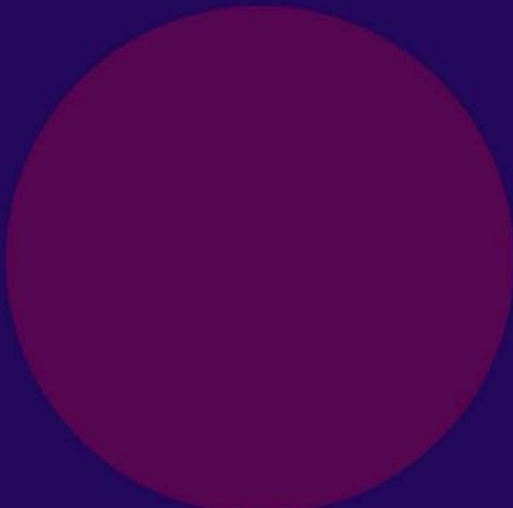
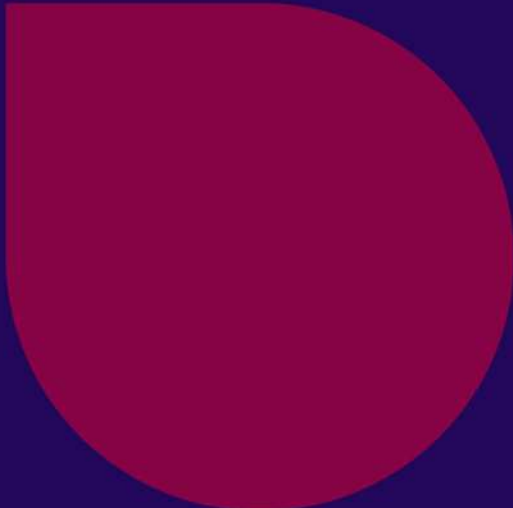
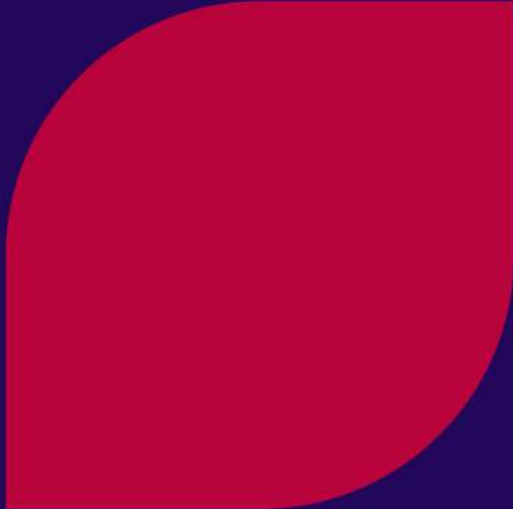
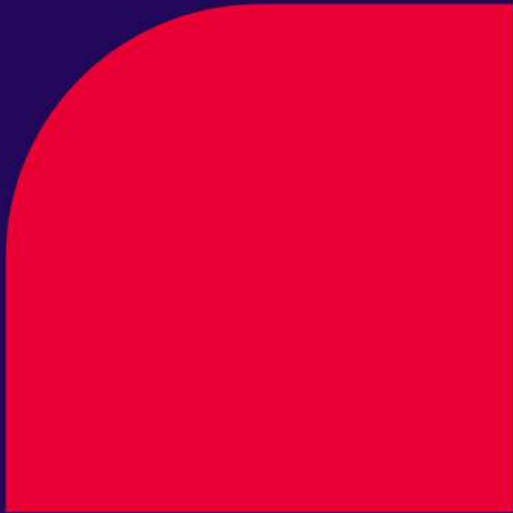




Annual Report

Arts and Culture Programmes 2021 - 22





About us

The British Council builds connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language.

We work in two ways – directly with individuals to transform their lives, and with governments and partners to make a bigger difference for the longer term, creating benefit for millions of people all over the world.

We help young people to gain the skills, confidence and connections they are looking for to realise their potential and to participate in strong and inclusive communities. We support them to learn English, to get a high-quality education and to gain internationally recognised qualifications. Our work in arts and culture stimulates creative expression and exchange and nurtures creative enterprise.

We connect the best of the UK with the world and the best of the world with the UK. These connections lead to an understanding of each other's strengths and of the challenges and values that we share. This builds trust between people in the UK and other nations which endures even when official relations may be strained.

We work on the ground in more than 100 countries. Last year we reached over 75 million people directly and 758 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications.

Our purpose

Although we receive a government grant in aid, the British Council is operationally independent from the UK government. All our work contributes to our purpose and [Royal Charter](#) aims:

'[to] advance, for the public benefit, any purpose which is exclusively charitable and which shall

(a) promote cultural relationships between the people of the United Kingdom and other countries; (b) develop a wider knowledge of the English language; and (c) encourage educational co-operation between the United Kingdom and other countries, support the advancement of United Kingdom education and education standards overseas, and otherwise promote education.'

Acknowledgement

British Council Lebanon is grateful for

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Impact Assessment

“Since the outbreak of popular protests on the 17th of October, 2019, Lebanon has witnessed a crescendo of catastrophic events. The demonstrations of 2019 raised alarms about the already deteriorating political, social and economic situation but were soon subsumed by the unprecedented financial collapse of the Lebanese state. This was further exacerbated by the global pandemic, which besides halting the world economy, had devastating effects on all aspects of life in Lebanon. The apocalyptic climax came with the massive explosion in the port of Beirut on the 4th of August of that same year leaving behind thousands of casualties and whole neighbourhoods destroyed.

Lebanon’s arts and culture community has been suffering under these compounded crises. In response, international cultural organisations and funding institutions had to reassess their modes of intervention. Against this backdrop, it is necessary to shift from emergency response toward a well-planned strategy for recovery. This naturally requires an assessment of previous projects to clearly understand emergent and future needs.”

To rethink the possible contributions and impacts that British Council Lebanon could have under these circumstances, we have contracted Dima Hamadeh & Adham Selim in 2021 to produce an assessment of projects between 2017 and 2020 to clearly understand emergent and future needs.

During this period, British Council Lebanon supported 18 project cycles that included an annual average of 21 performances and concerts, 18 training workshops, and 6 festivals, conferences, or seminars. In collaboration with over 165 institutions, we have reached over 7,000 audience members annually. The outcomes of this impact evaluation offered a basis for understanding our attitude, modes of engagement and agility in response to the needs of the arts and culture

scene in Lebanon vis-a-vis creating opportunities, building connections and inspiring trust. The study offers insight into three main themes – cultural exchange, responding to local and global challenges, and creative economy, drawing recommendations for enhancing our working culture and building internal capacities and skills geared towards developing informed and long-lasting strategic partnerships with the cultural sector in Lebanon.

The report draws the following recommendations:

- Consolidate a consistent message about the British Council’s identity, message and scope of intervention on the global, regional and local levels while maintaining a productive balance between the global mandates and the local context.
- Maintain clear portfolio ownership in order to minimise project management overlaps among global, regional and local offices, and thereby avoid data deficits in projects that are planned and implemented on different levels.
- Develop a digital infrastructure for data sourcing, management and documentation that facilitates access to evidential material required for monitoring and assessment.
- Develop an integrated action plan that gradually replaces the current fragmented portfolio with coherent arts and culture programming.
- Define a framework for the transition from financial donorship towards building strategic partnerships as a mode of engagement and support
- Incorporate impact assessment at the planning level to avoid searching for evidential material in retrospect.
- Focus on designing tools for implementation and reporting that are specific to the arts and culture programme in the given context and within the designated scope of work
- Formulate a proactive communication strategy aimed to promote the identity and message of the British Council’s Arts and Culture programme
- Build internal capacities and skills geared towards developing informed and long-lasting strategic partnerships with the cultural sector in Lebanon

While the crises and pandemic have significantly impacted the beneficiaries we serve, the partners we collaborate with, and our organisational functioning both globally and locally, British Council Lebanon has wholeheartedly adopted the recommendations of the impact assessment; we have made major alterations in our course of actions and strategies, and continue to better the ways in which we achieve our goals in the creative and cultural sector.

On Partnership, Listening, Reflecting and Responding Together

A message from Marc Mouarkech,
Arts and Culture Programmes Manager - British Council Lebanon

The world is changing quickly. As technology becomes more accessible, more powerful, and more sophisticated, the pandemic's effect on our world has been nothing less than seismic. The pace of change is only going to quicken as time goes on. And the change, in our case, is starting from within. While British Council global goes through a major restructuring enforced by the new realities, British Council Lebanon has also been adapting to its own context, where the situation is exacerbated due to the major political and economic crash.

Our Global strategy for the Arts has been set and it lies on three pillar directions: Creative Economy, Cultural Exchange and Global Matters. But as it is often said Culture eats strategy for breakfast. Emphasizing on the creation of a true culture is how we see ourselves moving forward. A culture that reflects openness, readiness and flexibility, a culture that conveys a sense of togetherness and trust, one that is nurtured by behaviours and attitudes that bring people closer and encourages collaboration. One of the most crucial aspect of the culture we're building is the role that collaboration and partnerships play in it. Today, the world is a much more connected place than it was even just a decade ago. And with that connectivity comes a new realm of possibilities and opportunities.

To work as a true partner is to listen, to reflect and to respond together. Taking into consideration the local context and its challenges and needs, be aware of new opportunities and make sure to open doors, forge relationships, build bridges, envision the future, and instil true impact.

But while collaborations bring new opportunities, they also introduce new challenges. Stakeholders' needs and priorities may differ from each other, disagreement on actions can complicate the process of finding common ground. In addition,

there may be diverging perceptions regarding what constitutes good practices in the field, thus hindering successful collaboration. Other issues include unclear responsibilities, conflicting agendas among partners and competition for limited resources. But these challenges are surmountable; understanding that collaboration is a two-way street, not just in terms of providing content, but also in terms of listening and engaging in an open exchange of data, ideas, expertise, and resources can lead to new insights. It is a very effective form to build awareness and bring attention to important causes. And it is a powerful tool for positive change.

The past year has been one filled with hardships but also many successes. Our will to anchor the culture of collaboration and act as a true partner allowed us to develop engage in more than 13 projects with 28 partners (90% newly developed partnerships) and to reach 560 direct beneficiaries and 22000 indirect ones thus enlarging our community.

In the next pages, we take you through our journey:

Our year started with an Impact Evaluation of previous work we've done and a Build Back Better initiative, both aiming to understand where we stand, where we excelled and where we failed but also what are the true needs of the arts and culture scene, who are its main actors and how can we all work together.

In the next pages, you will also discover our locally initiated projects.

CATAPULT; a talent and professional development program working hand in hand with local and UK partners in 4 creative sectors: Dance and performing arts, Visual arts, Music and Gaming. Situating Heritage; a set of activities leading to a seminar with the aim of mapping the threats, opportunities and future projections of cultural heritage while engaging with public authorities, experts, students and the larger public.

The regionally supported initiatives: Mudawanat I & II aiming to build a living archive of podcasts that document the contemporary cultural realm, and DIGITAL MAPS conducting social media mapping to understand how issues of identity, social cohesion and inclusion manifest on and are shaped by social media.

And our different grant schemes: The Digital Collaboration Fund encouraging the development of projects between local and UK entities, the MASARAT grants supporting the production of regional art projects and the small round of Cultural Protection Fund reinforcing its commitment to preserve the cultural heritage in endangered countries.

