhibition and film was part of a collaboration with Asia House.

We are so pleased to be part of Evolution thus far, and agree that it really has been a valuable collaboration on every level. We are also receiving high praise both for the exhibition, and for the symposium, including words from one of our trustees, Beth McKillop, also Deputy Director of V& A, who found the gallery show and the event highly engaging, informative and really well run. For that we need to also thank our Head of Events, Philip and both Charlottes, for all their hard work each day, turning around the room in record time for the symposium, to ensure everything is in place and ready to welcome our guests.

Thanks for creating such fantastic event so far. The first two events so far have been super successful because of all of your contributions and hard works. We have received so many positive feedback so far.

It's really great film and fantastic exhibition! Congratulations!

To see the film go to:

<http://youtu.be/EQOGES-A1mo>

English Language Teaching in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Innovations, Trends, and Challenges

This publication provides an overview of English Language Teaching (ELT) in the Islamic Republic of Iran from the viewpoint of local practitioners and researchers. It is designed “for the enrichment of ELT professionals worldwide”. The volume covers language policy, syllabus and materials design, methodology, and teacher and trainer training, with examples drawn from the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education, and from public and private sectors. <http://www.britishcouncil.ir/en/teach/English-Language-Teaching-Iran>

We interviewed a number of producers and partners involved:

The ELT elements were really well promoted. Some events quite exclusive.

Our [British Council] stuff was done really well. Partners not always so good.

There are a lot of people engaging with web site ... people asking questions and emailing. That's a testament to how engaging it has been.

Some of the choices of partners were questionable. Not successful.

The project went beyond our expectations in social media – and of course this was good in the short term but deeply unsustainable in the long term.

The investment in digital is there but people do not understand how much it costs to do it well. There has been extra work in risk management and in some cases risk aversion has resulted in - not the results we wanted but a compromise.

There were tensions in some events. Tensions because partners did not produce the standard we expected. It is complicated working with partners working according to very different standards – language and professional standards. The book involved a huge amount of editing. Clearly this is a difficult issue.

Political sensitivity compromise freedom of expression – that is inevitable.

The problems of cross-cultural collaborations where professional standards and linguistic skills are markedly different can bring considerable pressures to bear on staff – as can remote working. In the event the British Council staff did a terrific job of pulling this edited volume together under difficult working conditions.

Voices: The Iran Season in the global online magazine for the British Council.

An interview with one of the producers revealed some interesting and surprising insights

What I have seen in the responses to the articles [relating to the Iran Season] is a great appetite for opinions that are not what you expect. My experience [of working on the magazine] provided me with ideas I had not had before .. we need to do more of this kind of work .. on an even bigger scale. Need to do more with Iran. Digital outreach of this kind needs more of an investment.

[http://www.britishcouncil.org/blog?ff\[0\]=field_generic_loc%253Aparents_all%3A420&ff\[1\]=field_generic_loc%253Aparents_all%3A440](http://www.britishcouncil.org/blog?ff[0]=field_generic_loc%253Aparents_all%3A420&ff[1]=field_generic_loc%253Aparents_all%3A440)

There is evidence that this works. Especially Danny's piece was very popular. (Over 12,000 views on Danny's article) It did what it was meant to do. We did a lot of fact checking. We had very long conversations about the school education in Iran. The content we published was doing things that had not been done before. This is what we usually do... we research to see if certain ideas are out there and they were not there before the Iran season. We innovated.

Some of the responses to the articles on the web site showed that Iranians were happy to see the articles. We were highlighting Iran to the UK and working the other way. One comment on Facebook of a young chap who wanted to express himself. He was asked if he was afraid. He said he was happy to be a free person and not a mouse. We encouraged individuals .. some even took a personal risk.

The interesting point and lesson in the above statements which are symptomatic of a much wider pattern of response is that the British Council can exploit digital data to a much greater extent to help widen participation. But widening digital participation comes with risks as well as benefits.

Masters of Iranian Cinema, UK Tour

Below we present the full report from One World Film Managing Director David Gillam.

As a long time fan of the great Iranian filmmakers of the last 30 years I was particularly pleased to organise a season of Iranian films to tour Wales and the UK. The purpose was to screen a selection of films from 'Iranian Masters' that are rarely seen in the UK and to generate greater understanding of the heritage of Iranian cinema and more widely about Iranian culture and society.

With the support of British Council, British Council Wales, Iran Heritage Foundation, Ffilm Cymru Wales and the British Film Institute (BFI), WOW Wales One World Film Festival arranged 34 screenings of 8 films in 10 cities that were attended by over 1000 people.

