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British Council Jamaica is pleased to present its first ever annual report covering the 2017-2018 financial year.

In it you will not only find highlights of our programmes over the past year, you will also discover who we are as an organization and as specialists in our areas of work. It shines a light on the passion that motivates us to do what we do, and you will meet the myriad people with whom we have had the privilege and pleasure to engage.

The British Council is the UK’s international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust.

British Council has had a cultural relations footprint in Jamaica for over 70 years, starting in 1943 with the appointment of Hugh Paget as the first country representative, and a library development project which culminated in the establishment of a public library in each of the island’s 14 parishes. Over the years, the scope of our work has widened, as has its reach and impact.

Through our three programme pillars – basic education and core skills, the arts and creative economy, and social enterprise and youth engagement – we have reached over 1,000,000 people in the 2017-2018 financial year.

We have trained early childhood and secondary-level educators and leaders in core skills pedagogy. We have engaged government agencies, corporate Jamaica and civil society groups on the benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion. And, we staged the inaugural Backstage to the Future: Caribbean, a technical skills training programme for young people focused on live sound engineering, lighting design and operation, and stage management.

We could not have accomplished all of this on our own; our partners and collaborators, both in Jamaica and the UK, are at the heart of our successes. We salute you all.

On their own, the sheer number of participants stands as a testament to the continued demand for British Council interventions in Jamaica. Add to that the testimonials and feedback of participants and you get a rich sense of the organization’s continued relevance to Jamaica’s cultural, educational and societal fabric.

All our projects are conceived and executed with a common thread, one which reflects British Council’s core founding principles to build bridges of trust and understanding between our two nations and to create opportunities for mutual exchange through friendly knowledge and understanding, while promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

That is what we strive to do every single day.

The overall story of 2017–18 is the delivery of great cultural relations programmes for Jamaica and the UK.

As we forge ahead, the focus on being impact-led, agile, professional, and specialist, all driven by an imperative to be relevant, remains critical.

Over the next two years, from 2018-2020, our programming priorities in Jamaica will be:

1. Social Enterprise and Youth Engagement with a focus on improving youth employability skills, by positively reinforcing the work of schools to facilitate the transition process through social entrepreneurship and creating opportunities for active citizenship;

2. Basic Education, with a focus on educational transformation, mainstreaming of core skills in the primary, secondary as well as technical and vocational education and training (TVET) curricula, as well as supporting marginalised boys who are underperforming in the school system;

3. The Arts and Creative Economy, with a focus on social transformation, cultural skills and place-making in the vulnerable, garrison communities of downtown Kingston;

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion with a focus on empowering members of the vulnerable groupings by creating pathways for mainstreaming, changing values and attitudes, and embedding educational, social, economic, and cultural change;

5. Promoting the efficiency and excellence of all our programmes

As we reflect on the past year, and indeed plan for the upcoming period, I extend personal thanks to all our stakeholders, partners, and dedicated staff, without whom we would not have achieved these successes.

Olayinka Jacobs-Bonnick
Country Director
British Council in Jamaica

Who we are
We are the Jamaican office of British Council Global, a registered charity in England, Wales and Scotland established as the UK’s international organization for cultural relations and educational opportunities.

What we do
Our mission, as defined by Royal Charter of 1940, is to promote a wider knowledge of the United Kingdom (UK) and the English language abroad and to develop closer cultural relations between the UK and other countries. We create opportunities, build connections, and engender trust so that we make a lasting difference to the security, prosperity and influence of the UK. In Jamaica, we focus on developing people-to-people links in the areas of education, the arts, youth and social enterprise.

When and How
We create these links by implementing a variety of partners-based projects and programmes, internationally and in Jamaica. Our programmes are demand-driven and designed to be sustainable, implemented within specific financial years, and in that meet our targets.

Where we work
Our headquarters are at 28 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10, but we implement programmes in parishes all across the country. In 2017-2018, our focus areas were Kingston and Montego Bay.
The British Council was originally called the British Committee for Relations with Other Countries. The UK Government created it in response to a weakening of Britain’s influence in the world arising from global financial depression and growing extreme ideologies such as communism in Russia and fascism in Italy, Germany and Spain.

We were founded in 1934 and our first overseas offices opened in 1938, making us the oldest cultural relations organisation in the world.

Today, the British Council has over 7,000 staff working in 191 offices in 110 countries and territories, including Jamaica, where operations began in 1943.

The first country representative was Hugh Paget. Working from the Institute of Jamaica (IOJ) in downtown Kingston, he oversaw the extension and equipment of IOJ’s Junior Centre, as well as the improvement to the stock in libraries and community centres. By 1946 plans for an islandwide public library network were underway.

Declining budgetary support led to the closure of the Jamaica office in the late 1960s, with only a small number of scholarships, library training, and donation of material for libraries being offered.

Twenty years later, in 1988, the office reopened with a focus on developing science and education.

Today, we continue to strengthen cultural relations between the UK and Jamaica by sharing friendly knowledge and understanding as well as through mutually beneficial educational and cultural opportunities.
Do my commitments outside of work mean I’m not interested in my job?
**Our Contributions to Jamaica Over the Years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>British Council sets up office in Jamaica</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>British Council finances the extension of the Institute of Jamaica’s Junior Centre and stocks it with books</td>
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<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>The late Jamaican folklorist Louise “Miss Lou” Bennett-Coverley, OJ, OM, MBE, enrolls in the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, where she was the first black student, on a scholarship granted by the Colonial Office and administered by the British Council. She is one of several people to have been awarded scholarships over the years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>British Government approves plan to establish public libraries in each parish and train librarians. Stock is also added to sundry libraries and community centres.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>The Chevening scholarship scheme is introduced and is initially administered by the British Council. It is now administered by the High Commission. More than 300 Jamaicans are among the Chevening alumni worldwide.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present Day</td>
<td>We work in over 100 countries across the world in the fields of Arts, Education, English and Civil Society.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Our Team

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Will knowing my ethnicity affect the way you treat me?
Unlocking a world of potential

Core skills for learning, work and society
Our Work In Basic Education

British Council Prepares Jamaican Students for 21St Century

British Council Goals
We support teachers and head teachers with training that will help improve and enrich teaching and learning. Education systems, teaching and learning are improved and have better outcomes, through international collaboration and support.

