
A year at a glance 2015-16
Hong Kong

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Message from the Director

'It's no exaggeration to say that this past twelve months, the last of my four very happy years in Hong Kong, has been one of the most remarkable in the seven-decade history of the British Council in Hong Kong.'

Robert Ness
Director



We reached more people than ever in our core activity areas of English, education and the arts, and had the immense privilege of collaborating with a significantly expanded range of partner organisations and institutions. The most spectacular example of this was our presentation of Antony Gormley's magnificent *Event Horizon*, with 31 life-sized sculptures taking up temporary residence on the rooftops of Central (and at ground level, too) for the six months between November 2015 and May 2016. Our lead partner in this adventure was the K11 Art Foundation, and we were also delighted to have the support, encouragement, goodwill and important financial contribution of another 37 diverse partners across Hong Kong's public and private sectors. Our most tenacious supporter was the Chief Secretary, Carrie Lam, without whose commitment it would simply have been impossible to realise the project; so, thank you, CS.

Elsewhere, the numbers speak for themselves: we taught 26,283 learners of English; administered 58,362 examinations; attracted 110,294 people to our customer services centre; delivered 127 arts events; advised many of the 20,000 students who were making the decision to study at one of the UK's world-class universities; and offered a range of services to the 1,824,000 people who logged

on to our websites. In addition we launched our Education UK Alumni Awards scheme, culminating in the first batch of brilliant winners celebrating at the evocative China Club with us and the British Consul General, Caroline Wilson. And we were proud to be able to build on the recognition gained through our inclusion on the Community Business LGBT Workplace Inclusion index by participating in the Hong Kong Pride Parade. All of our efforts, of course, are aimed at strengthening trust and understanding between the people of Hong Kong and the UK by facilitating connections and introductions, in both directions, in pursuit of outcomes of mutual benefit.

However, all things must pass, and I will be moving to Tunisia in mid-August to take up a new job with responsibility for the countries of the Maghreb region of north Africa. That's a very exciting prospect, but I'm already aware how much I'll miss Hong Kong and will always be grateful that I was able to live and work here during such interesting times. I'm happy, however, to commend my successor, Chris Rawlings, to you. Chris is – naturally – excited about heading up this important operation and I know he will bring huge commitment, enthusiasm and insight to the job.

So, from me, farewell and very best wishes!

Executive Summary

In 2015-2016, the British Council in Hong Kong's contribution to educational opportunities and cultural relations has spanned the areas of English and Examination Services, Arts and Creativity, Education and Society, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This breadth of engagement has provided scope for the organisation to create friendly knowledge and understanding between the UK and Hong Kong. Creating opportunities, building mutually beneficial connections and building trust lie at the heart of our initiatives as UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Our positive contributions in these areas are driven by teams of talented and passionate individuals who provide depth, energy and authenticity to our wide range of programmes.

In the area of English and Examination Services, we built relationships with local communities through professional development programmes which empower students to take ownership over their learning and develop teachers' ability to support all types of learners in creative and engaging ways. Also, we have explored innovative and flexible approaches to teaching and learning in several new course offerings this year. These courses focus on the specific needs of each learner and create a learning environment which supports the growth of the 'whole person'.

This year Arts and Creativity played a substantial role in promoting cultural relations between the UK and Hong Kong, perhaps most visibly through a large-scale public art installation by the internationally-acclaimed UK artist, Sir Antony Gormley. Collaboration between a wide range of local and international partners culminated in the final product: *Event Horizon*. Unsurprisingly, this generated a significant amount of discussion about the development of public art in Hong Kong.

The link between Education and Society was further strengthened through the GREAT Britain Campaign, the launch of the Education UK Alumni Awards and a series of events which enabled the public to access science concepts in an inclusive and supported way. Connections with local teachers were further cultivated through professional development sessions which explored singing and creativity in the classroom, and supporting learners with special educational needs.

We believe that central to mutual trust, respect and understanding are the concepts of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. We continue to help refugees in Hong Kong and promote the rights of LGBT people, both within and beyond the organisation. We were proud to receive a Gold Standard in the Community Business Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Index.