The season started with a day event in Cardiff devoted to celebrate Nowruz. Four films were screened (Where Is My Friend's Home?, Hamoun, Under the Skin of The City, Fish & Cat) and there was a panel discussion after each film. The panel was made up of Dr Saeed Zeydabadi-Nejad (School of Oriental and African Studies), Dr Maryam Ghorbankarimi (St Andrews University) and Ehsan Khoshbakht (Iranian Film Critic & Curator).

The day also ran at the same time in Aberystwyth Arts Centre so that the first three films were screened simultaneously and the panel discussion was skyped to the audience in Aberystwyth for them to see.

The panel discussions were videoed as part of a BFI initiative, 'Conversations about Cinema' and can be seen on the WOW website at <http://www.wowfilmfestival.com/en/> By recording these lively debates we were then able to make them available to audiences around the UK in advance of the screenings in their local cinemas as part of our wider marketing campaign.

I have taken part in a good number of film discussions over the last twenty years but thanks to the hugely knowledgeable contributions of all the panelists these were the most illuminating, fresh and informative of any I have seen. Not only did the panelists debate the merit of the various films we had just seen, but they also gave us a deeper understanding of the director's career, an insight into the cultural context in which the films were made, and the wider cultural, political and social currents informing the directors' work. We were hugely fortunate to have such knowledgeable participants and the debates were greatly appreciated by the audiences present.

To add to the atmosphere in both Aberystwyth and Cardiff we set a Haft Seen table and the cafes in both Arts Centres served Iranian food. This meant that people who didn't come to the films were also aware that we were celebrating Nowruz. Later in the weekend in Cardiff Ehsan Khoshbakht also introduced *Fish & Cat* and *Bashu, the Little Stranger*.

The Nowruz celebrations continued in Wales with further screenings and a 'Food & Film' event in Small World Theatre in Cardigan on Saturday March 28 at which a Persian feast was served, and *Where Is My Friend's Home?* was screened. As well as setting a Haft Seen table, we arranged a beautiful display of Persian carpets and a reading of Sohrab Sepehri's poem that inspired the film. This is the kind of unique event that rarely comes to rural West Wales and so is greatly enjoyed by those who come to it.

The UK tour kicked off over the weekend of April 10/11 with screenings in London at Cine Lumiere and Greenwood Theatre, Kings College, arranged in partnership with the UK Iranian Film Festival. The tour then travelled to Queens Theatre Belfast, Watershed Bristol, The Courtyard Hereford, Tyneside Newcastle, and Salisbury Festival.

As well as the titles previously mentioned other films on the tour included *The Apple* and *Children of Heaven*. Most gratifying was to see that 176 people came to the screening of the fabulously beautiful *Gabbeh* at Salisbury Festival, the single highest attendance of the tour.

WOW Film Festival and the 'Masters of Iranian Cinema' received coverage in the Guardian, the Western Mail, Buzz magazine, on BBritish Council Radio Wales Arts Show and BBritish Council Radio Wales Jamie Owen Show. We created social media cards - i.e. graphics advertising the season on Facebook and Twitter – and used 'boosted Facebook posts' to reach out to new attenders. The season was included in the main WOW festival brochures and on a dedicated page on the WOW website. The season also featured in the British Council's UK-Iran Season of Culture brochure.

An example of what was achieved on social media is this post on the Watershed website - <http://wshd.to/ashesiran> - in which Nariman Massoumi, Senior Lecturer in Film & Television Studies at Bath Spa University, explains more about Iran's rich cultural traditions and provides some political and cultural context to the films in the season.

The cinemas that took part felt that attendance was higher than they'd expected for classic screenings of foreign language films of this sort. This certainly suggests that people across Britain are curious about Iranian society and will take the chance to find out more when given the opportunity to do so.

The season would not have been possible without the tremendous support of Ehsan Khoshbakht whose invaluable contacts with Iranian filmmakers, production companies and film institutions enabled us to source these classic films. Ehsan was also an invaluable member of the panels on our Iranian Film Day and along with Aras Khatami from British Council Iran helped us to find the UK-based experts to make up our panels.

Overall I believe we achieved our initial aim to give audiences across the UK access to a greater diversity of Iranian films, to provide them with educational opportunities that give a deeper understanding of these films and the context in which they were made, and more generally to develop a wider appreciation of Persian culture. This would not have been possible without the vital support of the Iranian Heritage Foundation.