National Goals
Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential

Sustainable Development Goals

Why?
It’s an increasingly common challenge for recruiters to find jobseekers with the soft skills needed to succeed in the world of work.

To address the problem, the British Council has rolled out its Core Skills for Teachers programme, which is designed to improve teaching skills, while positioning young people to prosper in a globalised society. It introduces them to new ways of working, new ways of thinking, and new ways of living in a 21st century world.

How?
British Council in collaboration with education experts in the UK, developed a training manual focusing on the following six core skills and competencies:

1. Critical thinking and problem-solving;
2. Collaboration and communication;
3. Creativity and imagination;
4. Citizenship;
5. Digital literacy;
6. Student leadership and personal development.

Led by Education Project Manager Nadene Newsome, The British Council has delivered a series of widely popular/highly subscribed teacher training workshops in which it trained some 800 teachers and school leaders at the early childhood and secondary school levels, including in special education institutions. Among the tools developed is how to incorporate these core skills into their teaching methodology across subject areas.

A total of 20 workshops were staged, with schools from St James, St Catherine, Kingston, and St Andrew.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK
The three-year core skills programme supports the Government of Jamaica’s revised National Education Curriculum that focuses on the development of critical thinking in students.

The training workshops are establishing a growing network of teachers who are exposed to core skills pedagogy in Jamaica, while fostering collaboration and shared knowledge between the two countries.

“The response has been overwhelming. The workshops are always oversubscribed, with registration normally closing within a week of publishing.”

— Nadene Newsome, Education Project Manager

Teachers work on a project during an Introduction to Core Skills training workshop at Knutsford Court Hotel in Kingston.
What Are Core Skills?

# 1 Critical thinking & Problem-solving
Promoting self-directed thinking that produces new and innovative ideas and solves problems, reflecting critically on learning experiences and processes, and making effective decisions.

# 2 Collaboration & Communication
Fostering effective communication (orally and in writing); actively listening to others in diverse and multi-lingual environments and understanding verbal and non-verbal communication; developing the ability to work in diverse international teams, including learning from and contributing to the learning of others, assuming shared responsibility, co-operating, leading, delegating, and compromising to produce new and innovative ideas and solutions.

# 3 Creativity & Imagination
Promoting economic and social entrepreneurialism; imagining and pursuing novel ideas, in tandem with judging value, developing innovation and curiosity.

# 4 Citizenship
Developing active, globally-aware citizens who have the skills, knowledge and motivation to address issues of human and environmental sustainability and work towards a fairer world in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue; developing an understanding of what it means to be a citizen of their own country and growing appreciation for their own country’s values.

# 5 Digital Literacy
Developing the skills to discover, acquire and communicate knowledge and information in a globalised economy; using technology to reinforce, extend and deepen learning through international collaboration.

# 6 Student Leadership & Personal Development
Recognizing the importance of honesty and empathy; recognizing others’ needs and safety; fostering perseverance, resilience, and self-confidence; exploring leadership, self-regulation and responsibility, personal health and well-being, career and life skills, and learning to learn for life-long learning.

Key Outcomes

For school leaders:
- learn how core skills can enrich the curriculum and lead to better outcomes and higher standards across your school;
- develop your own activity plans and apply new tools and approaches to improve core skills provision;
- discover how to lead professional development in core skills for your teaching staff; and
- enhance your school’s overall offer by making core skills a key part of the learning journey.

For teachers:
- learn new interactive teaching approaches and techniques to introduce core skills in the classroom, including use of digital tools and resources;
- become part of an international support network of educators to share best practices;
- create practical activity plans to embed core skills in the curriculum; and
- be confident you can prepare your students for life and work in a global economy.
UK Partners with Jamaica to Improve Boys' Performance in Schools

British Council Goals
We support you young people between the ages of 16-30 to increase their confidence, purposefulness, adaptability, and ability to build networks.

We support young people in to develop skills that improve their employability.

National Goals
Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential
The Jamaican society is secure, cohesive and just
Jamaica’s economy is prosperous

Sustainable Development Goals

Why?
For over 40 years the Western Hemisphere has been experiencing a consistent gap between the performance of boys and girls in critical national exams and a significant under-representation of males at the tertiary level. In addition to achieving lower grades than girls, boys are more likely to exhibit more disciplinary problems, repeat a grade, and be placed in special education classes.

How?
The British Council commissioned a Trilateral Champions Research Project on academic performance among boys in Jamaica, the USA and the UK and, in partnership with Jamaica Teaching Council, implemented the inaugural Boys in Education Week to support and celebrate male students. The week of activities coincided with Child Month and was executed under the theme ‘Supporting a Nation of Champion Boys’. It featured the release of the report findings, speed mentoring with influential Jamaican men, a trilateral parent-teacher workshop with the participation of UK teachers, and a junior hackathon.

The Trilateral Champions Research Project focused on the issue of gender equity through the examination of the differential in academic achievement of girls and boys in schools in the UK, the United States and Jamaica. It was inspired by a statement made by the former Minister of Education Reverend Ronald Thwaites at the Commonwealth Meeting of Ministers of Education. Minister Thwaites noted that the two major challenges he faced in education were the literacy and numeracy rates amongst school leavers from the formal school system, as well as the overall academic performance of boys in schools.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK
By turning the spotlight on boys, the British Council provided the opportunity for them to discuss the challenges they face in their schooling and this introduced them to confidence-building, role modeling, and other tools geared towards improving their performance. The week of activities also allowed for the sharing of ideas among teachers and education leaders from Jamaica and the UK.

Our Boys In Education work will continue in 2018/2019 with the development of a mentoring programme for boys, which is being designed and delivered through a gender-equity lens in collaboration with UK and Jamaican partners. Research shows that the underperformance of boys in education can be linked to gender norms and social constructs – one of the root causes that should not be overlooked.

“There is an issue with boys dropping out of school too early. And if they are still in school, they go through to graduate but they can’t even read and write by the time they are leaving, and that’s really criminal. Globally, something is not going on right with how boys are being educated to keep them motivated to stay in school the way girls are doing.”

— Therese Turner Jones, IDB General Manager of the Country Department Caribbean Group (CCB)
Eager hands shoot up during the Boys Speed-Mentoring Day.