An exciting ongoing project which began this year is the launch of our first international Pre-School in Hong Kong in August 2016. The Pre-School offers holistic, bilingual education to children who are eligible to study in Hong Kong. Adopting the UK-based International Primary Curriculum, the British Council International Pre-School aims to help children develop a respect for their own cultural identity as well as those of others.

We sincerely thank our staff and partners for their outstanding skills, experience and dedication to our mission. The substantial impact of our work this year on educational opportunities and the strengthening of cultural relations between the UK and Hong Kong would not have been possible without you.

English and Examination Services

This year, English and Examination Services celebrated the substantial growth of the existing programme and the development of a range of innovative projects involving collaboration between a broad network of stakeholders.



myClass 3rd anniversary video competition prize presentation

English language teaching impact was increased through the expansion of myClass, an online scheduling and resource platform which enables learners to select face-to-face English lessons which best suit their interests and availability. A new modular course, Primary Plus, was introduced for our younger learners. It aims to actively promote language use and develop confidence in the classroom. Two professional development programmes for teachers were driven by collaboration between the British Council, local institutions and the local community. The British Council's IELTS Prize, which supports outstanding students to study at universities abroad, was awarded to nine prizewinners this year. These scholarships enable the winners to further their education at world-class institutions. Our work in language testing saw the addition of a partnership with Kerry Logistics, which uses Aptis, a British Council examination developed to benchmark employees' English language abilities.



The English Master appears at the British Council Dinner Party 2016



Marketing Excellence's 'Excellence in Online Video' Silver Award

myClass third anniversary

myClass

In January 2016, we celebrated the third anniversary of myClass, a new, flexible way for learners to develop their English. To mark the occasion, a series of celebratory activities took place, including a one-minute video competition on the theme of 'myDream, myClass'. The grand prize of round-trip tickets to London was presented to winner Willy Choi.

More than 3,000 students have benefitted from the myClass approach, and it continues to grow, with new writing modules introduced in January 2016. Other recent developments include the myClub booking site, which enables students to book myClub activities online, anytime anywhere.

This year we also collaborated with Apple Daily, a leading Hong Kong newspaper. A series of videos, 'The English Master', introduced English idioms and sayings relating to everyday life in Hong Kong highlighting common English mistakes made by local learners. Within the first five days of being online, the videos generated over 500,000 views and sparked a social media discussion on English usage. The project won Marketing Excellence's 'Excellence in Online Video' Silver Award and a Bronze MARKies Award for 'Best Use of Video'.

Primary Plus, new course for Primary

primary plus

In September 2015 we introduced Primary Plus, a new English course for Primary students. Primary Plus consists of six levels and focuses on activating language and developing confidence in the classroom. It has a modular syllabus, based on core themes from the Hong Kong curriculum, that enables flexibility and includes online components. Central to the course is the development of the 'whole child', meaning that areas such as cultural awareness, creativity, critical thinking, and 'learning how to learn' are integrated into the content. One of the interactive components of the course, featuring the character "Shaun the Sheep", showcases UK excellence in creativity and has proven to be highly motivating for young learners.

Primary Plus was awarded a Gold Award Asia-Pacific by Transform Magazine, which recognizes best practice in corporate and product brand development, in the category 'Best Visual Identity from the Education Sector'. Parents have commented favourably that the learning taking place in this activity-based course can be applied to their children's learning in school.



Collaboration between children and teachers creates an environment where children are free to express themselves



We use a variety of stimulating activities that employ higher-order thinking to improve children's English skills and other life skills

Professional Development for Teachers: Kids Read and Event Horizon Workshops

Two significant teacher professional development projects have taken place over the past year are Kids Read and our *Event Horizon* teacher workshops. Kids Read is a collaboration between the British Council and HSBC and aims to promote reading for pleasure in primary schools in Hong Kong. Focusing on six schools and reaching over 1,800 teachers, parents and students, the project consisted of several strands, including a Kids Read book collection, teaching and learning materials, professional development sessions, and competitions and community events which encouraged parents and children to come together to take part in shared reading and language-learning craft activities. The project was highly valued by the community, with 100 per cent of participating schools saying they would recommend the project to another primary school.