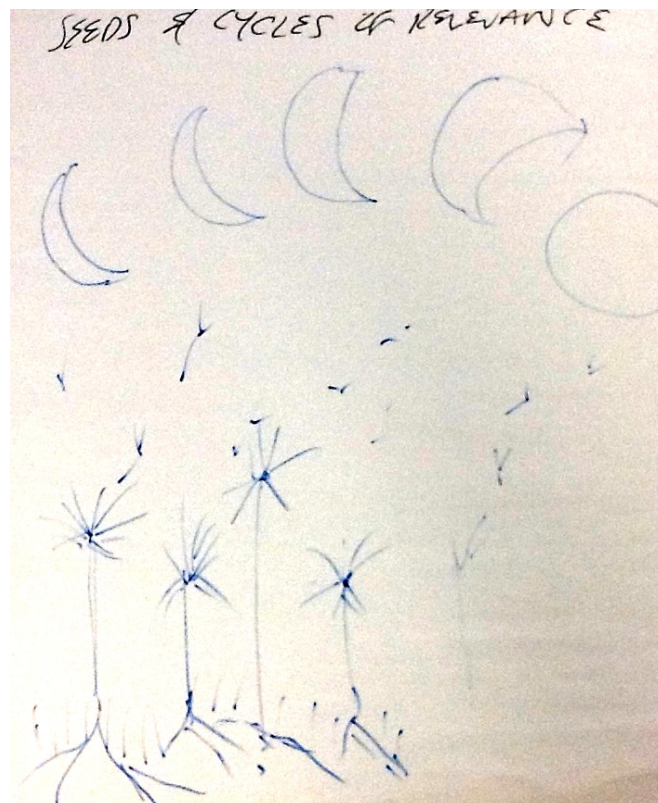
In reviewing this year's festival, the WOW Wales One World Film Festival board decided that, bearing in mind the great success of the Iranian Film Day, we should celebrate Nowruz again next year, albeit on a smaller scale. This will give us the chance to build on what we have achieved this year. Perhaps next year we will focus on contemporary Iranian cinema.

David Gillam, Director, WOW Wales One World Film Festival

Appendix 3: Rich Pictures from the final Imagine workshop June 15 2015 at the OU in Camden Town

The final Imagine workshop brought together users, partners, participants, audiences, senior managers, funders and stakeholders in order to assess whether the season had lived up to expectations. A full report is available on request. Here we simply present the rich pictures produced at the workshop by the groups. They represent pictographic synopses of key points emerging from the day-long discussions at the workshop. Each pictograph crystallises the collective evaluation of each of the groups present accompanied by a commentary given by the group's rapporteur.

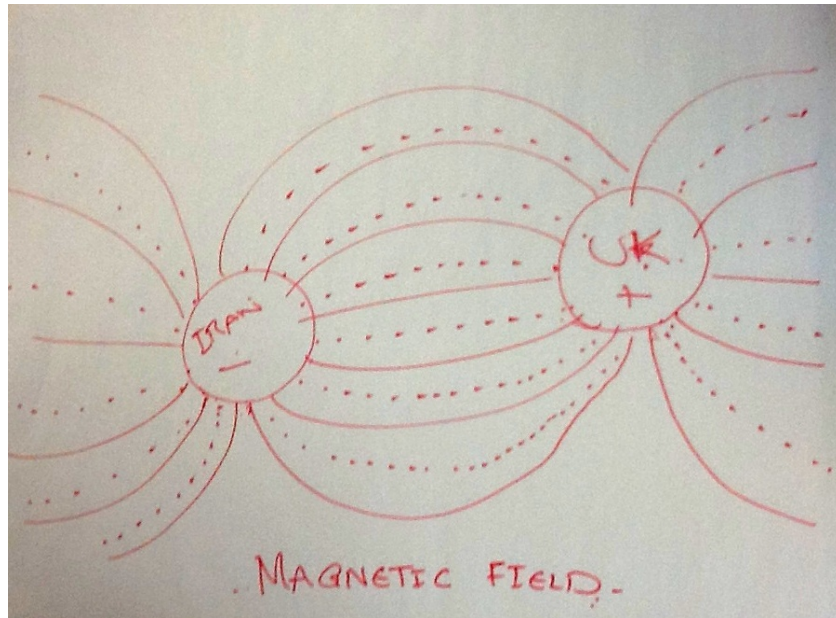
Seeds and cycles of relevance



The Iran Season sowed many seeds that will take time to germinate and blossom. The British Council must invest in its long-term strategy because culture can only overcome political divisions over time. The British Council must realise that it is part of a much wider cultural context and no longer a/the key player. It must adapt to this new cultural world in which it operates by grasping a better understanding of the cycles of cultural production that are