Build Back Better (BBB)

In March 2021, British Council Lebanon engaged in a series of round table discussions on how we can Build Back Better. Despite the overlap of numerous crises in Lebanon, there have been ambitious attempts to emphasize the role of art and culture in recovery and reconstruction mechanisms. In a report format, the Build Back Better (BBB) project offers purposeful ideas to aid artistic practitioners in Lebanon to create new opportunities to present their work and to find new spaces for positive cooperation between them and relevant local and international stakeholders. The research project presents the constructive perspective of 25 key figures through observations of 4 themes: Cultural Professionals; Role of Academia; Theatre, Cinema, and Performing Arts; and Creative Economy, suggesting promising initiatives that provide insight into new creative frameworks for the situation. The findings were translated into a 4-minute video

gathering cultural professionals to tackle the potential impact of arts and culture, the vision of Cultural Protection Players and Academics to overcome such difficult periods, the positioning of theatre, cinema, and performing arts, and the role of the Creative Economy. In brief, the report focused on the impact of crises on the arts and culture sectors, along with their role in the recovery process, challenged the current discourse about art and social activism as “resistance,” identified push and pull factors, and made recommendations categorized in 4 parts. Following the dissemination of the research, 30 practitioners from the local and international spheres took part in a facilitated discussion about the priorities of the sector in today’s rapidly changing context, and think of how we can together rebuild stronger, safer and more disaster-resilient systems in arts and culture.



Photograph
From the live session at Mina Image Centre

BUILD BACK BETTER



Read
the report

CATAPULT is a pilot initiative launched by British Council Lebanon's Arts and Culture department. It is thought of as a talent and professional development programme in collaboration with pre-existing hubs in four different creative sectors: Dance and Performing Arts, Music, Games, and Visual Arts.

The programme is about recognizing the potential in each of the sectors and developing with local partners, programmes that respond to the needs and ambitions of artists, and creative and cultural practitioners. British Council's involvement in each sector takes different forms but has one primary objective: to support creative talents from Lebanon while building strong connections with the UK, whilst focusing on creative expression, exchange, and enterprise. CATAPULT is about upskilling, growth and thriving.

CATAPULT is designed and implemented in close consultation with our local partners.

CATAPULT.digital

Partner: [Lebanese Game Developers](#).

CATAPULT.visual arts

Partner: [Artlab Gallery](#).

CATAPULT.sonic

Partner: [STATION](#).

CATAPULT.body

Partner: [Yaraqa](#).

CATAPULT.digital

Our Work in the Gaming Sector

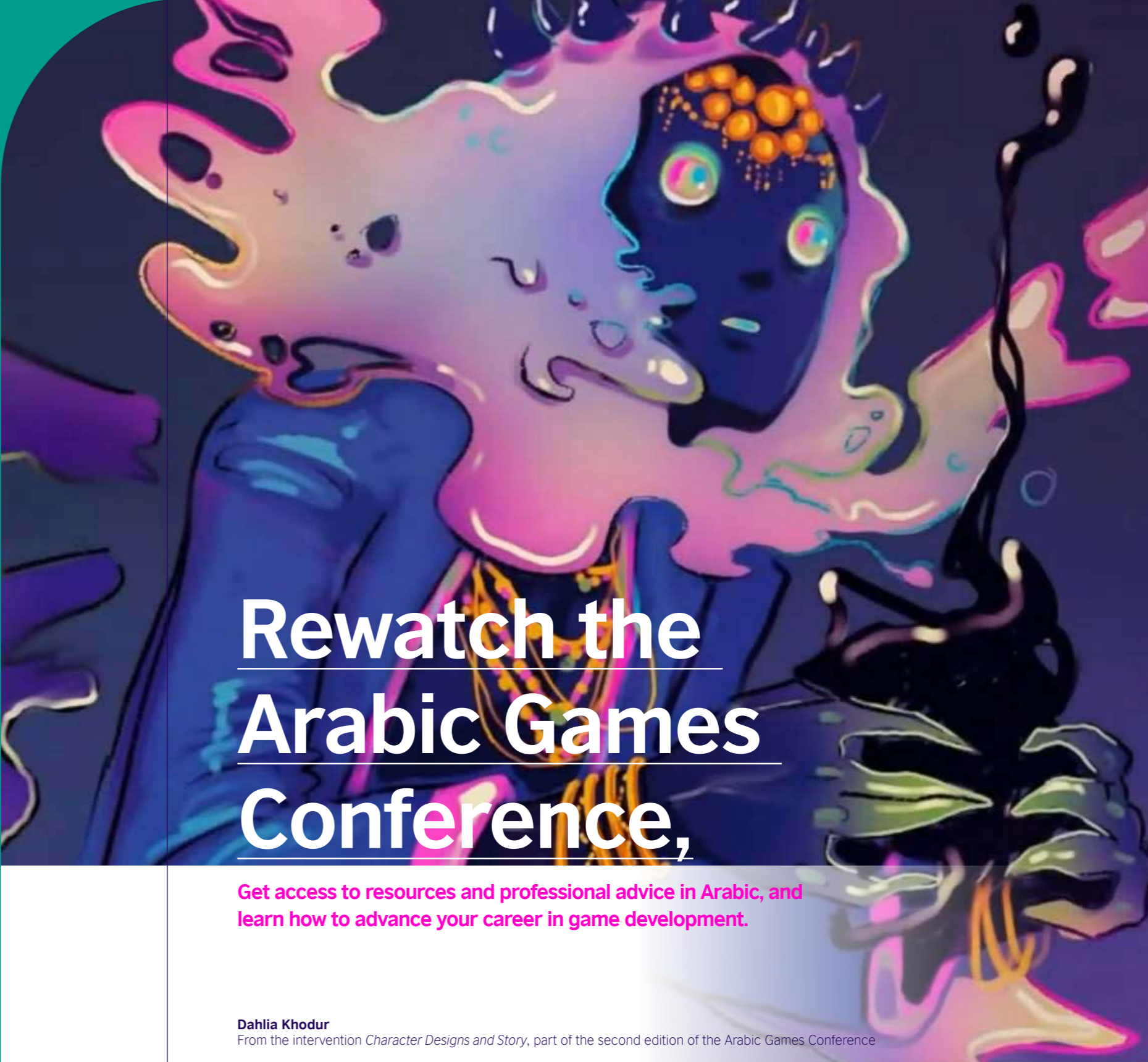
Since 2017, the Lebanese Game Developers (LGD) community initiative has steadily grown into a hub of **370** actively participating games and interactive experiences developers. Whilst lacking in structure, LGD has instigated momentum for the local gaming sector on a regional level in its initiation of programmes that attempt to compensate for the shortage of institutional contribution to a growing industry's advancement. Our support of LGD became fruitful at an opportune time when, due to the pandemic, virtual interconnectedness is common practice, and building networks both nationally and internationally is less obstructed than ever.

Our alliance with LGD manifested into generating a support system for the organisation; we facilitated the establishment of the Arabic Games Conference (AGC) as a legal entity to enable it to raise funds and grow. On the public front, CATAPULT.digital was launched with the second edition of the conference, a celebration of games and interactive experiences designed by Arab creators in the Arab world. It brought together **28** leading industry experts - half of whom are women - from **13** Arab game development communities in a series of **4** technical talks, **3** documentary-style videos, **1** panel, and a showcase of **35** regional games. The programme facilitated access to educational resources, opportunities, and professional advice, including over **60** individual portfolio review and mentorship sessions. The proceedings generated **1.6K** streams on YouTube, **1.4K** participants on Twitter, Facebook, Twitch and LinkedIn, and witnessed the interaction of **500** participants on Discord throughout the **6**-hour event.

Following the conference's success, we organised an open call to enable a delegation of **23** community members to attend the primary programming of London Games Festival (LGF), the UK's biggest spotlight for video games and the interactive entertainment industry. In April, the delegation has highlighted the network's achievements and showcased locally-developed games in an array of networking events. **5** game development studios have had the chance to take part in exclusive investor pitches for up to **£300,000** in capital, and the opportunity to forge strong partnerships and meaningful connections.



Lee Hammoud. *Psychoverse City*
Demo submitted to the London Games Festival open call.



Rewatch the Arabic Games Conference,

Get access to resources and professional advice in Arabic, and learn how to advance your career in game development.

Dahlia Khodur
From the intervention *Character Designs and Story*, part of the second edition of the Arabic Games Conference



my husband got me
baking paper on his
last trip to Paris,
and you ask me to
do a self Portrait

Elsie Haddad. *Untitled*, 2021.
Inkjet on luster paper mounted on wood, 33 x 47cm.

CATAPULT.visual'arts

Our Work in the Visual Arts Sector

The past two years have witnessed the disturbance of work of numerous institutions that once recognised the potential of emerging talent, leaving the inquisitive and engaged works of a new scene of artists unsheltered. Aiming at equipping emerging visual artists with the necessary capacity to move forward with their careers and ensure sustainability, we have partnered with Artlab on a yearlong programme of 3-week solo exhibitions to support the artists in overcoming the existing barriers to accessing opportunities.

While we've received over 70 promising applications to the launching open call, an esteemed jury of 5 practitioners and professionals have selected a round-up of 10 artists and collectives to hold their first solo exhibition at Artlab and benefit from USD 700 in honorarium, production fees, and support for effective communication. CATAPULT.visual'arts engages 23 emerging practitioners to celebrate the plurality of artistic expression and introduce the Lebanese

art scene to emerging vibrant and raw talent. The programme responds to the needs and ambitions of the artists, aligned with their practices, career positions, and long-term goals, offering planning, business support, networking events and critique of their work, all in relation to the current context of Lebanon and the vital opportunity of exchange with the UK. As a prequel to the success of the solo exhibitions, we have designed a 5-day talent and professional development workshop to unpack the process behind organising

“ In light of my first solo exhibition, [...] I have acquired a new skillset for handling galleries and institutions. ”

Ahmad Ghaddar
on the outcomes of the CATAPULT.visual'arts workshop

a solo gallery exhibition and equip the artists with an extensive practical skillset pertinent to today's creative industry. We initiated our preparations by setting up an inclusive and participatory framework; through 2 exchange sessions with the participants, we gauged their interests in a range of themes relevant to the contemporary discourses of the Visual Arts sector. Their input manifested in a series of 20 talks, 4 guided gallery tours, 5 workshops, and 1 portfolio review with 3 curators, where 28 cultural practitioners shared their experiences and insights and discussed topics including the art production ecosystem, institutional



Laura Menassa. *Self Portrait, February 2022, 2022.*
Inkjet print on enhanced cotton paper, 30 x 45cm



Photograph
From the exhibition Shames Safieddine: *Red Chairs* at Artlab Gallery



Photograph
Gosha Beshlyan's presentation during the workshop *Communication for the Arts*, facilitated by Nadine Khalil



Photograph
From the exhibition *Elias Nafaa: Impulsions* at Artlab Gallery

and non-institutional practices, the history of the Lebanese Arts scene, programming and artist residencies, creative writing and story-telling, copyright and legal status of artistic practitioners, and cross-cultural arts festivals in the UK.

The artists were presented with numerous opportunities including the 4 week CATAPULT.visual'arts Residency in partnership with Hospitalfield and Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop. In August, 2 selected applicants to the follow-on open call will have the chance to explore their research interests in Scotland, facilitated both critically and practically, partake in studio visits and activities that involve sharing of practice, attend exhibitions and events across the UK including the Edinburgh International Festival, access the facilities and guidance that both institutions offer.