The *Event Horizon* project audience consisted of teachers working in primary, secondary and tertiary contexts who wished to use creative methods to help their students learn about sculpture and, through this, develop their creativity, critical thinking and collaboration skills. We ran seven two-hour workshops for teachers from over 50 schools between November 2015 and April 2016. These hands-on workshops included insights into the history of sculpture, processes for creating sculpture, and writers' views on sculpture in Hong Kong. One participant said, 'The workshops were fantastic! They expanded my way of thinking and looking at art!'



Primary 1 parents and children read 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' with HSBC volunteer in 'Kids Read' Community Event



Volunteering teacher and primary 1 parents and children celebrate their 'very hungry caterpillar' craft creations in 'Kids Read' Community Event



IELTS Prize award ceremony in August 2015

IELTS Prize

IELTS is an English language proficiency test, recognised by over 9,000 organisations worldwide, including universities, employers and immigration authorities. Worldwide, the British Council administered over 2.5 million tests this year.

The British Council IELTS Prize supports outstanding students who can demonstrate what they will contribute to society if they fulfil their dreams of pursuing further education abroad. Since its launch in 2011, the IELTS Prize has been awarded scholarships to 123 students in the East Asia region, including 21 Hong Kong students. This year, four local and five regional prizewinners received substantial financial support from the British Council.

A Hong Kong IELTS prizewinner who is pursuing a DPhil in Education at the University of Oxford said, 'Being selected as one of the recipients of the prize gives me recognition for my language proficiency, which adds to my credibility as a researcher focusing on language development among Hong Kong students. As IELTS corresponds to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, my results can be provided as evidence of my ability to use English in countries where the language is used professionally and socially.'



Exams Partners gathering in January 2016

Exams Partners Gathering

The British Council has been delivering exams in Hong Kong since 1989. This year, we delivered over 50,000 exams, ranging from Cambridge English exams for children as young as four, to IELTS for teenagers and adults. Central to our success is collaboration with key partners, and we currently have over 300 partners who send students to the British Council to sit exams.

We organised a gathering in January 2016 to bring over 50 of these partners together to get to know each other better and share best practices. At the event, Jim So, Head of Marketing at Cambridge English Language Assessment, East Asia discussed developments at Cambridge English exams, and our colleague Neil Ballantyne, Mobile Learning Manager, English Language Innovation, demonstrated various exam preparation tools which support students' learning strategies.