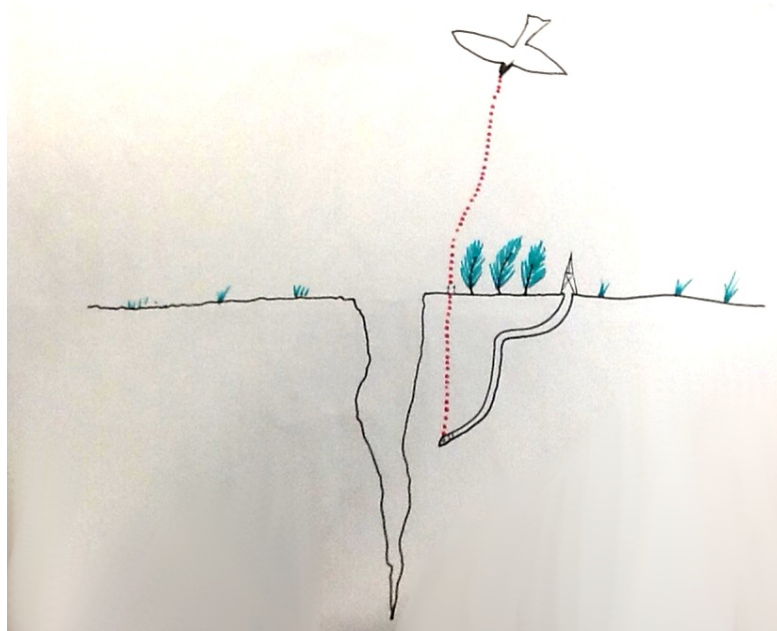
shaped by funders, venues, cultural programmes and initiatives. It must integrate into these cycles and produce outputs that are relevant to the audiences it is seeking to address.

Cultural forces of attraction and repulsion



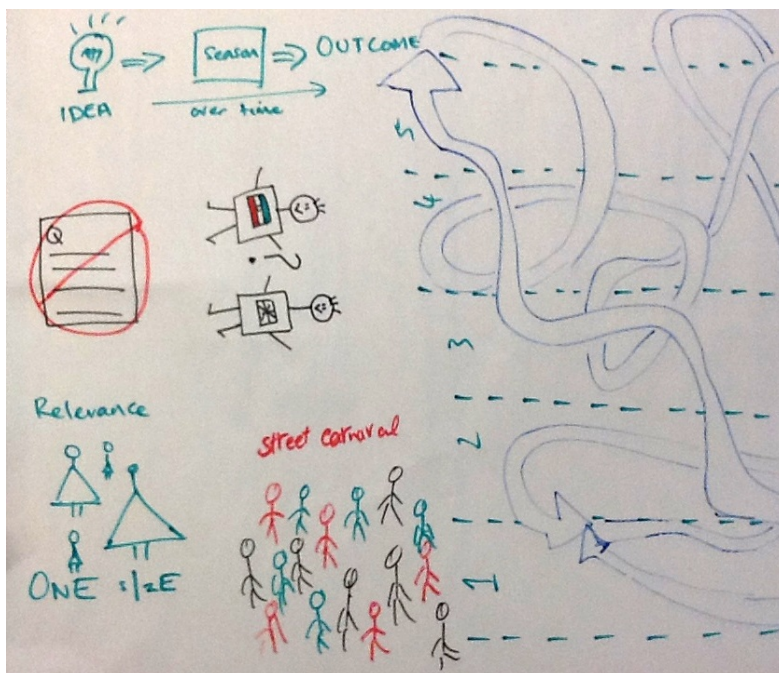
Cultural relations operate in a magnetic field with powerful forces of attraction and repulsion. This is nowhere more clearly apparent than in the UK-Iran Season of Culture where the potential to attract is balanced by an equal and opposite potential to repulse. That is why the British Council had such a difficult balancing act but it is in the very nature of international cultural relations. If one understands this, then devising a good cultural relations strategy will become easier.

Bridging the Divide



The season enabled artists to spread their creative wings and soar above the political gulf between Iran and the UK. It sought to sow seeds that over time will flourish and create new pastures green.