Boys from Excelsior Primary School and their teacher Phylicia Ledgister at the launch of the Triilateral Champions Research at Mona Visitors’ Lodge at the start of Boys In Education Week, observed May 1-5, 2017.

These boys from Calabar and Norman Manley high schools celebrate winning a challenge in their age category at the hackathon, staged at GraceKennedy STEM centre in Downtown, Kingston.

A sextet from Calabar High School presented a musical piece.

Students of Sts Peter & Paul Preparatory School were chaperoned by Dr. Corretta Brown Johnson for the launch of the Triilateral Champions Research at Mona Visitors’ Lodge.

Students participate in a team building activity.

The Boys In Education Week mentors were (back row, from left): Kevin Mills, Greg Parks, Dr. Tony Sewell, Keroma Bernard; (front row, from left) Wayne Thompson, Michael Reid, Romaine Allen, Shasane Parker, Jeffrey Campbell, and Xesus Johnston. Missing from the photo is Carlton Brown.

Pembroke Hall Primary School was represented at Boys In Education Week.
Former childcare social worker and mentor Greg Purkis (centre) interacts with students of Jessie Ripoll Primary and Avondale Preparatory at the Boys In Education Week launch.

Students of Avondale Preparatory School and their teacher Eric Thomas.

Dancehall artiste, Jeffrey “Agent Sasco” Campbell (centre) mentors a group of boys during the Speed Mentorship Day.

Members of the José Martí Technical High School delegation with a British Council volunteer.

St. Theresa’s Preparatory School students did it for the ‘likes’ in the Facebook frame.

The boys in the Pembroke Hall Primary School performance group were not to be outdone.

Menswear designer Carlton Brown mentored the boys on etiquette, presentation, and confidence during Boys In Education Week.

Kadeon Richards Bailey, British Council Programme Manager for Education at the time; Oluyinka Jacobs Bonnick, British Council country manager; Sir Tony Sewell, founder of Generating Genius; Therese Turner-Jones, Inter-American Development Bank General Manager for the Caribbean Country Group; and Dr. Rosemarie Campbell-Stephens, then director/principal of the National College for Educational Leadership in the Ministry of Education, discussed the launch of Boys In Education Week at the Jamaica Observer Monday Exchange.
Does my gender make me less or more important?
An evaluation of social enterprise in Jamaican secondary schools
Our Work In Social Enterprise & Youth Engagement

- Social Enterprise in Secondary Schools
- Listen & Learn Activities

British Council Introduces High School Students to Social Enterprise

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<th>British Council Goals</th>
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<td>We support young people to develop skills that improve their employability</td>
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<th>National Goals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential</td>
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<td>Jamaica’s economy is prosperous</td>
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<th>Sustainable Development Goals</th>
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<tr>
<td>4 Quality Education</td>
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<td>5 Gender Equality</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Decent Work and Economic Growth</td>
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<td>10 Reduced Inequalities</td>
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Why?

In partnership with Victoria Mutual Foundation and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, the British Council has launched a three-year Social Enterprise in Schools programme designed to teach students how to start and operate successful businesses while still in school.

How?

The British Council, UK-based Real Ideas Organisation and Social Enterprise Academy developed a social enterprise resource pack for schools which enables teachers to impart social enterprise skills through six lessons, including how social enterprises work, how to create a business canvas with social action as the vision, and how to map their communities and identify what the needs are.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK

The primary objective of Social Enterprise in Schools is to reduce the school-to-work transition gap among a cohort of about 16,000 Jamaican young people by upskilling them through the social enterprise model and core skills training. Their businesses will not only turn a profit, but will solve social problems in their communities as well. The programme also allows for a better understanding of the role social enterprises play in the economy, and encourages greater investment in the sector.

In addition, the programme offers substantial knowledge exchange between schools in Jamaica and the UK through the ‘train the trainer’ workshops, as well as a tour of social enterprise ventures in the UK.

“The Victoria Mutual Foundation is pleased to be a part of this innovative and timely project as we see this as critical to the fulfilling our mission of improving the quality of the lives of Jamaicans through financial empowerment. The project also allows us the opportunity to operationalize Victoria Mutual’s commitment to encouraging all team members to volunteer and to facilitate their involvement in meaningful programmes.”

— Courtney Campbell, Chairman, Victoria Mutual Foundation

The Denbigh High School had several brilliant suggestions for social enterprise projects.

Students and teachers from Montego Bay High School, one of the six pilot schools participating in the Social Enterprise in Secondary Schools Programme, supported the launch event on 12 March 2018.

Damion Campbell, Social Enterprise and Youth Engagement Programme Manager at the British Council, shared the programme overview at the launch event.

Lyndsay Hall, CEO of Real Ideas Organisation and co-developer of the British Council Social Enterprise resource pack, delivered an overview of the programme and benefits of social enterprises to Jamaica.

Connie Kyle (left), of 360 Recycle Manufacturing, a social enterprise in Jamaica, explains to (from second left) Olayinka Jacobs-Bonnick, country director, British Council; Courtney Campbell, chairman of Victoria Mutual Foundation; and Valerie Jones, board member, Victoria Mutual Foundation, how waste materials can be repurposed to make a positive impact on the environment.
Always Listening, Always Learning

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<th>British Council Goals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Young people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding which enable them to contribute better to society, locally and globally, and to prosperity and greater stability.</td>
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<th>Sustainable Development Goals</th>
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Why?

Jamaica is faced with rising levels of youth unemployment as well as increased incidences of violent and other types of crime perpetuated by young people.

How?

In tandem with the Youth Policy Division of the Ministry of Education and its empowerment officers, the British Council delivered three regional youth-engagement sessions, which we labeled Listen & Learn.

The objective was not only to elicit feedback from young people about the various issues facing them and their peers but, critically, to get their ideas about ways in which they think the problems can be suitably and sustainably addressed.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK

The youth engagement sessions lay the groundwork for further work as the youth projects we design from this point forward will be informed by the data captured. They also provide an immediate interface with local communities, which broadened British Council’s reach and raised awareness of the British Council brand and its work in Jamaica.

“There is high youth unemployment and if you realize, most of the social problems either impact a lot of young people or they are the perpetrators, so us working in that area creates a good niche for us to utilise the expertise of the UK in engaging the local populace and do some good work.”