“ I am excited to explore how my work can be shaped by new experiences, new surroundings and in relation to the Scottish landscape. ”

Elias Nafaa on his selection for the CATAPULT.visual'arts Residency in partnership with Hospitalfield and Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop

CATAPULT.sonic

Our Work in the Music Sector

To strengthen and promote the independent live music sector in Lebanon, we have partnered with Station on CATAPULT.sonic for the planning, content production, design and rollout of Shuruq. This artistic and professional development programme identifies, presents, and promotes the next generation of regional talent. While recognising the needs and potential of the music sector in Lebanon, CATAPULT.sonic aims to provide capacity building, content creation and international visibility for artists while instigating collaborative exchange with the UK. Equivalently, Shuruq is designed in response to the sector's untapped potential, with components addressing the identified needs: a capacity and community building music incubator for professionals, content and music channels for artists, programming for the public and export promotion activities to reach global audiences.

Photograph
Behind the scenes of Shuruq Sessions - Beirut Edition



“ Station and Music Ally’s Shuruq Digital Music Marketing Training provided some very insightful tips on how to navigate the tricky waters of the modern music industry. The bulk of information, that is usually overwhelming, was broken down into concise actionable steps that any independent artist can take to start boosting their career.”

Jean-Luc Maragel,
on the outcomes of the Digital Music Marketing training



discover swana music

SHURUQ
شورق

shuruqmusic.com

Shuruq's first activity in partnership with UK-based Music Ally offered training in Digital Music Marketing for a selection of 20 musicians and 10 music producers from Lebanon and its diaspora over 4 weeks. The training invited 4 industry experts to contribute to 4 live webinars and allowed access to 20 on-demand video modules on a dedicated learning hub. In addition, it facilitated access to 2 week direct mentorships for 3 artists, 2 of whom have successfully launched their music – one receiving a grant and bookings, and another launching with a 5-date tour.

Starting July 2022, 24 live performance music videos and audio tracks will be released on a dedicated YouTube channel and leading global music platforms in a bi-monthly cycle as part of Shuruq Sessions – Beirut Edition. The 12 bands have each had 2 songs recorded, mixed and mastered, with the involvement of the 34 musicians, most of whom are based in Beirut. Our support has enabled the building of a marketing and creative strategy, video post-production, brand identity and release assets. In the upcoming phase of the programme, CATAPULT will allow the post-

production, pre-release and launch of music content available to the public. So far, more than 130 people have been involved in the preparations for the successful roll-out of the Shuruq Sessions.

We have also coordinated Station's participation in this year's edition of the Sonica Festival in Glasgow in March 2022. The trip was a successful opportunity to discover UK-based artists through standout live performances, installations and workshops. It extended into a visit to London to create links with the contemporary music sector in the UK that could lead to creative collaborations, commissions, and partnership projects. The stay secured the first participation of a Shuruq musician in The Great Escape, presented opportunities to expand Shuruq's reach, reflected on the interest in music from the region, and offered a multitude of prospects for inviting sonic artists from Lebanon to the various projects or residencies in the UK and likewise seeking exhibitions, residencies or workshop activities by UK-based artists at Station in Lebanon.

Webinar 02, 'the Artist Entrepreneur' from the Digital Music Marketing training by Music Ally



Photograph Behind the scenes of Shuruq Sessions - Beirut Edition

CATAPULT.body

Our Work in the Performing Arts Sector

Between the magnitude of the crises we are enduring and the inherited practices and infrastructures of short-term thinking, it is crucial that we (re)investigate what the sustainability of dance could look like today, tomorrow, and in the future. In partnership with Yaraqa, CATAPULT.body reinforces the dance and performing arts sector through a pilot programme of 3 interlaced components that enable professionals to identify and access opportunities for support, exchange and growth, engaging in conversations around contemporary themes and enhancing the existing modes of entrepreneurship- and capacity-building activities throughout.

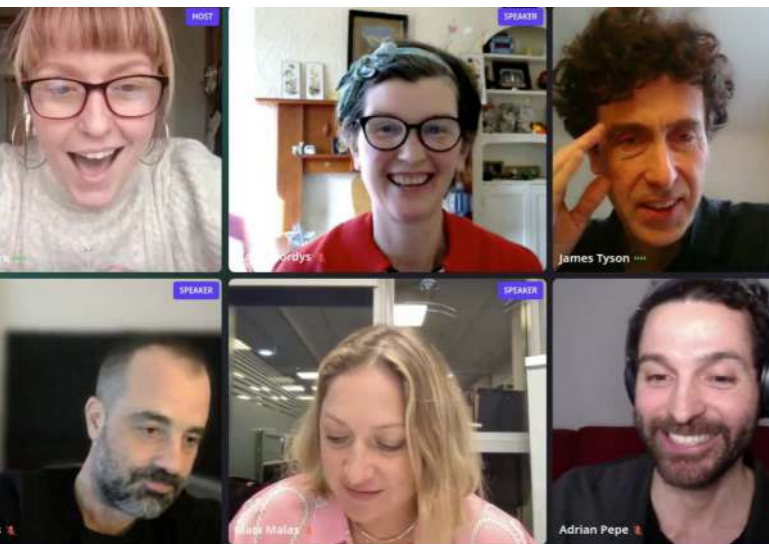
The pilot was launched with a 32-question study that underlined 3 strands of challenges – financial sustainability, relevance, and weakened ecosystem, in which 88 practitioners clarified their backgrounds, situated themselves within the ecosystem, and registered interests in the topics they wished to further explore. The study revealed the need for long-term development – from the desire to open up to new collaboration opportunities, connect with experts across new industries and sectors, develop cross-border relations, and experience new frameworks for creative thinking – and allowed for the in-depth analysis of 52 responses that informed the design of the subsequent steps.

Translated into a micro-forum, the theme of sustainability was intended to be discussed through a collective discourse, where representation from other industries such as design, health and technology would extend the dance and movement industry as a source of cross-industry collaboration and expand the utilisation of the practice into other fields. The 2-day hybrid format Micro-forum brought together 13 speakers in 6 segments to engage 72 participants in a thought-provoking programme, full of multifaceted debates and interactive sessions that placed the sector at the centre of each round-table discussion,

“ The micro-forum was an opportunity for me to revive my lifelong love for dance and reconnect with my roots following a short pandemic-induced hiatus. I met amazing new people and got to hear versatile perspectives on dance, creativity and shaping the future. ”

Christina Fakhry
on the impact of the Micro-forum

debate, working session, and performance. Adapted to the outcomes of the study, the programme communicated on 3 focus sub-themes: ‘business development’ – aimed at aiding professionals in recognising the ecosystems they need and developing relationships and partnerships that connect them with stakeholders regionally and globally, ‘value creation’ – to help professionals discover new product ideas and cross-industry intersections that lead to opportunities and allow for expanding their professional network of collaborators across the value chain, and ‘positioning’ to help professionals tap into new markets and build relations. While the micro-forum allowed for a clearer understanding of the current context and validated the outcomes of the study, it provisioned a strategy for building on the pilot.



Panel discussion 'Dance and...' on cross-industry collaborations



Photograph
Emma Jayne Park introducing the microforum's programme

Proposed through the International Collaboration Grants as a partnership with Dance Base, Precipitate is a groundbreaking hybrid artistic exchange Lab that will connect dance artists from Scotland and Lebanon in 2022. The collaboration will recruit 8 artists for bespoke digital creative development Lab, culminating in an in-person residency. The Lab's unique approach will engage 4 artists from each country in a series of online and in-person connections, focused on facilitating dialogue, inspiring professional development and fuelling creative collaboration. In consultation with the artists, the Lab will be framed around development goals, interests and creative ambitions, and will enable the partners to identify artistic partnerships between the Scottish and Lebanese artists, and select a creative mentor to guide each collaboration in a 4-week online programme of interactive workshops and artistic exchanges, providing space for the artists to engage with the challenges facing the sector, and

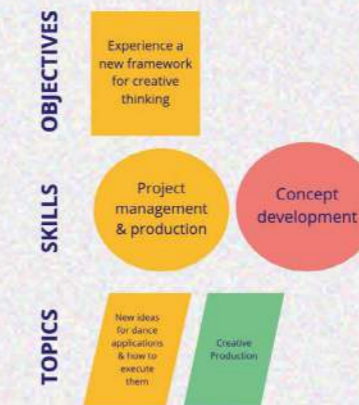
collaborate artistically. The artists will attend an in-person 2-week residency at Dance Base, providing a concentrated space for them to synthesise their conversations, and will participate in a complimentary programme focussing on infrastructure building, developing sector knowledge and sustainability. This will include introductions to leading curators in Scotland, attendance at events, and moments of rest and recovery.

A step further to secure sustainability in the dance and movement sector, the programme develops career-enhancing collaborations between innovative dance artists, supports them to develop new skills and creative approaches, provides access to new markets, and facilitates adaptability and resilience forges while forging new, long-lasting relationships between Lebanon and the UK.



Photograph
Participants discussion during the Micro-forum

module 1 /VALUE CREATION
conceptualization & productization



module 3 /OUTREACH
discourse & dissemination



module 2 /PARTNERSHIPS
ecosystems & sales

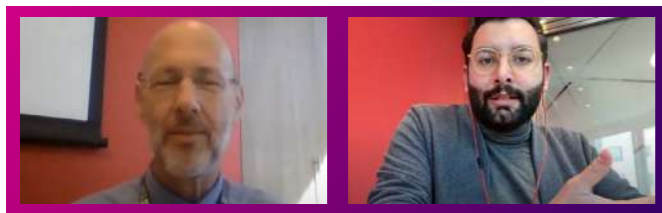


CATAPULT.body
the micro-forum . . .
for dance & movement

CATAPULT Podcast

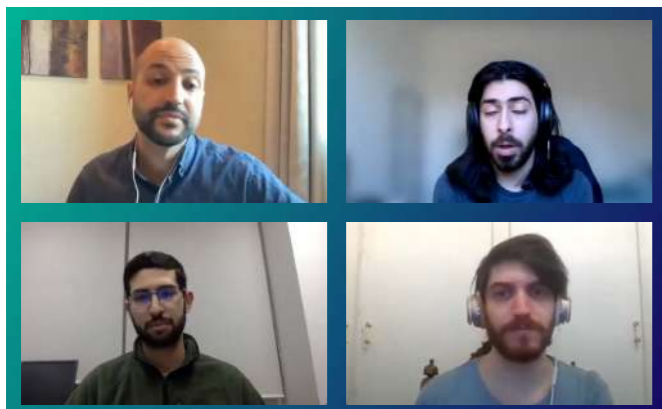
The creative sector in conversation

The CATAPULT Podcast builds on Afikra's mission to convert passive interest in the Arab world to active intellectual curiosity. The podcast series has hosted **15** cultural practitioners from Lebanon and the UK through **6** conversations moderated by Mikey Muhanna, introducing the programme to a wider audience and highlighting the driving factors for our interventions in the creative and cultural sector.



The introductory session with David Knox, Country Director at British Council Lebanon and Marc Mouarkech, Arts and Culture Programmes Manager oscillates between global matters and local implementation, articulating the pressing need to support the creative industries, and our unique position to advance the sustainability of the sector, particularly through CATAPULT.