Kerry Logistics shares its experience with Aptis in the video

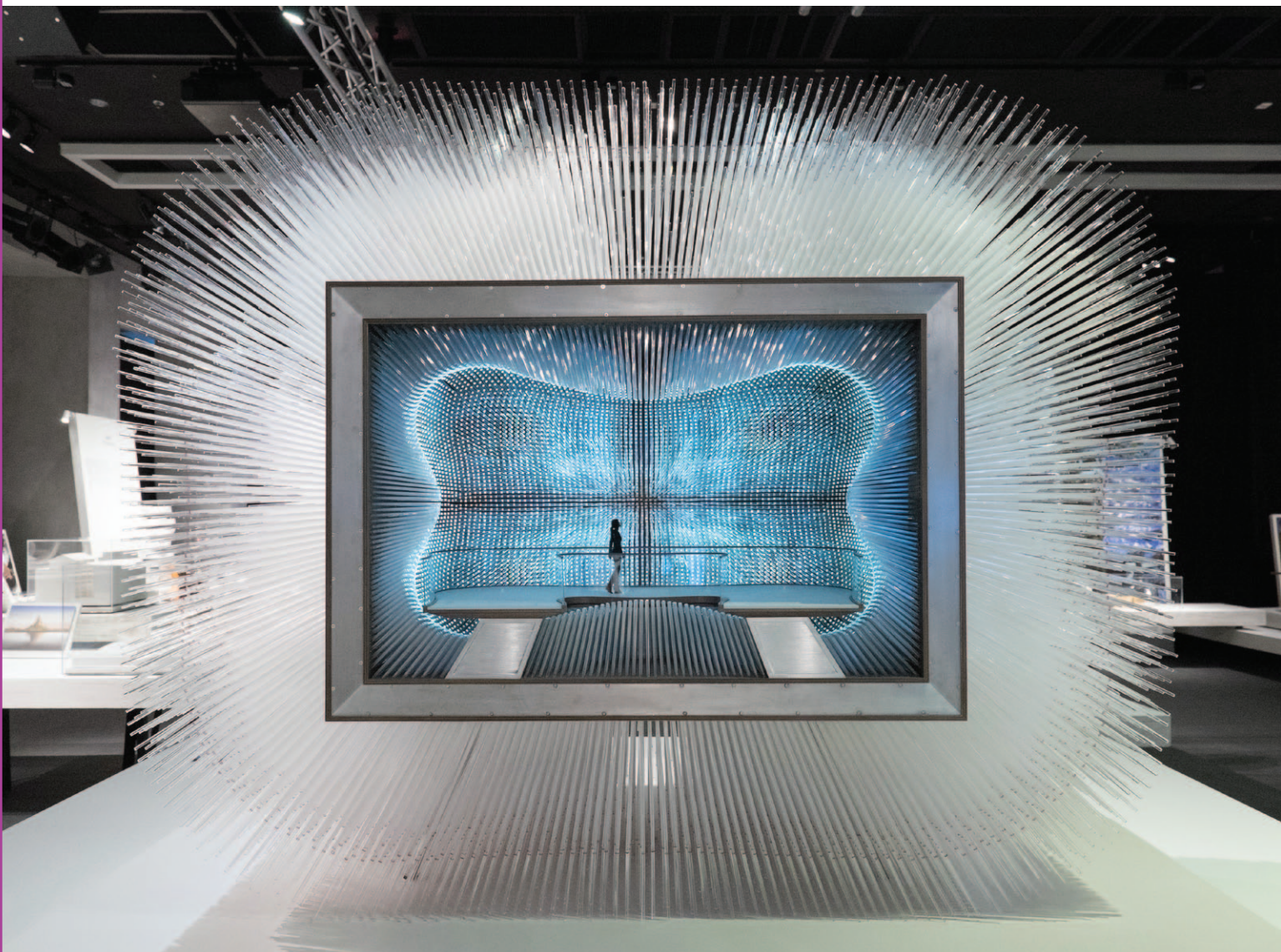
Aptis Case Study

Aptis, an English testing tool developed by us in 2013, enables organisations and institutions to benchmark the English language levels of their employees, potential employees, students or teachers for the purposes of recruitment and talent management.

This year we collaborated with Kerry Logistics, an Aptis client and leading logistics service provider in Asia, to produce a case study video to demonstrate how Aptis' flexibility helps meet their business needs and enables them to make better decisions about talent acquisition and development. This is the first of a number of case studies which will help us to build awareness of the product and share best practice. The video is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ng7g6ZCOPtw>.

Arts and Creativity

This year, we collaborated with a broad range of local partners to promote UK Arts and Creativity. Showcasing performing arts, visual arts, design and literary arts, thought leadership and professional development in symposia, forums and workshops provided powerful opportunities to engage audiences and promote progressive dialogue.



New British Inventors: Inside Heatherwick Studio exhibition in Hong Kong from 5-23 September 2015



New British Inventors: Inside Heatherwick Studio exhibition opening ceremony



Public lecture by Thomas Heatherwick in September 2015

New British Inventors: Inside Heatherwick Studio

In September 2015, more than 65,000 people visited *New British Inventors: Inside Heatherwick Studio* exhibition, which the British Council co-presented with the GREAT Britain campaign and PMQ, with Swire Properties and KEP as lead partners.

The exhibition was in Asia to explore the collective work of the Heatherwick Studio. Spanning a range of disciplines, including architecture, engineering, transport, urban planning, furniture, sculpture and product design, the exhibition provided insights into the wide range of the studio's projects. The opening ceremony of *New British Inventors: Inside Heatherwick Studio* was attended by Carrie Lam, Chief Secretary for Administration of the Hong Kong SAR Government, and 450 leading Hong Kong stakeholders and influencers from the government, community, cultural and business sectors.