Cultural routes to a better understanding



The Iran Season created many routes to a better understanding between the UK and Iran. Inside the British Council it afforded new working relationships to develop and sparked off

new ideas. But how do we know what we achieved? Culture is complex and has many routes and it is very difficult to assess the value of an event through a feedback form given out at the event – no matter how well designed the feedback form might be. To assess culture requires a more qualitative approach. We have assessed the season according to many components of value but was the season relevant? To whom and for whom was the season of value and how? Sometimes we felt that we were dealing with many different audiences and different objectives and this needs to be taken into account in any evaluation. What about all those people who did not fill in forms? What did they think and what routes led them to an event and where did the event or a conversation that they had at the event then lead them? Thinking about cultural routes can help us map the networks created by a season over time. Did we hit the street level? No we didn't, not yet, but we will do and we will hopefully get Nowruz on the national calendar one day and we will ensure Iranian culture is incorporated in The Mayor of London's Eid celebrations.

Appendix 4: CVM component definitions and scores

Users, participants and partners

Sources for scores

Scores for **Participation** have been allocated on the basis of the data for numbers of people attending events and on the digital metrics.

Data on **Quality, International, Relevance,** and **Utility** come from two sources:

- 188 feedback forms completed by participants in UK events – they were asked to agree or disagree (on a 5-point scale) with statements such as ‘*Overall, this was a high quality event*’ and ‘*The event challenged my assumptions about Iran and Iranian culture*’.
- in-depth interviews with five people who participated in UK events. These included not only people who attended the events but others such as performers who were involved in the creative process; this demonstrates that it is not always easy to draw a line between 'producers' and 'consumers'.

The scores from these two sources play an equal part in the overall calculation of the component scores.

Participation

Score: 4.3

Users participate actively in the events that make up the UK-Iran Season of Culture (UKISC). They are provided with well-designed, accessible information about the season that encourages and enriches active participation. A good effort has been made to target a suitable range of users/audiences via the right channels of communication, opening up the British Council’s international networks, and spheres of interaction and exchange. The audiences who attend are appropriate for the purpose of particular events and the UKISC as a whole. Users are able to access with ease and enjoy the season via digital and social media. Digital outreach widens participation to individuals and groups in Iran and across the UK who would otherwise not be able to participate.

Quality

Score: 4.3

Users expect the season to provide cultural events and experiences of world-class quality. They appreciate the consistently excellent nature of the experiences, venues, speakers and contributors to events and partnerships. They find the UKISC’s cultural experiences and activities enjoyable, informative, engaging and thought-provoking. The materials, exhibitions and outputs are aesthetically pleasing and attractive. They challenge assumptions and stereotypes about Iran and the UK building empathy and trust. The materials help users to understand the essential aims of the UKISC to improve mutual understanding and impart knowledge of Iran’s rich cultural heritage

International

Score: 4.0

Users appreciate the British Council's international ethos and the values it seeks to promote based on mutuality and respect. They feel that these values are clearly demonstrated across the season. Users develop a deeper understanding of relations between Iran and Britain (cultural, historical, and diplomatic), through the events and activities. They understand and appreciate the underlying rationale of UKISC.

Relevance

Score: 4.1

Users are drawn to the UKISC because it provides opportunities that are relevant and life-enhancing. The experiences that the season provides open up new opportunities; for example, for social networking, learning and/or employment, creativity, travel, enjoyment and business. The British Council brings the best of Iranian culture to users in the UK in ways that relate to their interests and, in so doing, invites reciprocal cultural exchange. It makes best use of diasporic Iranians to act as bridges and mediators, facilitating UKISC while at the same time extending networks of interaction to UK publics who may know little about Iran's culture and heritage.

Utility

Score: 4.7

Users enjoy and learn something new and useful from the season. They feel empowered to go on to use the knowledge and understanding, skills and experiences in ways that broaden their cultural horizons. The cross-cultural experiences that the British Council provides contribute to informed and active citizenship in Iran and the UK and to the creation of stronger cultural connections between UK and Iranian citizens.

Producers, advisors and cultural intermediaries

Sources for scores

Scores for this segment are based on interviews with 14 people who were involved in organising the events and producing materials. The figures shown are averages of those given by interviewees.

Professional

Score: 4.0

Producers display a strong awareness of the British Council values based on mutuality and demonstrate these in their professional activities. They demonstrate the personal and professional intercultural skills and political sensitivities required to work on UKISC and are able to draw on their transnational networks to ensure diversity and plurality. They evaluate their work on UKISC regularly, both individually and collaboratively. They benefit from the prestige value of working on the season and use that to good effect in their careers. They receive appropriate training and career development opportunities.