— Damion Campbell, Social Enterprise & Youth Engagement Programme Manager

Students provided feedback about issues relevant to them and their peers.

Young people expressed the factors they believed portrayed their communities in a negative light.

The Listen & Learn sessions focused on current issues and their solutions.
Are my beliefs more important than my actions?

An inclusive British Council

www.britishcouncil.org/diversity
Our Work In Arts & The Creative Economy

- Backstage to the Future: Caribbean
- We Have Met Before Exhibition
- Making Development Work

Backstage to the Future Trains Students from the Caribbean in Festival Management

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<th>British Council Goals</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural professionals and artists develop their knowledge, artistic practice, skills and networks contributing to greater prosperity</td>
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<th>National Goals</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable Development Goals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. No Poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Decent Work and Economic Growth</td>
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<td>9. Industry Innovation and Infrastructure</td>
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Why?

Students from Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, and Jamaica got the opportunity to work backstage at the Green Moon festival in Colombia and the Rebel Salute music festival in Jamaica as interns in festival management, stage management, lighting, and sound engineering in September 2017 and January 2018.

Following a successful internship backstage at the annual Rebel Salute music festival in St Ann, Jamaica, two students of Alpha Institute in Kingston have been offered the chance to work with the production crew for next year’s staging.

How?

In recognition of Jamaica’s designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Music and the wide appeal of the country’s rich heritage and culture, British Council designed a skills development programme in live festivals — Backstage to the Future — to help the country leverage its unique position by translating it into sustainable revenue streams.

We flew a Jamaican co-trainer and a trainee to the Green Moon festival in Colombia in September 2017 at which, under the guidance of a UK expert, they were exposed to festival management skills. In January 2018 we hosted a group of 10 students from Colombia, Cuba, Venezuela, and Jamaica at Rebel Salute.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK

The British Council facilitated the hands-on professional development of one co-trainer and three young Jamaican arts professional who were part of a larger cohort of 10 participants. By strengthening skills in the live music sector, and building the capacity of young Jamaican professionals working in the music industry, the British Council has built trust and created dialogue between the UK and the Caribbean, and between the Anglophone and Hispanophone Caribbean.

As an added bonus, two of the students from partner institution Alpha Institute were offered positions to work at the festival next year.

“Live music-events are an important way of leveraging Jamaica’s cultural capital and we hope to build on the success of the first phase of Backstage to the Future: Caribbean, which took place in Colombia, continuing the British Council’s sustained commitment to capacity-building, in the cultural and creative sector in Jamaica and throughout the region.”

— Andrea Dempster Chung, Arts Project Manager
Backstage to the Future interns (from left) Patrick Garrel, Khadeem James, Najay Pearce, Fermin Whitacker, Nitchman Robinson, Ana Luisa Sánchez, Daelis Padilla, Yessica Ramos, and Maroxy Robinson had a theory session with a UK trainer prior to the practical stage work at Rebel Salute music festival.

Ryan Bailey, stage manager for the Rebel Salute festival, guided trainees (from left) Yessica Ramos, Maroxy Robinson, Fermin Whitacker, and Ana Luisa Sánchez on stage management ahead of the live shows.

Post-stage setup, the trainees were among the more than 20,000 patrons who enjoyed the live two-day festival.

Trainees Patrick Garrel (left) and Najay Pearce during stage setup at Rebel Salute 2018.
Does my sexual orientation affect how you see my work?
We Have Met Before

British Council Goals
We support young people to develop skills that improve their employability

National Goals
Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential

Sustainable Development Goals

Why?
In the context of renewed interest in the cross-cultural exchange between the UK and Jamaica, specifically due to the Commonwealth Games Cultural Programme which took place in Glasgow in 2014 and the London Olympic Games of 2012, four contemporary artists start a fresh conversation about the histories of slavery, the Transatlantic trade in Africans, and their present-day implications.

How?
From September 22 to November 4, 2017, the British Council, in partnership with the National Gallery of Jamaica, hosted an art exhibition — We Have Met Before — featuring Scottish artist Graham Fagen, Bajan-Canadian Joscelyn Gardner, Guyanese-born Briton Dr Ingrid Pollard, and Jamaican Leasho Johnson.

Fagen’s work, titled The Slave’s Lament after Robert Burns’ 200-year-old lyric empathising with the appalling hurt of the displaced, the trafficked, and the enslaved, featured a series of photographs from his ‘sound clash’, in which Burns’ poetry finds a haunting bedfellow in Jamaican reggae music.

Gardner presented two full series of lithographs showcasing intricate African braided hairstyles morphed into the instruments of torture that were used during slavery.

Dr Pollard’s work was titled The Boy Who Watches Ships Go By and featured photographic canvases describing the shifting landscapes and histories of the quiet coastal village of Sunderland Point — one of the busiest ports in northern England in the eighteenth century.

Johnson, meanwhile, presented a visually and conceptually explosive mix of history and contemporary popular culture with strong references to dancehall and graffiti.

Prior to the start of the exhibition, the four artists introduced students at Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts to some of their techniques in a series of well-received practical workshops.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK
In addition to showcasing artists’ work, We Have Met Before provided a platform for Scotland to re-examine its links to the Caribbean through its role in the slave trade. It also created a transatlantic dialogue across the waters with a view towards a more mature and nuanced understanding of each other’s culture and the engendering of trust between the UK and Jamaica.

“We Have Met Before contributed to the vision of our arts programme playing a critical role in redefining the relationship between the UK and the Caribbean, reframing perceptions on both sides. As part of the larger two year project called Difficult Conversations, the collaboration with the National Gallery of Jamaica facilitated a conversation, led by artists, on the histories of slavery, the Transatlantic slave trade, and its present-day implications.”

— Annalee Davis, Caribbean Arts Manager, British Council

A panel discussion explored issues brought to the fore at the We Have Met Before Exhibition at the National Gallery of Jamaica.
As part of the We Have Met Before exhibition, the British Council hosted an experimental drawing workshop led by Scottish artist Graham Fagen at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts.

Jamaican Leasito Johnson presented a visually and conceptually explosive mix of history and contemporary popular culture with strong references to dancehall and graffiti for the We Have Met Before exhibition.

Professor Carolyn Cooper was in attendance at the We Have Met Before panel discussion.