An associated design competition reached more than 40,000 people from local institutions, design and architectural associations, students, parents and agents. Two winners were selected to participate in a five-day study trip to the Heatherwick Studio and other design institutions in Manchester.

Event Horizon

Presented by the British Council and supported by lead partner, the K11 Art Foundation (KAF), *Event Horizon* was a large-scale public art installation by the internationally-acclaimed UK artist, Sir Antony Gormley, which ran from November 2015 to May 2016. *Event Horizon* comprised 31 sculptures which were installed at both street level and on building tops, encouraging passers-by to stop, look up, engage, and re-assess their current position in the world.

This ambitious arts, education and outreach project gained the support of 25 sponsors, 16 landlords, and 15 government departments. A wide audience of teachers, students, decision-makers and the general public were engaged through lectures, panel discussions, public events, tours and teacher development workshops. More than 1,400 people attended a highly interactive public talk in which Sir Antony Gormley reflected on the role of public art in society.

The project captured the imagination of the media, generating 475 media stories and more than 260,000 social media interactions via Facebook and Instagram. We rounded off



Sculpture and the Animation of Collective Space — Panel discussion with Antony Gormley in November 2015

Event Horizon by hosting a panel discussion with key cultural speakers to discuss the impact of Sir Antony Gormley's work and the development of public art in Hong Kong, paving the way for more public art in the city.



Antony Gormley: *Event Horizon*, presented in Hong Kong by the British Council; photo credit: Oak Taylor-Smith



New Works Forum: Dance Dialogue with Wayne McGregor; photo credit: West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

Other Events

Thought Leadership and Professional Development

To mark the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Hong Kong Arts Administrators Association, the 2015 Cultural Leadership Summit chose the theme 'Raising for our Future: Arts Funding and Philanthropy in Hong Kong', focused on developing an enterprising culture among arts and cultural organisations and individual artists. We invited our Chair, Sir Vernon Ellis, to share his experience and insights on funding issues facing the arts, focusing on the role of philanthropy and best practices.

In October 2015 eminent British choreographer and director Wayne McGregor, along with his team, led a series of master classes and workshops for dance professionals in Hong Kong. Co-presented by the British Council and West Kowloon Cultural District Authority, more than 280 people attended the four-day programme, including representatives from local dance companies, dance instructors and students. More than 300 people also attended a lively public forum led by Wayne McGregor.

Literary Events

Partnering with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, we invited the Booker Prize-winning author Ben Okri and acclaimed teen fiction author Keith Gray to the 26th Hong Kong Book Fair in July 2015. Keith Gray discussed his transition from a 'reluctant' to an avid reader, and Ben Okri exchanged his ideas on writing and imagination. In November, we brought novelist Dame Margaret Drabble and poet Luke Kennard to the Hong Kong International Literary Festival.



Sir Vernon Ellis at 2015 Cultural Leadership Summit; photo credit: Hong Kong Arts Administrators Association

Exhibition, British Film and Theatre

Above the Line: People and Places in the DPRK, an exhibition of Nick Danziger's photographs, was presented at the Hong Kong Arts Centre in April 2015. Commissioned by the British Council, the photographs captured the lives of ordinary North Koreans and their smallest idiosyncrasies and pleasures. In the same month, we collaborated with the Hong Kong International Film Festival to welcome the prominent and internationally-renowned British filmmaker Peter Greenaway to present his latest film, *Eisenstein in Guanajuato*, and to discuss his work and career.

We also presented *NT Live*, an innovative project by National Theatre Live to bring screenings of the best of British theatre to Hong Kong in collaboration with Edko Films. Since March 2015, a series of live productions including *The Audience*, *Frankenstein*, *Coriolanus*, *Skylight*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, and *Hamlet* have been screened in cinemas across Hong Kong, attracting over 15,800 people.

Education and Society

Supporting people in Hong Kong to access British education continues to be a core part of our work in Hong Kong.