Creativity and Innovation

Score: 3.9

Producers encourage creativity in ways that trigger innovation at cultural and organisational level. They manage the tensions between creative risk-taking and risk aversion in a positive way. They balance the intrinsic and the instrumental aspects of cultural experiences. They

work energetically to locate, promote and bring together new artistic and creative talent in the UK and Iran. UKISC acts as a catalyst to further intercultural dialogue and international cultural exchanges which brings new opportunities benefits to the artists/cultural producers involved as well as to their audiences.

Interculturality

Score: 4.5

Producers make best use of their intercultural skills to communicate across cultural, linguistic and political boundaries. They travel and translate with ease across political, socio-cultural and language boundaries. They understand the full implications of mutuality in theory and practice. They help to promote a cosmopolitan ethos of ‘world openness,’ international understanding, empathy and trust. They act as bridge figures connecting, people, places, cultures and languages.

Cultural citizenship

Score: 3.5

The producers and advisors help to empower UK and Iranian citizens culturally and digitally to represent themselves and to be represented. The producers promote and actively demonstrate British Council values of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). They invite a wide range of Iranian voices to be heard while being sensitive to the sensitive political context of Iran-UK relations and the vulnerabilities of both producers and users – ensuring their safety and protection from harm. The season promotes freedom of expression. It provides appropriate resources and tools that enable individual and collective expression – enabling digital forms of citizenship that enable voices in Iran to be heard more widely inside and outside Iran. It influences how Iran and Iranians are perceived in the UK in ways that promote mutuality. The season fosters a public sphere of communication based on democratic principles. It fosters understanding of citizen rights and responsibilities in the sphere of culture and communication.

Engagement

Score: 4.3

Producers create content and experiences that users and audiences enjoy and actively engage with. They drawn on the resources that British Council offers, as well as available knowledge and research, to inform themselves about the interests and sensibilities of their diverse audiences. They work effectively with partners, funders and stakeholders to deliver the season and to promote user engagement. They encourage and make best use of interactive technologies and social media to widen participation, and receive appropriate training to do so. They manage to communicate the essential aims and objectives of UKISC to diverse audience in ways that ensure short, medium and especially long-term benefits.

Senior Managers, Strategic Planners and Programme Developers

Sources for scores

Scores for this segment are based on interviews with two people in British Council management. The figures shown are averages of those given by interviewees.

Reputation

Score: 3.5

The events and activities of the UK-Iran Season of Culture represent and reflect the British Council's values. It builds trust between UK and Iranian citizens and in so doing improves the reputation of the British Council, and by extension, of the UK in Iran. The season strikes a good balance between promoting good cultural relations and bringing rich economic benefits to the UK. It balances public service and commercial priorities.

Mutuality

Score: 4.8

Managers understand the full richness of the concept of mutuality as a set of ethical principles and a practice. They value the national-to-global reach of the British Council but recognise the need for locally sensitive and resonant work. Mutuality as the key British Council value is strongly promoted and this is recognised in Iran. They ensure that the British Council balances the need to target elites as well as disadvantaged groups.

Strategy

Score: 5.2

The UKISC develops the British Council's response to the Triennial review. It supports the wider strategic goals of the British Council and the Iran strategy. It contributes to better relationships with and increased understanding and trust with Iran-based stakeholders.

Technological Innovation

Score: 3.8

Managers create circumstances favorable to exploiting technological innovation and enhancing digital opportunities. They recognise the need to sustain established 'best practice' as well as create new styles of 'best practice'. They manage the tension between face-to-face intercultural encounters (the 'personal touch' which has been so vital to the British Council's legacy and success in the past) and digital interactions and values (transparency, recognition of perspective and viewpoint). The digital strategy allows for widening levels of participation and increasing the scale of and engagement with UK producers and stakeholders. The managers gather high quality data that contributes to innovative design and effective monitoring and evaluation of activities. They record and learn from failure as well as success.

Quality

Score: 4.0

Leadership of the British Council across sectors and regions is well demonstrated. Managers set a suitable framework for compliance and quality assurance – especially risk, equality and diversity, environmental impact, IP (protection and exploitation), supplier and contract management. They maintain standards but recognise that new value drivers and metrics are required to assess the quality and reception of British Council outputs and to manage reputation under challenging financial constraints. There is an effective working relationship within and between SBUs in quality assessment and control.

Funders and Stakeholders

Sources for scores

Scores for this segment are based on interviews with two people who represent organisations which fund British Council. The figures shown are averages of those given by interviewees.