Slave’s Lament by Graham Fagen

The Boy Who Watches Ships Go By (2002) is the oldest work featured in the We Have Met Before exhibition courtesy of Dr Ingrid Pollard.
Also as part of the “We Have Met Before” exhibition, the British Council hosted a photography workshop lead by Guyanese-born British artist Dr. Ingrid Pollard.

Bajan-born artist Joscelyn Gardner exhibited two full series of lithographs showcasing intricate African braided hairstyles that were morphed into the instruments of torture used during slavery.

Leasho Johnson’s explosive mix of history and contemporary popular culture with strong references to dancehall and graffiti for the “We Have Met Before” exhibition.

Also as part of the “We Have Met Before” exhibition, the British Council hosted a photography workshop lead by Guyanese-born British artist Dr. Ingrid Pollard.

Leasho Johnson (left) and Senate President Tom Tavares-Finson.

Joscelyn Gardner

Leasho Johnson (left) and Senate President Tom Tavares-Finson.


**British Council Goals**
We support young people in to develop skills that improve their employability

**National Goals**
Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential

**Sustainable Development Goals**


**Why?**

Two Jamaican film-makers who participated in British Council script development workshop have won recognition for their work.

**How?**

In partnership with Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) and Jamaica Film and Television Association (JAFTA), the British Council hosted Writing for Development workshops for scriptwriters, directors and script editors, led by Polish-British script consultant Ludo Smolski who arranged the film-makers into five teams of three — writer, director, and script editor — and set them on the path to developing scripts they already had over a five-month period. This was followed by distance mentoring and a final workshop in September 2017. The main feature of the second workshop, a three-day event, was the film-makers pitching projects to corporate funders.

Writer, script editor, filmmaker and Chief Creative Officer at Reelvibez Studios Kaiel Eytle won a pitch competition and will have his animated short made into an action movie.

Another workshop participant, writer and comedian Tony ‘Paleface’ Hendricks, had his script shortlisted for the Palm D’or in Cannes in France last year.

The script development exercise is to be followed by marketing and production workshops over the next two years.

**Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK**

The workshops helped improve the scriptwriting skills and build capacity among Jamaican scriptwriters and film-makers. They also strengthened the capacity of the film and television industry and created opportunities for young professionals to access professional development opportunities in their field. They also facilitated cultural exchange between Jamaica and the UK and established a network of UK-trained professionals in Jamaica.

“JAMPRO, through the Film Commission, is pleased to be partnering with the British Council and JAFTA on the delivery of this workshop. We are always exploring partnerships that will further the development of the industry and this programme is one such. We look forward to the positive outcomes and anticipate our continued partnership.”

— Renee Robinson, Film Commissioner, JAMPRO

Noted local film makers, script writers, and editors attended the Making Development Work training sessions led by British script editor Ludo Smolski at the JAMPRO building on September 29 – 30, 2017.

Playwright and actor Tony Hendricks (right), and cinematographer and producer Kaiel Eytle participated in the Making Development Work learning sessions for film-makers, including scriptwriters, editors, and producers.
Art Interventions

**TAARE**
(Trans Atlantic Artist Residency Exchange)

The British Council has collaborated with UK- and Caribbean-based cultural partners to offer new residency opportunities open to visual artists, art critics and curators who are living and working in Jamaica or Trinidad and Tobago. The residency can be research and/or practice-based and includes round-trip travel, accommodation, a materials/project budget, an artist fee, and a stipend for living costs. The residency is supported by British Council, its UK partners including Delfina Foundation in partnership with Autograph, Gasworks and Hospitalfield, and its Caribbean partners, including NLS Kingston in Jamaica and Alice Yard in Trinidad.

**Momentum + Edinburgh Arts Festival**

Momentum is the Edinburgh Festivals International Delegate Programme which takes place in Edinburgh during August and is delivered through a partnership between British Council Scotland, Festivals Edinburgh and Creative Scotland, with the additional support of the City of Edinburgh Council, Event Scotland and the Scottish Government.

**Run Free**

The Run Free project is a participatory arts programme designed and implemented through collaboration between the National Theatre of Scotland, the British Council and Manifesto Jamaica. The mission is to engage vulnerable youth by fusing the movement aesthetics of Parkour (otherwise known as Free Running) with Physical Theatre. In 2014, we staged a 10-day pilot project.

**Tilting Axis Fellowship**

Tilting Axis (TA) is a roving meeting, conceptualized by ARC Magazine and the Fresh Milk Art Platform Inc., that moves in and out of the Caribbean region on an annual basis. It brings together arts professionals who are interested in, and committed to, expanding contemporary visual art practice across all linguistic areas of the region.

**The Stuart Hall Conference**

A celebration of Stuart Hall’s life and work through film in partnership with Autograph ABP, London; The University of the West Indies, Mona; and the National Gallery of Jamaica.

**Shakespeare in the Caribbean (FILM)**

In 2016, the British Council commissioned a short documentary film to mark the quatercentenary of Shakespeare’s death. Though clearly celebratory in tone and concept, Shakespeare in the Caribbean/The Caribbean in Shakespeare provides an exciting opportunity for young Caribbean teachers, scholars, performing artists, and film-makers to “talk back” to Shakespeare and to reflect on his profound, though sometimes problematic impact on their lives and their societies.

**Animae Caribe**

The British Council supported the participation of eleven (11) animators at the Animae Caribe Animation Festival in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from November 20-25, 2017. The selected participants were chosen from Cuba, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, where the British Council has offices.

**Kingston Book Festival**

The British Council partnered with the Book Industry Association of Jamaica (BIAJ) to support the staging of a Deaf Poetry Slam led by Raymond Antrobus at the Kingston Book Festival on Sunday March 11th at Hope Gardens. The British Council’s long term involvement in disability and arts is based on a commitment to equality. The moral, social, and political imperative argues that disabled people should have the same rights to the arts, either as audiences or as artists, as do non-disabled people. There is also a creative benefit, as artists with a unique and complex experience of the world bring that unique and nuanced perspective to their art. In addition the British Council sponsored (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) EDI Day at the Spanish Court hotel, a joint activity in partnership with the Kingston Book Festival and the Foreign Commonwealth Office which focused on Human Trafficking, Surviving Abuse and Deaf Storytelling.
Will noticing my disability mean you stop noticing my skills?