GREAT banners in Wan Chai MTR station promote the Education UK exhibition

The GREAT Britain campaign promotes the UK internationally as a great place to visit, study and do business. The British Council is a partner in the campaign, raising awareness and promoting the UK's strengths in education by organising Education UK exhibitions and the prestigious Alumni Awards 2016.

Another focus of our work in education is science communication. In 2015 we held a series of exciting events to bridge the perceptual gap between the public and the science community, including Science Alive, FameLab and Café Scientifique. Inclusive education is another area in which we are working. 2015 also saw the launch of World Voice, a pilot programme that provides primary school teachers with the pedagogical tools and techniques to use singing to enhance students' learning, especially those with special educational needs.

GREAT Britain Campaign and Alumni Awards

As part of the broad GREAT Britain campaign, we organised a series of annual Education UK exhibitions to promote UK education opportunities to Hong Kong students and their parents. The events offered information about schools, further and higher education. In 2015, the exhibitions held in January, July, August and October, welcomed more than 150 British education institutions and 13,000 visitors.

In January 2016, we launched the Education UK Alumni Awards in Hong Kong, supported by the GREAT Britain campaign. The awards celebrated the outstanding achievements of business professionals, entrepreneurs and community leaders who have used their experience of studying at a UK university to make a positive contribution to their communities and professions.

Our extensive promotional campaigns, which included an MTR poster campaign, reached over one million people in Hong Kong. The poster campaign was nominated as the MTR's Best of the Best Poster award 2015.



Alumni awards 2016 finalists and winners. (From left) Christine Chiu, Charlotte Ho, Kenny Chui, Kenneth Ng, Jackie Chu, Cynthia Chan, Kelvin Chan, Jeremy Lai, Mimi Zou



Alumni awards 2016 winners. (From left) Kenny Chui, Kelvin Chan and Kenneth Ng



FameLab Hong Kong Grand Final 2016



Science Alive 2016 Blow Your Mind Show drop-in activity



Science Alive 2016 student workshop: Madlab — Super soldering circuit boards

Science Communication

We recognise the importance of promoting a basic understanding of science in a knowledge-based economy like Hong Kong. It is with this in mind that science communication sits at the heart of our science programming in Hong Kong.

Science Alive, our annual flagship science event, invites leading UK academics and science communicators to engage Hong Kong's students, teachers and the general public in activities that promote a wider understanding of science. This free two-week event, which attracted more than 24,000 participants, is sponsored by the Croucher Foundation, and jointly organised by the British Council, the Hong Kong Science Museum, the Education Bureau and Hong Kong Education City Limited. The theme for the 24th edition of Science Alive was 'Impossible to Possible'.

FameLab, an annual science communications competition designed to engage and entertain audiences by breaking down science, technology and engineering concepts into three-minute presentations, enjoyed its seventh year. This year's winner, Chloe Fung Choi Yi from the University of Hong Kong, entertained and educated audiences with her presentation on the science of sleeping.

Another programme designed to encourage the public to explore the wonders of science is our Café Scientifique. By featuring UK scientists working on cutting-edge research as speakers, we give the public the opportunity to interact with the scientists which, in essence, breaks down perceived barriers between them and subject specialists. When news broke in early 2016 that Einstein's prediction of gravitational waves in the universe was correct and that they were detected by sophisticated instruments that didn't exist in Einstein's time, we were able to invite prominent scientist, Dr. Clare Burrage, to speak about how this discovery affects our understanding of the universe.



World Voice Hong Kong Pilot Year Demonstration Session by Yan Oi Tong Madam Lau Wong Fat Primary School teachers and students



World Voice Hong Kong Pilot Year Demonstration Session by Yan Chai Hospital Law Chan Chor Si Primary School teachers and students

World Voice

World Voice provides primary school teachers with pedagogical tools and techniques to employ singing and songs to enhance students' learning in a wide range of subjects within the existing school curriculum. Singing and other rhythmic exercises use different parts of the brain than reading or writing, so those students who have struggled to learn through more traditional pedagogical approaches are included and empowered.