In the second episode, Tarek Mourad of Artlab and Beirut Printmaking Studio, Ghassan Salameh, Design Curator and Cultural Consultant and Betty Ketchedjian, visual artist and a participant in the programme discussed the current state of the Arts scene and propose – each drawing from their practice – ways of counteracting the effects of the past two years moving forward. While reflecting on the role of galleries and arts institutions, and balancing personal and collective efforts, the conversation highlights the importance of programmes such as CATAPULT in recognising the potential of emerging talent and building resilient support systems. The episode concludes on a note from Cicely Farrer of Hospitalfield about the residency we have offered to 2 of the artists.



In the first episode, Joseph Azzam, Iyad El-Hout and Ashraf Abi-Said of Lebanese Games Developers (LGD) have discussed how cultivating a collaborative culture of peer-to-peer support in the games sector can have positive returns. We have also highlighted the community's achievements and shared how we have built on those to enable the LGD community to expand its network in the UK.



In the third episode, we discussed with Yaraqa's Romy Assouad and Jadd Tank the process of designing a pilot programme of multiple interlaced components that enables dance and movement professionals to identify and access opportunities for support, exchange and growth. While kicking off with a study to understand better the current stance of the sector, the results have helped shape a micro-forum tailored to the specific needs and ambitions of the network. Throughout the discussion, our guests have exchanged thoughts on the sustainability of the sector with Tony Mills and projected the value of an exchange with the UK in the form of a residency in partnership with DanceBase in Scotland.



In the fourth episode – and for now – the final, Nabil Cnaan, co-founder of STATION, and music producer and multi-instrumentalist Maya Aghniadis to talk about all things Music. They've shared insight on how Shuruq, a major component of CATAPULT.sonic, is designed in response to the sector's untapped potential. While examining the development of the local music scene and navigating the international one, the conversation highlighted the necessity for a capacity and community building incubator, content and music channels for artists and exporting efforts to reach global audiences. With Anthony Churchman of UK-based Music Ally, our guests discussed the intersection of music and technology and briefed us about the four-weeks training in Digital Music Marketing they delivered for 20 musicians and 10 music producers from Lebanon and its diaspora.





CULTURAL PROTECTION FUND

The Cultural Protection Fund is a fund that supports efforts to protect cultural heritage at risk. It aims to help to create sustainable opportunities for economic and social development through building capacity to foster, safeguard and promote cultural heritage.

In 2021, three projects from Lebanon received the follow-on grant:

Safeguarding and Rescuing Archaeological Assets (SARAA).

Grant Recipients: the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara (Turkey) and BILADI (Lebanon).

Training in Restoration Techniques for Traditional Houses in Beirut.

Grant Recipients: Arcenciel (Lebanon).

Cultural Corridors of Peace II.

Grant Recipients: InHerit (UK) and the American University of Beirut (Lebanon).

CULTURAL PROTECTION FUND

01 Safeguarding and Rescuing Archaeological Assets (SARAA)

Building on the success of the CPF-funded Safeguarding Archaeological Assets of Turkey (SARAT), the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara (BIAA) and BILADI have partnered to implement SARAA in an initiative that encompasses 4 strands. Firstly, 9 Lebanese academics were recruited onto a Committee of Experts to advise on the contextual adaptation of the 5-module SARAT training course and its materials and resources on the protection and conservation of cultural assets at risk. The adaption includes case studies on the National Museum of Beirut, Military and Civilian Collaboration, and Destruction and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage after the July War of 2006. Its course text, summaries, and presentations were translated into English and Arabic, and distributed as part of a 3-day Train the Trainers workshop where 8 trainers delivered the course to 29 participating Lebanese heritage professionals – including professors of Archaeology, Architecture and Law from 6 different universities

across Lebanon, senior officers from the Lebanese Armed Forces, representatives of the Directorate General of Antiquities, and representatives of Lebanese civil society. The participants will go on to train a cross-section of current and future professionals and volunteers.

The fund allowed for the creation and dissemination of a short film demonstrating the impact of the training, and highlighting best practices in an interview of 9 of the 5,497 graduates of the online SARAT certificate. Additionally, it supported the transnational exchange of knowledge, experiences and learning through a virtual workshop 'Comparing Notes: Cultural Protection Fund Projects in Lebanon and Turkey' that brought together 52 participants – including representatives from all CPF-funded projects in both countries.



Photograph
Dr. Rana Dubeissy introducing the disaster risk management cycle during the Training of Trainers workshop



“ The materials will be very useful for training the other soldiers in the regiment on how to protect cultural heritage. ”

Watch an overview,

of the proceedings of the Training the Trainers workshop.

Photograph
Participants during their visit to the National Museum

CULTURAL PROTECTION FUND

02 Training in Restoration Techniques for Traditional Houses in Beirut

As one of three recipients of the Cultural Protection Fund follow-on grant, Arcenciel, in partnership with the European Institute of Cooperation and Development (IECD), Beirut Heritage Initiative (BHI) and the Directorate General of Antiquities (DGA), has continued Training in Restoration Techniques for Traditional Houses. The partnership project culminates in a toolkit to support future heritage protection through hands-on training to local people on traditional craftsmanship and restoration works of 2 traditional houses that have suffered extensive damage as a result of conflict, post-conflict reconstruction and the Beirut port explosion.

Guided by Architects, heritage experts and 4 trained carpenters, 10 trainees have undergone practical and theoretical sessions to assess the condition of a wooden truss structure of a traditional building in the Bachoura area of Beirut, and have prepared and treated the required elements to reinstate it into its traditional form. While another traditional building in Mar Mikhael was being prepared, 12

apprentices have learned the basics and importance of lime plastering and 12 about carpentry, allowing them to acquire skills relevant to the treatment of walls and wooden elements of a traditional house, including dimensioning, polishing, assembling, and installation. The trainees also participated in the finalization of the products installed, and have learned how to paint the wood, install the glass, and apply the final touches.

While providing training to local people on traditional craftsmanship, the project was able to raise awareness of young people on the importance of using traditional materials and techniques, created the space to develop positive connections, and enabled the diversification of the participant's professional network allowing them to access employment opportunities. Within this project, research and documentation about traditional Lime plastering and traditional carpentry have been made available for future generation. In a holistic sense, it created a toolkit to support future heritage protection efforts.



Photograph
Trainee and carpenter assessing the condition of a wooden roof truss

“ I proved to myself and to society that as a woman I can do everything I want ”

Rana, trainee of the traditional lime plaster training



Photograph
Trainees during the traditional lime plastering training

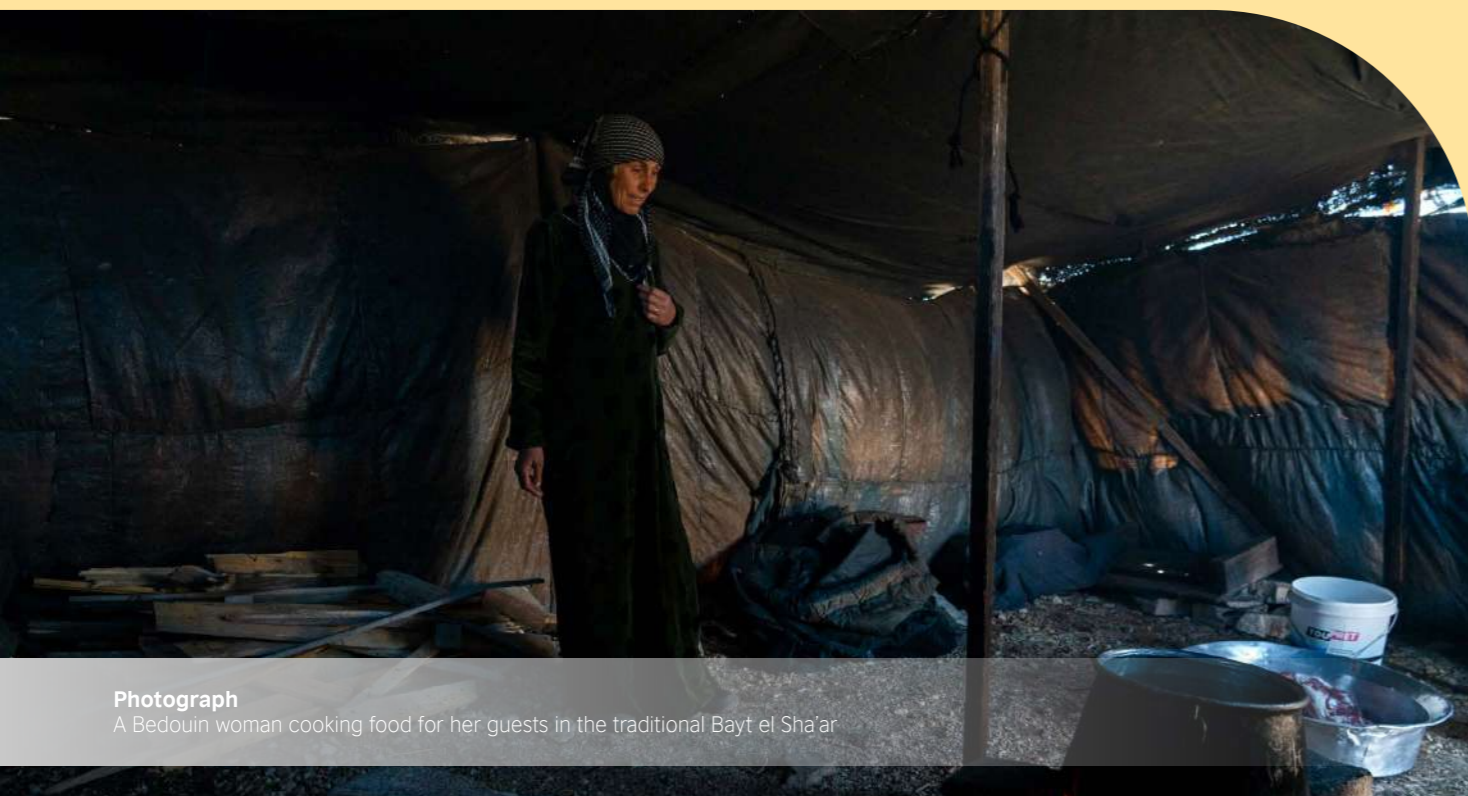
CULTURAL PROTECTION FUND

03 Cultural Corridors of Peace II

Cultural Corridors of Peace, a partnership between InHerit and the American University of Beirut (AUB), focuses on the preservation and promotion of the living memory and heritage of the Bedouin people in Lebanon and the Middle East. It sought to identify and set pathways for their cultural heritage to become a driver for positive change, improving their circumstances and achieving sustainable development. The project enabled international knowledge exchange through a stakeholder analysis that identified organisations and individuals who work with Bedouins in the region, inviting 2 to aid in gathering evidence regarding the status of intangible cultural heritage in the region, and allowed for organizing 2 e-meetings through which Bedouin communities in Lebanon agreed to collaborate as a network to ensure the safeguarding and promotion of their cultural heritage.

While disseminating knowledge through an Open Access Archive, 26 thematic videos and online exhibitions, the project supported 3 young Bedouins in developing skills in audio-visual documentation. More Bedouins have engaged through one-to-one interviews and workshops, discussing the challenges facing safeguarding and promotion as a result of economic and social injustice, food insecurity and lack of recognition within Lebanon and beyond.