An inclusive British Council

www.britishcouncil.org/diversity
Our Work In
Equality, Diversity And Inclusion (EDI)

- Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and Salvation Army School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Inclusion and Diversity Summit
- Deaf Poetry Slam

British Council, RNIB Scotland Donates Books To School In Jamaica

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<td>8 Reduce poverty and economic growth</td>
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<td>10 Reduced inequality</td>
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<td>17 Partnerships for the goals</td>
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Why?
As an international organisation, the British Council celebrates globally-recognised days, including International Literacy Day. As such, we decided to challenge the discrimination and marginalisation of visually impaired and blind people in Jamaica by raising awareness around the lack of accessible literature and making a contribution in whatever way we could to support inclusion.

How?
The British Council reached out to the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) in Scotland with the help of Flag Up Jamaica, Scotland, to provide braille and large-print books for the students. There is an unconscious bias that reading is purely visual and so if you have experienced sight loss, or are blind, then you don’t read. We wanted to challenge the discrimination and marginalisation of visually impaired and blind persons in Jamaica. We received 55 boxes of literature that staff and students are currently enjoying.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK
This activity has provided blind and visually impaired Jamaicans with the opportunity to enjoy the same stories that stretch the imagination and sense of wonder as their sighted peers. It represents equality, diversity and inclusion, which is at the core of the British Council’s work globally and promotes the UK’s international reputation for excellence in cultural relations. Likewise, it has promoted the conversation around making braille and large-print books more accessible to blind and visually impaired Jamaicans as they, too, read.

“There is a very limited access to books in alternate formats for low vision and totally blind children in Jamaica, so we are very grateful for initiatives such as this. Granting a child with visual impairment an enabling environment means they can break that glass ceiling.”

— Iyeke Erharuyi, Principal, Salvation Army School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
British Council Caribbean Media Officer Kiwayne Jacobs and Education Project Manager Nadene Newsome celebrate the arrival of 55 boxes of Braille and large print books from the Royal National Institute of Blind People in Scotland featuring titles by J.K. Rowling and David Williams. The books were donated to the Salvation Army School for the Blind and Visually Impaired on International Literacy Day, 8 September 2017.

Sarah Lindo (centre), a grade eight student at Salvation Army School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, her teacher Sherine Thompson (right), and other Salvation Army staff outside the TVJ studio before/after Lindo did a televised reading from a Braille Harry Potter book in observance of International Literacy Day, 8 September 2017.

British Council Country Director Olayinka Jacobs-Bonnick (right) holds the microphone for Sashana Wauchope, a teacher at Salvation Army School for the Blind and Visually Impaired as she reads aloud from a Braille book.

Kiwayne Jacobs, British Council Caribbean Media Officer at the Reading Day and Book Donation event at Salvation Army School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in St Andrew on International Literacy Day 8 September 2017.

Salvation Army School for the Blind students, staff and administrators gathered in the auditorium for the International Literacy Day event.
Summit Focuses on Road Map for Inclusive Kingston

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<td>More inclusive thinking is integrated, which promotes inclusive growth and service provision that works for the poorest or most marginalised.</td>
<td>Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential</td>
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**Why?**

To address socio-economic inequalities as we strive for greater inclusion and to widen opportunities for members of the vulnerable population.

**How?**

We mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into our programmes, services and general behaviour. This is a tripartite approach which consists of a business, moral, and legal case. The focus is on six broad areas: age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender, religion/belief, and sexual identity/orientation.

**Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK**

Our partners and stakeholders are more aware of their roles and responsibilities and possess access to a wider pool of information to minimise negative impact and potential discrimination, as well as promote opportunities to advance equality, inclusion and good relations between different groups of people.

> “If you start to include friends and family of those disabled people, you’re pushing the number up to 2.5 billion people and a US$6.9-trillion annual disposable income. That is a huge market, and not including disabled people by having an excluded society, businesses are not taking full advantage of that spending power.”

--- Haqeeq Bostan, EDI Consultant
UK Poet Headlines Deaf Poetry Slam In Jamaica

British Council Goals
Individuals have improved social outcomes, contributing to greater social inclusion and social engagement

National Goals
Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential.

Sustainable Development Goals
8: Decent work and economic growth
10: Reduced inequalities

Why?
The British Council’s long-term involvement in disability and the arts is based on a commitment to equality. The moral, social, and political imperative argues that disabled people should have the same rights to the arts, either as audiences or as artists, as do non-disabled people. There is also a creative benefit, as artists with a unique and complex experience of the world bring that unique and nuanced perspective to their art. Disabled artists can harness their own experience and bring to audiences not only their own rarely-heard stories and narratives, but also those which augment, adapt or challenge the mainstream.

How?
The British Council partnered with the Book Industry Association of Jamaica (BIAJ) to support the staging of a Deaf Poetry Slam at the Kingston Book Fair on Sunday, March 11, 2018 at Hope Gardens. Raymond Antrobus, who also headlined the literary festival, led a workshop on deaf storytelling on Thursday, March 8, 2018 at the Spanish Court Hotel. This was the first time that deaf poets have taken to the stage in Jamaica and have been able to participate in a storytelling workshop.

Benefit to Jamaica and to the UK
We reached an arts audience of 1,000 people face to face. Additionally, the broadcast media coverage, at the lower end of the spectrum, reached approximately 115,000 people in print and some 400,000 on electronic platforms.

“The UK is one of the leaders in disabled access to the arts and this is an important cultural relations theme for us in Jamaica. The Kingston Book Festival has been an excellent partner showcasing the skills of artists from the disabled community, and we believe that this can catalyze long-term change.”

— Andrea Dempster-Chung, British Council, Arts Manager.
Olayinka Jacobs-Bonnick, Country Director at the British Council (left), shares details on the organisation’s involvement in the 2018 edition of the Kingston Book Festival with Krystal Tomlinson, master of ceremonies.

British Jamaican poet Raymond Antrobus (left) with fellow writer and poet Professor Mervyn Morris at the British Council Deaf Poetry Slam.

Twelve-year-old author Justin McKay was on site with his book 7 Tales of Wizardry.

Acclaimed young author Marley Dias was also a special guest at this year’s Kingston Book Fair and Deaf Poetry Slam.

Famous children characters Geronimo Stilton (left) and Clifford the Big Red Dog (right), with children’s author Paula-Anne Porter-Jones.