Sustainability

Score: 4.0

British Council demonstrates financial sustainability, good financial management and consistent account management, and in so doing raises both the financial and cultural value of key relationships. The British Council brings economic value to the UK by promoting the influence and attractiveness of the English Language and of Britain as a good place in which to invest, trade and to do business, to study and visit.

Partnerships

Score: 3.7

British Council via UKISC uses its partnering success to further its reputation and commercial capability. The British Council is recognised as a good partnering organisation. It reaches a large number of people in Iran via digital and social media, delivers high quality outputs and actively pursues new creative partnerships that bring benefit to its Iranian participants/ audience, the UK and to the organisation.

Transnational

Score: 4.1

As a key national to global institution which represents Britain and the values it cherishes, UKISC promotes freedom of expression, the rule of law, democratic and human rights and cultural diversity. It is recognised as one of the most important cultural organisations connecting UK to Iran. It projects an accurate picture of Britain. Overseas publics find Britain an attractive place to study, visit or work as a result of the British Council. British Council helps to increase the political, cultural and economic influence of the UK abroad by demonstrating good practice in institutions and public affairs.

Development

Score: 3.8

British Council projects such as the UKISC function as an incubator of innovative ideas and best practices – thought leaders – in international development. British Council works effectively with policy-makers. Via its contracts, it supports 2020 goals.

Diplomatic

Score: 4.2

British Council via UKISC works effectively in alignment with the UK's diplomatic infrastructure. The British Council's culturally diverse workers are valued as a resource – as diplomatic/cultural intermediaries. The diplomatic value of the season is an outcome rather than a primary objective of its activities. British Council indirectly provides benefits to UK national security and prosperity through the promotion of a sense of mutuality and shared interests via good international cultural relations. It represents and engages users and partners in intercultural dialogue via innovative cultural encounters.

Appendix 5: Participation data

Events in London

Event	Details	Numbers participating/ attending/visiting
UK-Iran Season of Culture Launch event	Spring Gardens, 27 January	130 participants
The Spirit of Nowruz exhibition	Exhibition in foyer of British Council building to celebrate Nowruz. Spring Gardens, 04 Mar – 15 May	Launch event:106 participants Exhibition: 9,777 visitors
Women of the World Festival	As part of the WOW Festival, British Council brought an inspirational Iranian woman at the top of her field to the UK to join the debates and discussions. Southbank Centre, 06 – 08 March	300 visitors
UK-Iranian Harmonies: New Year's Jazz	An evening of intercultural music to celebrate Nowruz. Southbank Centre, 20 March	400 attended
Evolution – Art, Design & Architecture exhibition	Exhibition,performance and talks on historical Iranian architectural innovation, as well as contemporary art and architectural scenes of Iran. Asia House 13 – 24 April	Symposiums: attendance 190 Exhibition: approx. 300 visitors
Master Builders in Qajar Tehran: The Mirza Akbar Drawings	Introduction to the V&A's archive of nineteenth-century architectural drawings, part of the Museum's collections of Iranian art. V&A, 04 March	135 participants
Iran in Writing	Daljit Nagra talked to two pioneering Iranian writers about their work and what it is like to be a writer in today's Iran. British Library, 18 February	97 participants
Art of Improvisation in Iranian Music	Improvisational performance using traditional Iranian instruments, combined with a contemporary focus. Asia House, 18 February	60+ attended
Land of the Turquoise Mountains	Illustrated talk by Cyrus Massoudi, a young British-born Iranian, about the three years he spent travelling across the country his parents were forced to flee thirty years ago. SOAS, 23 April	120 attended

Events outside London

Event	Details	Numbers participating/ attending/visiting
Edinburgh Iranian Festival	Iranian art, music, history, food and fashion. Venues across Edinburgh, 06 – 16 Feb	301 participants 5,900 visitors
Iranian Cinema After the Revolution: Debate	A day of debate and screenings celebrating Iranian films of the last thirty years. Chapter, Cardiff, 21 Mar	20 participants
Iranian Cinema After the Revolution: Screenings	Season focusing on a generation of internationally acclaimed Iranian filmmakers who have opened a window on contemporary Iran during a time of great social change. Cinemas across Wales and the rest of the UK, 21 Mar – 24 June	Over 1,000 attended
Junctures	A day of debate exploring innovation and collaboration across the arts and sciences Cambridge Junction, Cambridge, 25 March	150 participants
Above: An Imaginary Festival for Rooftops in Tehran and London	14 Iranian and British independent artists got together through their imaginations to create a festival of imagined performances for rooftops, printed on postcards	112 participants to presentation of project 1,870 cards distributed