In response, the UNESCO office in Lebanon and the Lebanese Ministry of Culture have invited the project representative to contribute to the drafting of their National Strategy for intangible cultural heritage while supporting the inscription process of Bedouin heritage in the Safeguarding List.



Photograph

A Bedouin woman cooking food for her guests in the traditional Bayt el Sha'ar

Explore the Archive,

An online resource containing photographs, videos, audio recordings, texts and other materials produced by the project.



Situating Heritage

Mapping Threats, Opportunities and Future Directions

Within a wider framework of fostering, safeguarding and promoting cultural heritage, Situating Heritage aimed at consolidating the efforts and resources of cultural heritage professionals in Lebanon. In that sense, to formulate a clear and responsive strategy, in partnership with 2 local NGOs – Biladi and Silat for culture, we have embarked on a situational analysis that maps and assesses, in accord with a cross-section of stakeholders, the needs and priorities of the sector, and attempts to reposition the Cultural Protection Fund as an opportunity to address the sector's challenges and pacify the threats to cultural heritage.

The compounded repercussions of alarming political, social and economic crises since 2019 dictated the shaping of Situating Heritage into a prequel for an assessment and response strategy that dissects the state of the sector within the current context, maps its threats, prioritizes its needs and defines the possible ways forward. In scope, the initiative proposed a series of 3 programmatic components that bridge the general public's notions of and concerns on cultural heritage with the extensive experience of practitioners to instigate contextualized responses, enlarge the pool of viewpoints and heighten the relevance of ownership of cultural heritage.



Photograph
Introductory presentation during the Students' Focus Group

As the first preparatory activity, Silat for culture conducted a focus group debate with 21 professionals from the different tangible and intangible sectors of Cultural Heritage to discuss and identify the sectors' weaknesses, needs and priorities. The debate functioned as a pool of ideas where the different perspectives and aspirations were put to discussion. The Cultural Heritage sectors were clustered in 3 overarching categories – Tangible-Immovable, Tangible-Movable and Intangible, and assisted in identifying the appropriate stakeholders, organizing the debate, and compiling the findings. For every above-mentioned cluster, the experts have drawn on their vast experience and know-how to define the sector's priorities and envision an actionable path that responds to the current needs, revealing common thematic and cross-thematic threats and weaknesses across 5 subjects, and highlighting the need for a wider vision and strategy moving forward.

In parallel, aiming to gather the wider public's understanding of cultural heritage, Biladi designed the first national survey on the subject and registered the perceptions of 400 individuals from the 8 Lebanese governorates and 100 university students from the



Photograph
Discussions during the Focus Group Debate



Photograph
Situating Heritage Seminar, Working Group 01: Historic buildings, Historic monuments & sites, and Historic urban landscapes

faculties of Engineering, Archaeology and History. The aim was to understand how citizens define its values and needs and recognize their aspirations for the future of the sector. The survey indicated that on one hand, the majority of the Lebanese population cannot accurately identify cultural heritage, yet showed they believe in the importance of protecting and preserving archaeological and heritage assets for their potential to contribute to the country's economy. The results also highlighted the dangers facing intangible heritage. As the third preparatory activity, **3** focus groups were conducted with 96 students enrolled in higher education institutions in Lebanon. Their active participation, as prospective professionals, enhanced their knowledge of the current challenges and opportunities in the cultural heritage sector. The students responded to a survey ahead of the focus group proceedings, allowing them to become acquainted with the **4** main themes that were explored – identification, protection, threat, and valorisation.

The seminar *Situating Heritage: Mapping Threats, Opportunities and Future Directions* presented the findings of the Focus Group Debate, the public survey and the Students' Focus Group, and opened

the discussion with the wider community of heritage experts in alignment with the project's efforts for an inclusive, public consultation policy. It aimed at initiating the debate between the different stakeholders and evolving into an initial consensus on the needs and priorities of the cultural heritage sector in Lebanon. For this purpose, **75** experts, professionals, and students were assigned to **7** working groups according to their fields of expertise and on the earlier identified cultural heritage clusters.

The findings of the programme were made public through a report that highlights the need to concentrate on safeguarding cultural heritage through sustainable partnerships and updated legal frameworks, the protection and support of local capacities and programmed academic and technical targeting of potential new actors. Wide and adequate dissemination of cultural heritage values through collaborative efforts between the sub-sectors could additionally consolidate accepted narratives within the national self-identification crisis, opening the door to a holistic approach that would eventually help professionals in their valorisation and community involvement efforts.



Photograph

During the Plenary Session presentations on the lessons learned from the Beirut blast experience in preserving the cultural heritage

SITUATING HERITAGE

Mapping Threats, Opportunities, and Future Directions

Download the Report

It offers a comprehensive view on the programme's components and their outcomes.



MASARAT GRANTS

The Masarat Grants programme seeks to respond to the needs of artists and cultural practitioners in Iraq, Jordan Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Yemen, providing financial support to enable continued production and project work in very difficult circumstances.

At a time of significant challenge for artists and the cultural sector globally, the British Council remains committed to supporting the development of diverse and creative expression and mutual cultural exchange between the UK and the rest of the world. It aims to strengthen artistic practice through supporting production, training and showcasing activities. Selected grantees are also given opportunities to build their professional networks and make new connections with the UK and the Arab world.

This grant programme is designed to support the professional development of emerging artists, creatives and cultural practitioners in the region. A total of 21 projects have received grants ranging from 4000 to 10,000 GBP to implement. In 2021, four projects from Lebanon received the grant:

Ethno presents: A Virtual Introduction to the Musical Heritage of Lebanon.

Grant Recipient: Jeunesses Musicales du Liban. [Grant: £ 9,965](#)

Barsees.

Grant Recipient: Studio Kunukku. [Grant: £ 8,695](#)

The Story of Nujoud.

Grant Recipient: Dima Nachawi. [Grant: £ 10,520](#)

We Must Clown.

Grant Recipient: Clown Me In. [Grant: £ 7,495](#)

MASARAT GRANTS



Photograph
Director Dr Hayaf Yassine giving directions during the shoot

MASARAT GRANTS

01 Ethno presents: A Virtual Introduction to the Musical Heritage of Lebanon

Seeking to introduce the beauty of Arabic music and Levantine culture to the world, A Virtual Introduction to the Musical Heritage of Lebanon employs a democratic peer-to-peer learning approach through virtual training and performances with local musicians who play traditional instruments.

Through an open call that invited local and international artists, the project began with an online training course in an introduction to folkloric melodies and elements of traditional dance. While covering theoretical and practical aspects, the training resulted in a demonstration of outcomes in the form of individual videos, where participants recorded their playing and chanting of simple Arabic songs and few steps of Dabkeh.

The project, led by the Jeunesses Musicales du Liban, in cooperation with Bayt El-Mūsīqā and the Delia Arts Foundation, recorded the harmonious collaboration of 40 musicians who played 8 songs together. Coinciding with World Music Day 2021, a sample of one Maqam was released in anticipation of the initiative's full launch which took the form of a virtual concert: A Century of Music in Greater Lebanon.



Photograph
Enchantment on the faces of the musicians when hearing Rafka Rizk's powerful voice



Watch the concert

A Century of Music in Greater Lebanon has a **second part**. You can also listen to the **8 songs** separately.

Photograph
Youssef Kanjo on the flute carrying his ancestors' culture

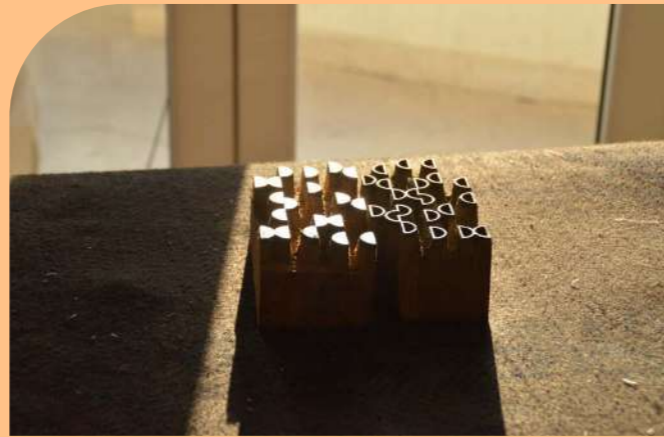
The project started with **3** days of online training on Levantine folk musical heritage to introduce **10** participants to playing folkloric melodies and elements of traditional dance. It culminated into the production and diffusion of **2** virtual concerts; the first, with the participation of **6** musicians. The second, under the title "A Century of Music in Greater Lebanon" saw the transmission of **6** Maqams by **40** local musicians, and an additional one from international musicians.

MASARAT GRANTS

02 Barsees

Studio Kunukku is a design studio telling stories of communities through lost and endangered crafts. With the support of British Council's Masarat Grants Scheme, the studio has launched Barsees, their first streetwear collection inspired by at-risk Syrian architectural feats and design motifs to recount the stories of home in exile. While the project mainly focused on livelihood opportunities for Syrian artisans and supporting a network of cross-cultural design collaborations, it aimed to revive the endangered craft of block-printing techniques, while undertaking visual research on elements of home and tradition, and their root in collective memory. Starting with research into one of the only known collections of Syrian block prints, some dating back over 400 years, the studio has designed a new collection of 10 carved wooden blocks blending new and old, and has applied the patterns to textiles to create a collection of 20 streetwear pieces including shirts, trousers, jackets, dresses, blouses and accessories.

The carved blocks are kept as an evolving archive and used for collaborations with local and international designers, in training workshops for refugees and vulnerable youth and showcased through exhibitions. The collection, launched in November 2021 and presented to shops both locally and internationally. The grant has also enabled the upscale of the studio's production space and the sourcing of tools needed to prototype and produce products in-house including a sewing machine, sewing tools, and cutting table which will be used for training purposes and allow for scaling the studio's production capacity.



Photograph
Hawwa Shirt from the Barsees Collection

Learn more about the process

From locally-sourced fabrics, to the technique of hand carving and printing

“ It is important for us to share this collection with a wider audience to tell stories from Syria and Lebanon not yet shared with the world. ”

Ward AlKhalaf, Creative Director - Studio Kunukku

MASARAT GRANTS

03 The Story of Nujoud

'The Story of Nujoud' is a multidisciplinary, creative response to a global humanitarian crisis that continues to repeat throughout human history and presents the experience of refugees and displaced people. The project – led by artist Dima Nashawi - utilised a mix of shadow theatre, puppetry and storytelling to produce an artistic performance catered to youth living in vulnerable and underserved communities across Lebanon.

The fictional tale is of a young girl called Nujoud who greets the moon from her window every night. One night, when the moon ceases to shine and

floods the country with its tears, Nujoud decides to go on a quest to save the city from the flood and return the moon its light. The story explores the experiences of those fleeing their countries to protect themselves and their families from conflicts or authoritarian and corrupt regimes. Aiming to revive the traditional arts of shadow theatre and puppetry, the 25 minutes-long performance toured Lebanon for ten days in a vivid display of coloured light and an ensemble of familiar music.



Photograph

In a short video, Dima Nachawi discusses the inception of the Story of Nujoud, and the aspects of story-telling and puppetry.



Photograph
Dima Nachawi during the performance

“The story of Nujoud opens a discussion around the topic of immigration and fleeing from politically distressed countries and around the question of a possible return to help rebuild a better future for the next generations.”