Raymond Antrobus also signed copies of his book for patrons on the day.
When you ask my age are you really questioning what I can achieve?
Positive feedback

Name: Mario Galbert
Title: Norman Manley High School Head Boy 2015-16
Event: Social Enterprise Seminar
Feedback: I really want to take this time to thank you for such an amazing seminar. I hope to work with you sometime in the future.

Name: Donovan McLaren
Title: Executive Director, Kevoy Community Development Institute (KCDI) Jamaica
Event: Social Enterprise Seminar
Feedback: We were indeed pleased to be invited to the launch and seminar. It was most informative and provided an alternative approach re Social Enterprise in the Jamaican school system. As a vocational training facility we will take on board some of these new approaches, most notably the activity re Time Management which was demonstrated by Dr Knife. Again, thank for extending the invitation and KCDI Jamaica stands ready to work with the British Council re the development of our nation.

Name: Denieve Manning
Event: Writers Workshop
Feedback: Thank you and the British Council Caribbean for creating much-needed opportunities for artists and the arts. I believe in what you do, so my question is how can I help in moving forward any projects you have in the upcoming three-to-six months cycle?

Name: Tafari Burns
Title: Director, Cultural Economics & Business Initiatives, Culture & Creative Industries Policy Division, Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport
Event: British Council Seminar - Edinburgh
Feedback: I want to thank the British Council for giving me the opportunity to serve as a delegate at the recently held seminar. How Important is Enterprise Training to Job Creation? Embedding Enterprise Within Technical and Vocational Education, March 7-9, 2017 in Edinburgh, Scotland. I have gained valuable insights into enterprise and vocational training and the role of Scottish institutions in creating and nurturing the enabling environment for entrepreneurship to flourish. Because of this seminar I had the opportunity to observe a variety of projects, programmes and institutions within the public and private sectors, I had the chance to observe numerous aspects of apprenticeship, incubator models, tertiary education through experiential learning — "learning by doing" and the support systems established for students and graduates. I would like to highlight: The Princes Trust, City of Glasgow College; West Lothian College; Creative Exchange; and Bridge 2 Business as the most memorable exchanges. I am sure that Jamaica will benefit from the models and best practices I have seen throughout Scotland. This seminar has definitely provided opportunities for further strengthening of the culture and creative industries of Jamaica.

Name: Floyd Green
Title: State Minister, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information
Event: British Council Skills Seminar
Feedback: I found the visit to Scotland extremely informative, especially my interaction with Skills Development Scotland and the introduction to the Foundation Apprenticeship Scheme and also my visit to West Lothian College. I also found the contingent was well-crafted and as such we were able to have very worthwhile exchanges about the Jamaican situation and how we can transfer some of the best practices to our own reality. I do look forward to exploring embarking on an International Skills Partnership as I have already identified a number of areas that I am certain collaboration would be mutually beneficial. Finally, I must make special mention of the British Council team, especially our own Morland Wilson and Dorota Drajewicz, both of whom I found to be tremendously helpful, knowledgeable and well-organized. I am sorry I wasn’t able to stay longer, but I have already signalled to Morland that I would love to have the Jamaican contingent brought together for a post-meeting where we can craft some strategies going forward.

Name: Rosemary Campbell-Stephens
Title: Former Principal, National Council on Educational Leadership
Event: Boys In Education Week
Feedback: This is a very important initiative on a subject very close to my heart. I was one of a small team in the UK that led on the then Department for Education National African Caribbean Boys Achievement project, which then led to more focused research in London c. 2003. There is a lot of expertise in this area, and what was great about the research and intervention was it was led by black practitioners, most of whom had been head teachers. All of that said, I would very much like to be a part of this current conversation and offer whatever support that I can. Well done, British Council, for keeping a positive focus on this critical area.

Name: Nichola Edwards
Title: English and Communication Studies Teacher at Glenmuir High School
Event: Core Skills training workshop
Feedback: The Core Skills approach teaches the students to connect to day-to-day life so that they can better relate and draw on their own experiences to explain a concept, an idea or an event. I’m using the skills and I’m seeing the results. For one, usually you would give them a task today and tomorrow you ask them a question about it and they are blank. Now they’re not that blank anymore. I see them making the effort and drawing on the previous knowledge. Also, previously they were not keen on sharing and working together, so now I make the lessons more interactive and use group-based activities and I see them adapting to that kind of activity. It’s slow, but they are adapting.
So thank you, British Council!

Name: Donovan Edwards
Title: Science Teacher, Cumberland High School
Event: Core Skills training workshop
Feedback: The workshop was very interesting and I have learned a lot. I have been using the skills all along but I wasn’t aware that they had a name and that they were formalized. It enlightened me on how to important these skills are to student learning. I’m seeing some improvement in their academic performance. It’s incremental, not dramatic, but it’s improvement nonetheless.
(For more details, please check our FACEBOOK page https://www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilCaribbean/ and our website: https://caribbean.britishcouncil.org/).
2.3 Jamaica

Twenty-seven schools from Kingston and Montego Bay participated in the Core Skills project in Jamaica. Teachers from these 27 schools attended the one-day Introduction to Core Skills (ICS) course run in various locations between October 17 – 26, 2017. Seventy-eight teachers participated in the baseline survey, and 75 completed end of course (EoC) surveys, enabling paired surveys in 74 cases.

95% of Jamaican teachers felt confident in developing their students' core skills by the end of the training.

- There was 68% growth in the number of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I think I know a lot about core skills."
- After the ICS training course, 95% of teachers stated they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I feel confident in developing my students' core skills." These results show an overwhelmingly positive response to this initial core skills training.
- 100% of the Jamaican teachers further stated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I understand why it is important for my students to develop core skills."
- 99% stated they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I understand the difference between deep learning and surface learning," which suggests that beyond gaining an overall understanding of core skills, teachers felt their teaching methodology had been enhanced, thus ultimately benefiting their students.

99% of Jamaican teachers reported that they understood the difference between deep learning and surface learning.

The findings overall showed quantitative and qualitative evidence of a positive impact on the participating teachers, yet challenges to the Core Skills project in Jamaica included the fact that only the short, one-day ICS course was possible, leaving many teachers feeling they would have benefited from more input and practise with the core skills. Additional Core Skills training courses have already taken this into account.