Publications

Publication	Description	Recipients
English Language Teaching in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Innovations, Trends, and Challenges	Overview of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Iran with analysis of policy and practice. <i>Note: this book is being translated into Farsi and will thus have a wider reach.</i>	3,000 printed, distribution continuing 629 online access ³
Didgah: new perspectives on UK-Iran cultural relations	15 authors, living in both Iran and the UK, share their 'didgah' (vision, opinion, view) of cultural relations between the UK and Iran.	1,150 printed, distribution continuing 549 online access
Modern Poetry in Translation: Focus on Iranian poetry	For the Spring issue of Modern Poetry in Translation, distinguished British and Iranian translators and poets collaborated to present a selection of contemporary Iranian poems.	800 printed, sales continuing
Season brochure		3,000 printed, distribution continuing 919 online access
Nowruz Brochure		1,000 printed, distribution continuing 104 online access

Digital content and activities

Activity	Description	Recipients
Nowruz Education Pack for Schools	The pack brings Persian New Year to life for primary school children throughout the country.	1,127 online access
Magic of Persia Foundation, Contemporary Art Prize	Online residency programme open to artists, curators, and cultural practitioners across the globe, providing opportunities for a re-presentation of the extensive Magic of Persia's Contemporary Art Prize archive.	1,115 online access

³ Online access/or digital audiences (which means downloads, online views, visitors, social media share). This is the figure used on the British Council dashboard.

Website and social media

Description	Visitors etc.
British Council Iran website	15,700 new visitors (up 88% on previous period) 28,800 visits (up 80%) 231,000 page views (up 407%) 35% of visitors were in Iran – lower than in the previous period (53%)
#SpiritOfNowruz campaign	2,384 direct shares of main exhibition page social media 3.4 million individuals received #SpiritOfNowruz tweets on their twitter feeds (compared with 923,637 people receiving tweets for the last and most succesful exhibition at Spring Gardens, #Syria3rdSpace). 697 mentions for #SpiritOfNowruz Twitter tour of the exhibition: 51,500 people (<i>higher than all previous tours</i>) with 668 engagements. The Twitter Tour has been viewed 36,338 times with 502 engagements. Spirit of Nowruz tweets registered 49,100 impressions on @irBritish over 76 days. More than 130 photos received via Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.
#IranUKculture campaign	2,384 direct shares of main UKISC page on social media. Exhibition landing page on Underline Magazine was visited 3,317 times.
British Council Iran Facebook page	720 new followers (36% increase). Up to 84% engagement. Paid promotion reach over 41,600 with 14,630 'likes' Facebook Event reached over 18,000 individuals, viewed 1,000 times.

Blogs

Description	Visitors
Iran blog by Danny	12,405
Studio Integrate blog on architecture event	1,759
Schools pack blog	1,050
Nima Malekmohamadi's blog on Iranian literature	1,055

Note: expected number of visitors was 1,000 for each blog

Appendix 6: Participant feedback form

We are constantly trying to improve the quality of the work we do and we place great importance on the views of the people we work with. Please help us to improve and develop our services further by completing this brief questionnaire. Your responses will be treated anonymously.

About the event

Please tick one box for each statement below to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
Overall, this was a high quality event.						
The event was entertaining and enjoyable						
The event challenged my assumptions about Iran and the UK						
I was offered attractive and accessible information and material about the event						
The event opened up new opportunities for me (for networking, business, travel etc.)						
The event gave me a greater appreciation of the historic ties and cultural connections between UK and Iran						
The event brought the best of traditional and modern Iranian culture to the UK						
The event was educational						
The event contributed to improving international understanding between UK and Iran						
The event encouraged me to take more interest in cultural connections between Iran and UK in the longer term						

Please turn over to the other side.

How did you find out about this event? Please tick one or more boxes below

I was personally invited

From a family member or friend

From the radio, TV, newspapers or magazines NAME OF SOURCE:

From the internet NAME OF WEBSITE:

From social media NAME OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITE:

From somewhere else NAME OF SOURCE:

About yourself

This information is for statistical purposes only. Please circle one answer for each line

Age	16-20	21-24	25-34	35-44	45+	Prefer not to say
Gender	Female	Male				Prefer not to say
Employment status	Employed/ self-employed	Student at university	Student at school of college	Other		Prefer not to say
If employed, the sector you work in.	Government	Business/ Industry	University	School/ College	Other	Prefer not to say