Over the course of 10 days, the Story of Nujoud was shown 15 times at institutions that serve marginalised communities in 5 regions across Lebanon. 683 spectators - including 438 children and 170 community members attended the shows.

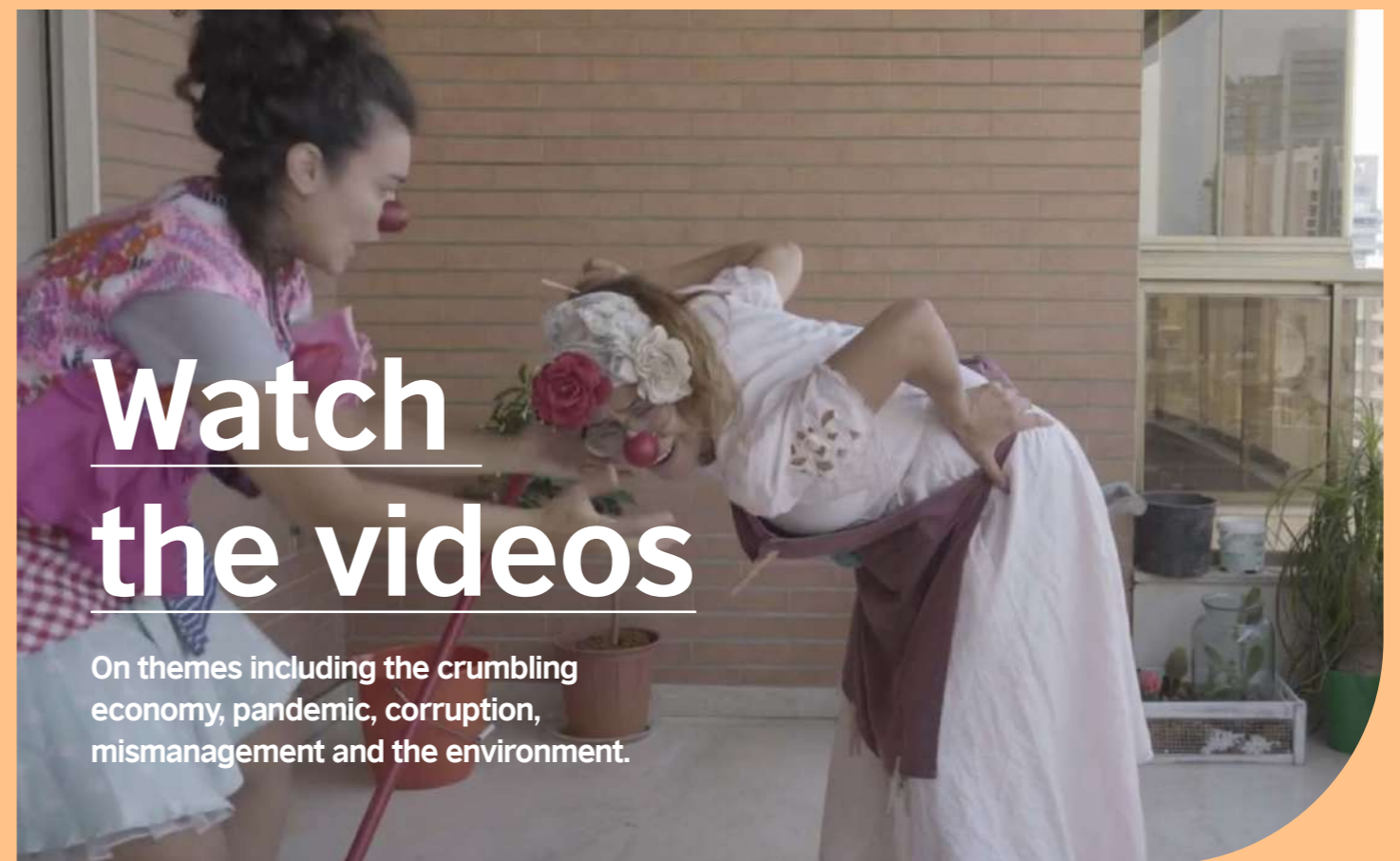
MASARAT GRANTS

04 We Must Clown

We Must Clown has brought together an assemblage of professional and non-professional clowns living in Lebanon, to address the societal and political challenges they are facing. Through humorous filmed creations, Clown Me In has transfigured 1 report commissioned to a political analyst and peace researcher into 6 clips that engaged an online audience of over 373K viewers and were shared over 350 times. The themes that tackle the crumbling economy, pandemic, corruption, mismanagement and environment, initiate a constructive discussion and promote communal solidarity.

In a time when alternative artistic careers in the performing arts sector are in distress, the project has empowered 18 participants to have a voice, engage into a deep reflection on their situation and develop their professional artistic practices. It has also allowed non-professional clowns to exercise the preparation they received from 3 Clown Me In trainers.

“ This is a great opportunity for us as a group to meet, work and laugh together, sustain our mental well-being and tackle important issues. ”



Watch the videos

On themes including the crumbling economy, pandemic, corruption, mismanagement and the environment.



DIGITAL COLLABORATION FUND

The Digital Collaboration Fund aims to support international artistic collaboration in light of increasing restrictions on global travel due to Covid-19, and rising concerns about the sustainability of face-to-face collaborations. Through a series of grants, we are supporting organisations to devise new virtual ways of working internationally, in turn creating a climate-friendly approach to international collaboration and artistic exchange.

In 2021, two projects from Lebanon received the grant:

Masahat.

Collaborators: Beirut DC (Lebanon) and DOC Society (UK).

Rise of the Bloods.

Collaborators: the American University of Beirut (Lebanon) and Commonword (UK).

DIGITAL COLLABORATION FUND

01 Masahat

Aiming to develop a radical pan-Arab network of non-commercial screening spaces, Beirut DC and DOC Society have launched Masahat – a transliteration of the Arabic word meaning ‘spaces’, a virtual solution to the near-complete halt of traditional distribution in the film industry. Its goal is to connect community-led physical spaces with independent filmmakers, producers and impact producers, to disseminate socially and environmentally engaged films that instigate critical conversations.

While identifying **103** potential screening spaces, **37** of which were willing to host screenings and **21** fully equipped to, Masahat renders accessible an online list of spaces with a special focus on rural and historically neglected areas along with a distribution solution adapted to limited broadbands to ensure the secure and timely delivery of the films. It has complemented existing non-commercial screening spaces with micro-grants to enable the technical rehabilitation and acquisition of screening material. The pilot included **24** screenings in **6** independent spaces spread across the country and reaching

around **950** viewers who have little to no access to independent cinema. In preparation, the programme enabled the training of **6** space managers through **4** facilitated sessions with expert mentors, covering programming, outreach, impact, and technical considerations.

In addition, Masahat has compiled an exhaustive listing of digital solutions to making the process of getting films to spaces frictionless, taking into account the numerous difficulties that spaces face with broadband. These digital solutions were uncovered through research in **7** countries that have most potential to host Masahat in the future, testing **3** of the most relevant ones in the pilot.

Masahat has the potential to offer a much needed solution during the pandemic and post-COVID era; a non-competitive complement to the budding Arab art-house cinema movement, as well as a new tool for impact distribution for the Arab filmmaking community, which will offer Arab citizens safe spaces to access and engage with the stories of their past, present and future.



Photograph
Film screening during the pilot launch of Masahat

DALEEL.FILM

Made by Beirut DC

دليل حلول بيئية في الإنتاج
Green solutions for production

دليل التحالف للتأثير
Alliance Guide to impact

دليل تمويل الأفلام
Funding Guide

DIGITAL COLLABORATION FUND

02 Rise of the Bloods

Rise of the Bloods links cross-cultural literary and digital artists in a dystopian UK set against the backdrop of civil war, with similar artists from Lebanon, who live in a factionally dysfunctional world, one that exists in the shadow of real wars and their fall out. The project explores the conflicts and contradictions of the fictional, dystopian, civil-war world that their triptych, Rise of The Bloods – 3 gameifiable novels – is set in and the characters who inhabit it. The partnership between Commonword and the American University of Beirut places at its core the engagement of 5 game developers and artists in Lebanon with 5 from the UK who have developed new ways of collaborative digital working, producing 6 demonstrative, 5 minutes long, audio-visual stories with UK-based Visioning Lab.

The project also resulted in the development of a high-quality demo of a game representing the Complex Dystopia – a war-ravaged world ruled by bigoted racists, hiding under the guise of religion, sharing insights through 2 streamed video sessions that cover how stories are transformed into video games, and how literary characters are adapted accordingly, paying particular attention to avoiding racist, sexist or other negative stereotypes in the visual representation of characters.