Success stories included the overwhelmingly positive reaction from teachers in Jamaica and their widespread feeling that the training should be rolled out to more teachers with involvement of school leaders.

Americas Core Skills Report Phase 1

In Jamaica, teachers felt that after participating in the ICS training course, they:

- were able to identify points in the curriculum where Core Skills could be included to develop their students' core skills;
- felt more equipped to plan lessons that include opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate their abilities in Core Skills;
- felt more confident in developing their students' core skills; and
- that they looked for additional opportunities within lessons to develop their students' core skills.
Raymond Antrobus at Kingston Book Festival

Raymond Antrobus blogs about his time in Jamaica at the Kingston Book Festival!

Kingston Book Festival has done powerful and important work for Jamaica. Its function is slightly different to the more prominent festival on the island - Calabash Literary Festival - that happens every two years and features some of the most acclaimed writers from around the world. Kingston Book Festival does more ground work activism and more promotion of literacy, whereas Calabash operates as a prestigious showcase of English language literature. Both are important and I’m proud to have taken part in both. In 2016 I was the joint-winner of the Calabash open mic slam (alongside Keith Jarrett) - a win that led to my invitation to the Kingston Book Festival (shout out Latoya West-Blackwood and Bookophilia).

Most of my time at the festival was spent visiting schools and running workshops with young Jamaicans (Deaf and hearing). I was also a guest on Smile Jamaica (a show I remembered family watching as a child) and other Jamaican TV network programs. I haven’t spent a significant amount of time in Jamaica since I was thirteen so it took a couple days to tune back into the rhythm of the island: for example, never begin a conversation with a Jamaican without acknowledging the time of day ("Morning!") and sharing gratitude for life and sunshine ("beautiful day! Give thanks! Blessings!"). It jarred with my London rhythm where you can start a conversation with "Hey, can you tell me how to get to Oxford Street?" This doesn’t fly in Jamaica, try it and you will be greeted with cold eyes and quiet resentment. You will get directions but don’t be surprised if they’re wrong or so vague you’ll have to ask someone else a mile down the road.

Fellow headliners at the Kingston Book Festival were novelist Nicole Dennis-Benn (Jamaican author of Here Comes The Sun) and Marley Dias (a thirteen year old Jamaican-American author and a superstar literacy champion). After we gave talks and readings to students we had a Q&A with fiercely intelligent young people. A question asked to me by an 11-year-old boy was, “is it emotional to write a book?” I was moved by many of the thoughtful questions but that one stayed with me. I wasn’t surprised though: Jamaican students are typically high achievers. My cousin, who was born in New York and was a well-marked student in the US came to Jamaica and was so far behind in comparison to his peers that he had to repeat a year of school. All the students looked like they could be my cousins and nephews and nieces, so I felt a kind of pride and protectiveness. There was an engaging conversation about my “Jamaican British” poem - one of the teachers admitted to her students “I’m a light skin Jamaican, born on the island and I have to explain myself this way too”. I have always written poetry with the hope of connecting to people who share an experience. This was poignant, the way she too, could be vulnerable with her students, which in turn may give her students a deeper connection with their teacher in the classroom.

The most rewarding visit for me was with the Caribbean Christian school for the Deaf and meeting Deaf Jamaicans who have developed a community that is also linked to Deaf Can coffee. It’s a non-profit organisation set up by Alfred Everlin Clarke, a Deaf Jamaican farmer, that has helped teach young deaf Jamaicans how to roast coffee. A number of Deaf Can coffee shops have now been launched around the island. Some deaf students at the school work in the coffee shops as baristas or teaching some Jamaican sign language.

The day before I visited Deaf Can, I had met Antoinette Aiken, a CODA (child of a deaf adult) and Jamaican Sign Language interpreter who informed me that 95% of people born deaf in Jamaica grow up illiterate. In the UK, it’s around 70%. Of course this doesn’t mean they grow up without language, rather most would be functionally illiterate, meaning they could be fluent in sign language but struggle to write “grammatically correct” English. I had my own struggles with this; I was born deaf but it wasn’t discovered until I was seven years old. I was slow to talk and walk and at thirteen I had the reading and writing age of an average seven year old, so like my cousin in Jamaica, I’d had to catch up in my own way. Thanks to the NHS I was given speech and hearing therapy, as well as powerful hearing aid technology. I was sent to a Deaf and hearing school in North London and learned some British Sign Language but felt ashamed because I was teased by hearing kids, so I stopped learning after a year and relied on lip-reading. This deeply impacted my self esteem. When I was a child in Jamaica I remember how socially awkward I was, how I couldn’t assert my deafness anywhere but there were many levels of barriers on the island. I remember walking on a beach (without my hearing aids in) and a man ran up to me, vex “What the rassclout you ignore me for pussy bwoy!? You hear me nuh? Mi call yuh from over dere” and when I tried to explain I was deaf, it seemed to make him angrier, “you pussy bwoy!” and he’d walk away, leaving me wondering what he wanted in the first place... (kind of funny too, I admit).

But seeing the workers at Deaf Can coffee (mostly profoundly deaf Jamaicans) and students at the Caribbean Christian Centre For The Deaf, I’d seen deafness asserted, an understanding and nurturing community that is holding itself up. I don’t doubt there are challenges and flaws, but some of my old private traumas - that are also tangled up in my deaf and Jamaican identity - surfaced. Since the Kingston Book Festival I have begun a kind of healing or at least a chance to change the narrative that Jamaica is too harsh a place for someone like me to exist.

I spoke with Tashi Widmer (the school director) the next day and had the opportunity to ask what her students got out of our workshop, she explained, some of the students who usually struggle with language and communication were able to present strong performances of their poems and stories and this has shown her a new side to them which she can apply to their learning from now on.

Thanks to the British Council and the Kingston Book Festival. I got to see that poetry and storytelling offers people more than a short term confidence boost, it also offers the world another kind of diasporic community, a language that can be honed and when it can be shared we are made richer, whether we are speakers or listeners, it is important we are witnesses.
Going Global

For the 2017-2018 Financial Year, we had an accumulated reach of over 11,000,000.

- Radio: 288,000
- Face to Face: 30,000
- TV: 1,100,000
- Online: 1,694,000
- Print: 7,918,000