In September 2015, we introduced World Voice to eight primary schools in Hong Kong, with a focus on students with special education needs (SEN). In its pilot year, the programme set out to tackle two particular challenges: to ensure that SEN students in mainstream schools feel socially included and to ensure that teachers feel adequately equipped to teach SEN students in mainstream schools. This is in line with the Hong Kong government's aim to provide more support to SEN students.

We invited the Education University of Hong Kong to study the impact of the programme. The final evaluation results demonstrate that World Voice has increased teachers' confidence in working with SEN children by giving them the tools with which to promote inclusive practices and the confidence to engage with the parents of their SEN students. The students themselves have an increased interest and engagement in learning, along with increased feelings of acceptance and inclusion amongst their peers.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are at the heart of the British Council's cultural relations ambitions.

Hong Kong **LGBT**
Workplace
Inclusion Index
AWARDS 2015
第一屆香港職場同志共融指數頒獎禮

#time4changehk



EDI team members accept the award for Gold Standard and 10th place in the Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Inclusion Index

They contribute to the mutual trust, respect and understanding that we strive for on behalf of the UK. They are integral to our brand, reputation, success and cultural relations impact. There are three main strands informing our EDI Strategy: business, ethical and legal. These operate alongside a focus on seven main (but not exclusive) areas: age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation and work-life balance.

This year, we celebrated a number of EDI successes, with our LGBT work and Transitions programme for refugees and asylum seekers at the forefront. The Diversity Assessment Framework, a British Council tool that assesses how we perform in EDI, highlighted our positive growth and areas for future focus.



British Council Hong Kong staff members proudly represent the organisation at Hong Kong Pride

Diversity

Our annual Diversity Week was held in May 2016. This year's programme supported EDI across the organisation and helped us to foster an inclusive workplace. It featured a variety of sessions on different topics relating to EDI including ethnicity/race, disability, sexual orientation and work-life balance. Feedback from participants was very positive.

We are committed to integrate equality and diversity into all that we do. The British Council Diversity Assessment Framework helps us to monitor our progress in this area and highlights areas for development. In February 2016, we received the second highest analysis in our East Asia network, exceeding the organisational target and providing testimony to the positive impact the range of EDI initiatives have had on our workplace.

LGBT

In May 2015, we were proud to be ranked 10th in the Community Business Hong Kong LGBT Workplace Index, achieving Gold Standard. This index, a first of its kind in Asia, based its assessment on our policies, training, workplace culture, marketing and community and advocacy work related to LGBT issues.

We continued our community and advocacy work in this area with a strong presence at two high-profile LGBT events in 2015: Pink Dot and Hong Kong Pride. Pink Dot, held at Tamar Park in front of the Central Government Complex, attracted several important stakeholders including the Chairman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, Dr. York Chow Yat-ngok, and the United States Consul General, Clifford Hart. Hong Kong Pride drew a crowd of around 9,000 participants, who marched from Victoria Park to Tamar Park in support of LGBT rights in Hong Kong.

In 2016, we launched our LGBT Pride Network, aiming to create a more supportive environment for LGBT staff, educate all staff about LGBT issues and promote visibility and engagement within the Hong Kong LGBT community.



Transitions volunteers present the diverse artwork created by some of Hong Kong's refugees and asylum seekers



Volunteers at the book sale which raised money for the Transitions programme

Transitions

Our very successful Transitions programme continued to run throughout the year. This initiative provides the opportunity for our staff to teach English and art classes to refugees and asylum seekers in Hong Kong who are waiting to resettle in a new country. Our teachers run the classes on a voluntary basis, with Christian Action contributing the transport costs for the students.

One of the highlights this year was the sale of artwork by refugees living in Hong Kong. The artists came from Togo, Eritrea, Rwanda, Congo and Ivory Coast. Many of the pictures offered a tantalising glimpse of Africa. Dramatic landscapes, vibrant designs and seriously big cats were some of the themes. The paintings, sold alongside second-hand books at a stall in the coffee bar, raised a substantial sum, which was donated to Christian Action to fund expenses for future classes.

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1999. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy.

The public sector has also become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy. The public sector has become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a key factor in the overall growth of the economy.

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