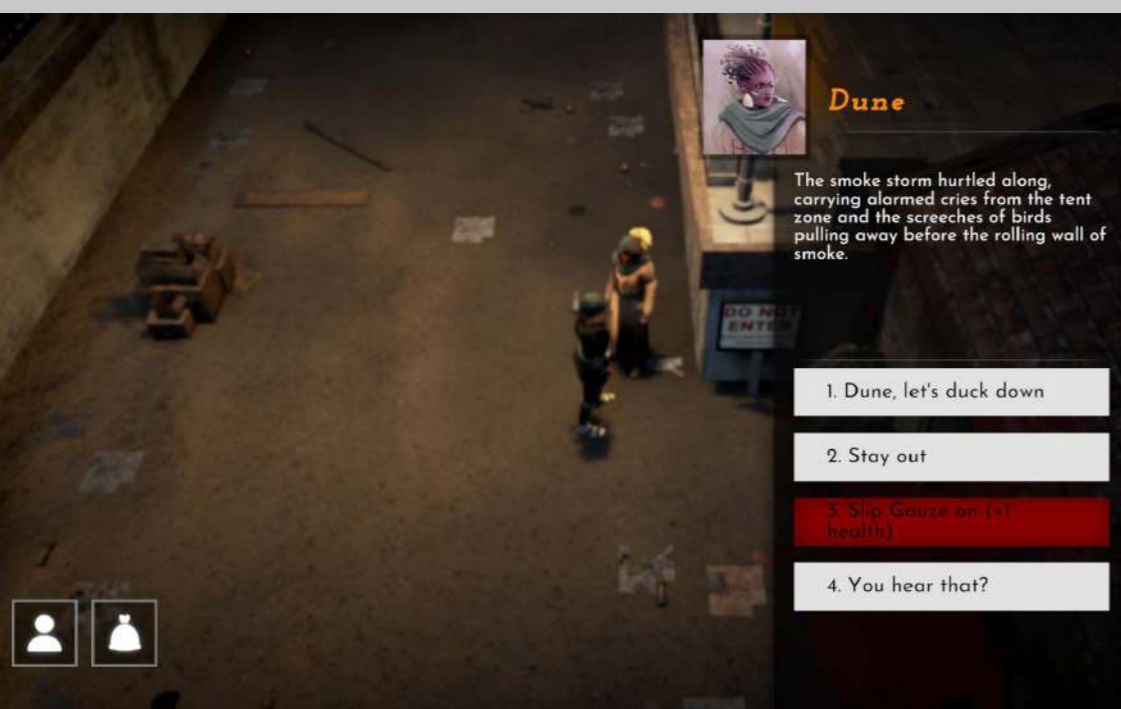
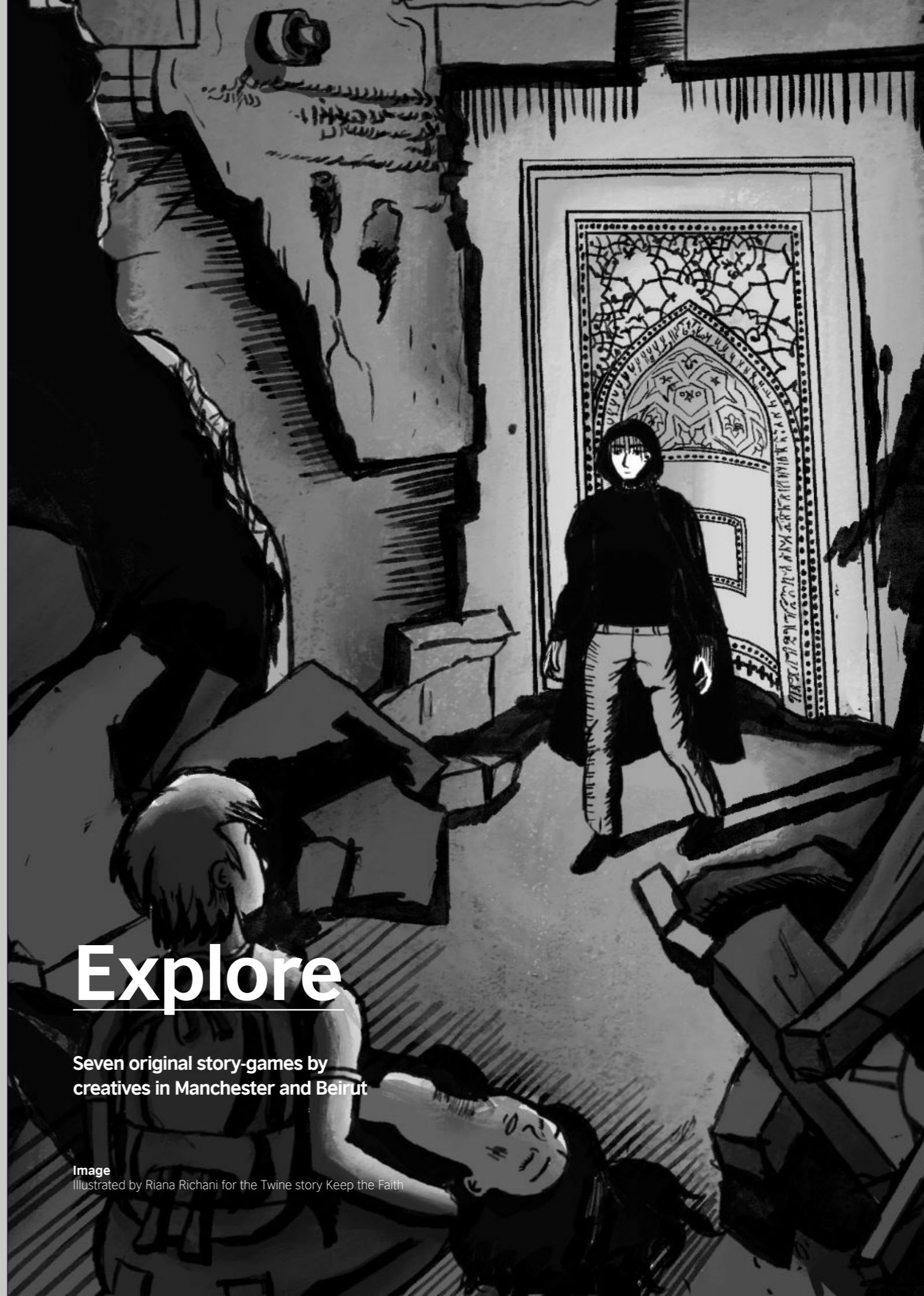


Image From the game-play demo of Bullet



Explore

Seven original story-games by creatives in Manchester and Beirut

Image Illustrated by Riana Richani for the Twine story Keep the Faith

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION FUND

The International Collaboration Fund is designed to support artists to make and develop creative artwork with their international peers, and to encourage new international partnerships and innovative ways of collaborating. Selected projects demonstrate genuine international collaboration and an explicit benefit to individual artists and international partners, and address significant contemporary themes, from climate change to global challenges.

In 2022, three projects from Lebanon will be enabled by the grant:

Orchestras in Exile,

Collaborators: Music Halls Project Ltd (UK) and Beirut and Beyond (Lebanon).

Grant: £63,145

This recording project will reunite these orchestra members with stars from Lebanon and the UK, to celebrate the remarkable music and culture of Syria, Lebanon and the UK combined. Selected guest vocalists will collaborate on the tracks for the record, which will be scored for the orchestra.

Beyond the Now – Socially Engaged Art in a (Dis)Connected World.

Collaborators: Counterpoints Arts (UK), Ettijahat - Independent Culture (Lebanon) and Plymouth College of Art (UK).

Grant: £69,000

The project proposes a programme of mentorship, artist residencies, public dialogue events, research and development commissions, and other peer-learning and mutual exchange opportunities to enable artists to join vital conversations about the role of socially engaged art with communities of place: what 'change' might mean in a post-pandemic context and in times of global 'crisis', human displacement and ecological transformation.

PRECIPITATE,

Collaborators: Dance Base (UK) and Yaraqa (Lebanon).

Grant: £72,251

PRECIPITATE is a ground-breaking hybrid artistic exchange Lab that will connect dance artists from Scotland and Lebanon in 2022 in a bespoke digital creative development Lab, culminating in an in-person residency. The Lab's unique approach to facilitating international collaboration will engage four artists from each country in a series of online and in-person connections, focused on facilitating dialogue, inspiring professional development and fuelling creative collaboration.



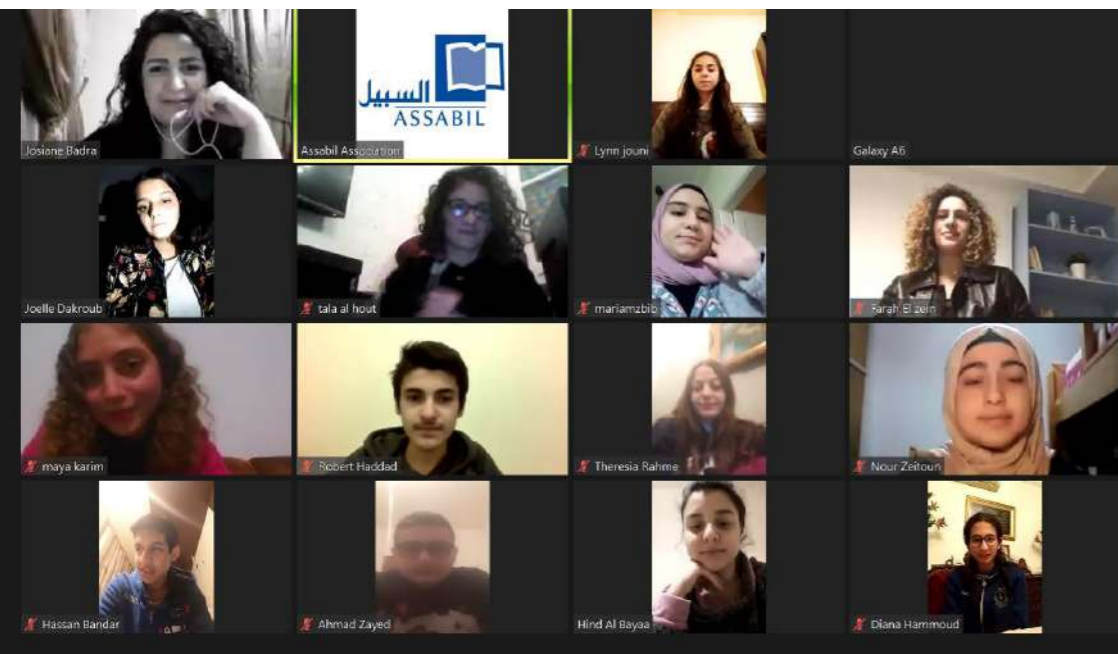
British Council Digital Libraries

We have partnered with Assabil in taking the first step toward digital libraries and e-resources by providing access to the British Council Digital Library as a free and accessible archive. A launching event encompassed the presentation of libraries and a discussion panel about the opportunities and challenges of Digital libraries with 4 experts in Information Science, archives, and librarianship.

In efforts to raise awareness of the British Council Digital Library collection and its effective use, we held a webinar with the participation of 50 librarians from across Lebanon to demonstrate how to access and search the online database and brainstorm activities that can be implemented to promote its utilisation. With a broad range of stakeholders in mind, 14 students from 8 public high schools were selected from a pool of 200 applicants to participate in an online

Scavenger Hunt consisting of a series of questions about the collection for a chance to win a tablet. Assabil continued to organize public contests: Its fourth online event invited high school and Freshman university students to watch "Henry IV" theatre play, an innovative female stage production adapted from William Shakespeare's two plays about King Henry IV, Prince Hal and Falstaff, and write an essay about it.

Access to British Council Digital Libraries has been renewed for another year and is publicly accessible until June 2023.



Scavenger Hunt introductory online session

The world's best learning and entertainment content on one app.

Discover thousands of best-selling ebooks and audiobooks in every genre!

Register and Get Access

to the world's best learning and entertainment content through Assabil Library



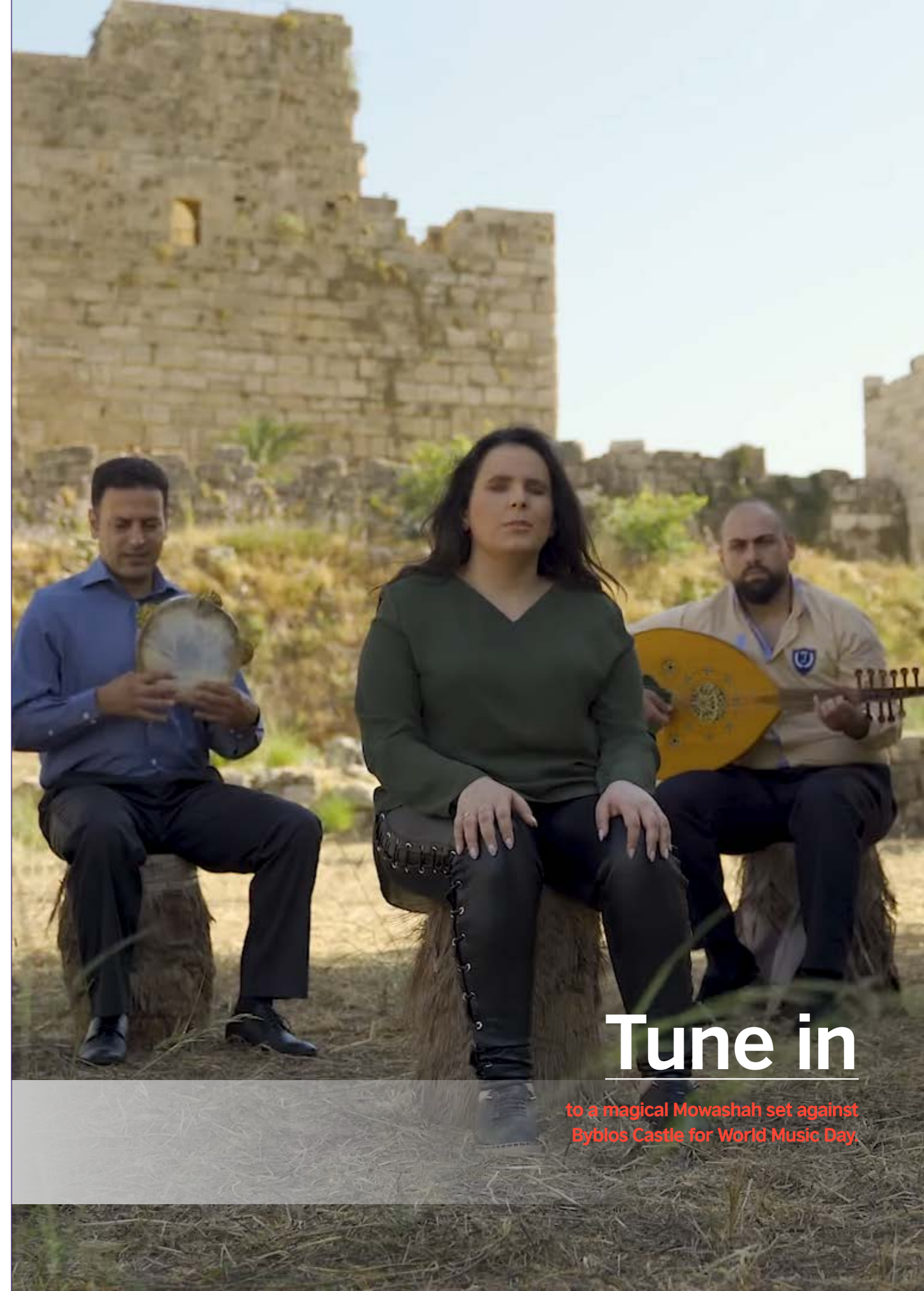
World Music Day 2021

In a sonic journey through historic heritage sites in Lebanon and the UK, on Monday, June 21, 2021, British Council Lebanon presented a curated selection of 2 filmed musical seances that highlight folkloric music from both cultures. The first is presented as part of the Masarat Grant project Ethno presents: A Virtual Introduction to the Musical Heritage of Lebanon. In a serene and simple disposition, the song was performed at the castle of Byblos – one of the most important heritage sites in the country and relied on the harmony of 1 vocalist and 4 musicians under the direction of Dr Hayaf Yassine. The second song explores the stories behind traditional English folk songs that have connections to the iconic Iron Bridge in Shropshire. The Four Loom Weaver from the series Songs of England created by English Heritage and the Nest Collective reflects an age of labour through the struggles of the people who worked in hard and

unforgiving jobs. It is written and directed by Max O'Brien, performed by Abel Selaocoe and composed by Christopher Schlechte-Bond. While both pieces are vivid in their own light, they reiterate the depth of the association between our contemporary musical endeavours and the longstanding cultural associations that have shaped them. Paired together, they compose a novel take on the necessity to instigate a sense of connectedness and inspire knowledge of the richness that both lands offer.



Explore the stories behind traditional English folk songs that have connections to historic places



Tune in

to a magical Mowashah set against Byblos Castle for World Music Day.

Mudawanat I and II

Mudawanat is a project initiated by Culture Resource in partnership with British Council to train contributors in digital media and produce audio content (podcast) around arts and culture for an Arabic speaking audience. The project aims to build a living archive of podcasts that document the contemporary cultural realm. It encourages participants to experiment with the audio genre outside of conventional radio formats and to employ creative methods of storytelling while reflecting on local and regional specificities. Following the conception of 2 podcast series – the first titled 'Myths' looks into urban legends through personal anecdotes, contemporary experiences, and cultural productions and practices, and the second 'Alternatives' exposes the present and future of cultural practices in the region - 12 contributors from the region were selected to join a training workshop and develop their collaborative ideas into 2 trailers

and 15 executed podcast episodes. The training workshop included presentations and contributions by the participants and covered theoretical and practical sessions in 4 workshops on the fundamentals of sound, script-writing, production and publishing. Prior to the dissemination of the series, 2 additional training sessions were held to develop technical skills for publishing and equip the participants with the techniques and methods to promote posts on social media to increase Mudawanat's audience outreach and promote its episodes. By June, 2021, the episodes from the first season have reached a global listenership of over 12K.



Photograph
Caption



Youthful Cities: Coventry x Beirut

The Youthful Cities programme is a cultural and creative skills exchange between Coventry – the UK's City of Culture 2021 – and 4 international cities including Beirut, which according to the Youthful Cities Index, fits the description as a city 'moving forward and taking control of its communities through art, creativity, technology and civic participation with activism at the forefront.' Chosen as the arts organization partner from Lebanon, *Rusted Radishes: Beirut Literary and Art Journal* initiated an open call for 6 young adults to creatively respond to important, urgent and youth-focused issues in their cities. Over the period of 6 months, 6 participants from Lebanon and 6 from the UK have met virtually in 5 phases of the project to explore their respective social and cultural contexts and establish mutual connections and creative synergies. As they explored personal and collective journeys, they created Coventry x Beirut:

Transnational Lag Express, a performance piece that utilises poetry, dance, spoken word, and video, to recount a fictional train ride from Coventry to Beirut and back again. In its non-existence or inaccessibility, for both cities, trains address questions of ownership, hope, home, youth, stigma, and what their future holds (or doesn't). The performance presents the collective hive mind the global youth participates in across national borders and explores how their cities and youth have shaped the world they share. In a showcase of the ideas and innovations from the exchanges, the performance was streamed as part of the BBC Contains Strong Language Poetry and Performance Festival and a digital 3-day Global Youth Summit in Coventry. It has also presented the youth with an opportunity to explore poetry, storytelling, and spoken word as a means for reflection and dissemination, and a driving force of change.



Photograph
Youth from Coventry, UK, partook in intensive writing and workshops with the Beirut cohort



Watch the performance

Hop on the Transnational Lag Express on a fictional train ride from Coventry to Beirut and back again



Working on the Youthful Cities project and producing *Not Much Longer Now*, was the highlight of the work we did in 2021.



Rima Rantisi, Editor of Rusted Radishes

Digital Media Arts for an Inclusive Public Sphere (Digital MAPS)

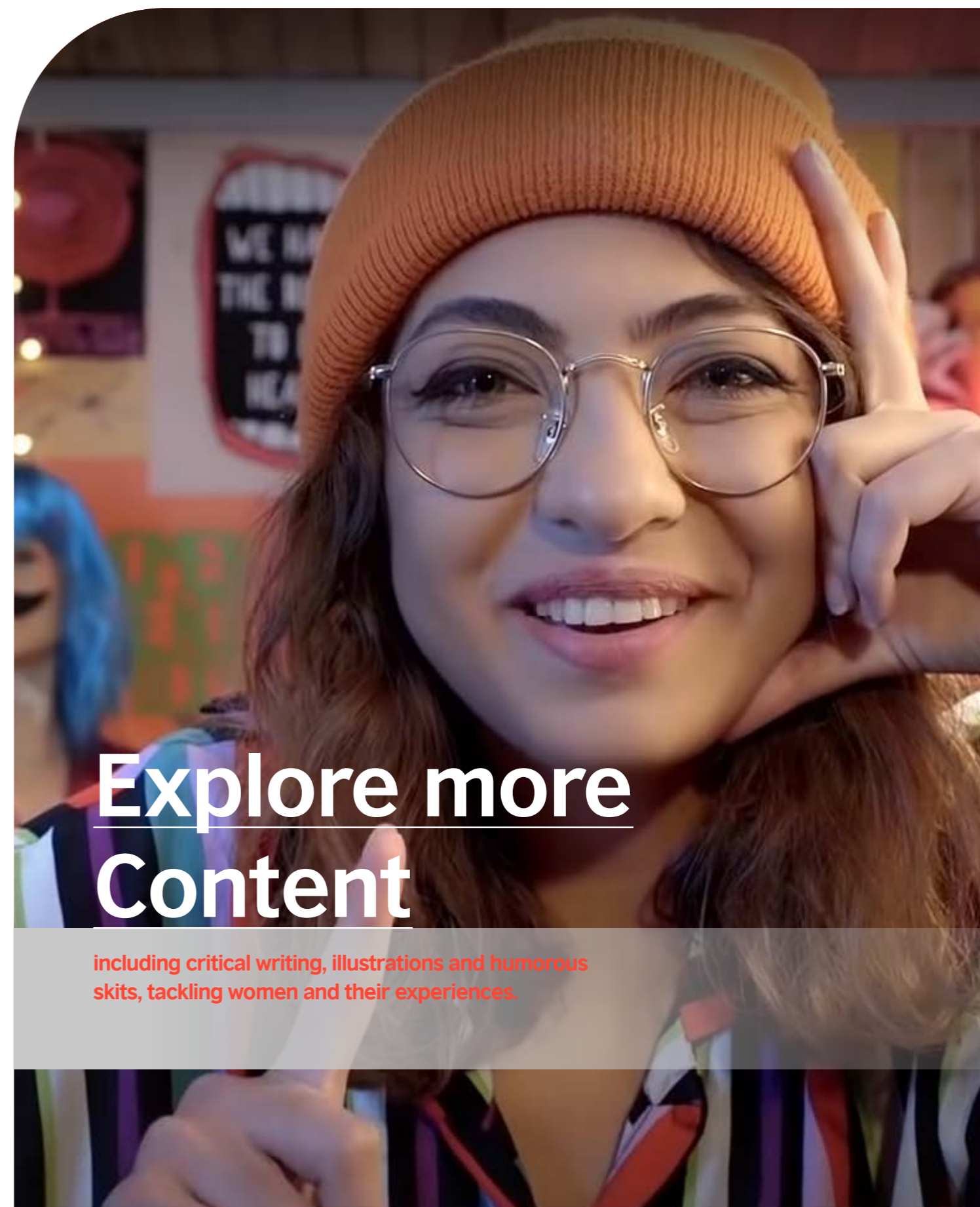
Information and communication technologies, especially social media platforms, have created opportunities for civic actors to become more visible and impactful than they were in the offline space. The Digital MAPS programme has supported young leaders from creative and media arts organisations across 8 countries in conducting social media mapping to understand how issues of identity, social cohesion and inclusion manifest on and are shaped by social media. Having identified the signal of polarisation related to the stereotyping of women on social media, Khateera, the organisation selected from Lebanon, has relied on humour and gender-conscious content to mainstream gender equality and break gender stereotypes. With the support of the programme, Khateera has re-published 1 production episode and 4 cut-downs across platforms enabling them to expand the reach of their previously published content on gender roles.

They have also produced and published 1 interactive quiz and 2 new recorded creations. The content make use of depolarisation approaches shared during the DMAPS programme and observe a shift in attitudes and interactions. The results exceeded the baseline targets, reaffirming the validity of the approach. In turn, the outcomes guided the writing of content for 6 new theme-based episodes for an upcoming project.

While attempting to change attitudes and understanding of gender roles in Lebanon and the MENA region, and Influence the narratives and attitudes towards the cultural norms and stereotypes of women, Khateera will build on the outcomes of the workshop to develop content that raises cumulative awareness and enable similar projects to work beyond the surface and take a deeper dive and discuss more complex levels of the same issues.



Extract
From Khateera's video on Gender Roles



Explore more Content

including critical writing, illustrations and humorous skits, tackling women and their experiences.



