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# Why invest in culture and creativity?



International fund for cultural diversity

Investing in creativity. Transforming societies.

Culture and creativity  
are the **heartbeat** of our  
societies, and we need  
to help them thrive, now  
more than ever.





With so many crises around the world – from **climate change** to **conflict** and **COVID-19** – people need moments to connect, come together, understand each other, and imagine better futures.

Music, art, literature, cinema, dance and many more forms of cultural expression and creativity have the power to heal us, empower us, and drive the momentum we need to overcome the challenges we face.

At the same time, the creative economy is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. It accounts for **3.1 per cent of global GDP** and **6.2 per cent of all employment\***, providing decent work, especially for women and youth.

By investing in the creative economy now, especially in the Global South, we support sustainable and inclusive development so that everyone can reap the benefits.

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\* UNESCO, Re|shaping policies for creativity: addressing culture as a global public good, 2022.

**While the digital transformation presents an opportunity, it also brings challenges. Diverse cultural expressions have been under pressure for decades, and now the impacts of the pandemic have pushed many cultural and creative industries (CCIs) to the edge, especially in the Global South.**

In a post-pandemic world, where YouTube is the number one most downloaded app, there is a need to champion diversity, especially in the Global South, where cultural and creative industries are buckling under the pressure: new markets are emerging but not everyone has the means or possibility to access them. At a time when societies everywhere need their culture and creativity to face immense challenges, the question of “how to ensure the diversity of cultural expression”, both online and offline, is more urgent than ever.

**How can we ensure that everybody has access to create, produce, disseminate and enjoy the diversity of culture and creativity?** How can we ensure that artists and cultural professionals everywhere benefit from the new opportunities of digital technology?

As the world prepares to build the cultural and creative industries back better, we have the chance to make sure that diversity is protected and promoted and that the heartbeat of our societies – culture and creativity – remains strong.



The global North accounts for **95%** of the world's total exports of cultural service\*



The cultural and creative sectors were among the hardest hit by the pandemic, with **over 10 million** jobs lost in 2020 alone\*

\* UNESCO, Reshaping policies for creativity: addressing culture as a global public good, 2022.

## Investing in creativity helps deliver on the promise of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

With less than a decade left to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals, investing in cultural and creative industries drives sustainable and inclusive development.



These sectors help societies to understand themselves, their past, and to project themselves into the future. This is essential for sustainable development to succeed.



It is critical that people from all walks of life participate in the development of society. CCIs can give everyone a voice.



CCIs promote understanding, social cohesion and peace.



CCIs are growing fast around the world. With the right foundations in place, countries of the Global South can create jobs, opportunities, and access new markets.

**By investing in strong foundations for cultural and creative industries (CCIs) in the Global South today, we create opportunities that benefit whole societies.**

Thriving CCIs provide income opportunities, especially for women and youth. The CCIs also inspire people to connect and understand each other, fostering social cohesion and peace. They enable communities and countries to participate in the rapidly growing regional and global marketplace for contemporary creative goods and services. This not only enriches local economies, but the entire world. Culture and creativity are and must be recognized as a global public good.

To create opportunities for marginalized groups, investing in the CCIs is a strategic choice:



**women**  
hold 45% of cultural occupations worldwide\*



20% of those employed in the CCIs are **young people** (15–29 years old)

\* UNESCO, Re|shaping policies for creativity: addressing culture as a global public good, 2022.



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## The UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) invests in the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) to empower countries in the Global South and enrich the entire world.

The IFCD is one of the few United Nations funds that supports arts and cultural bodies, government institutions and non-governmental organizations in the Global South to develop stronger CCIs in their countries. By working together, **we are building lasting change so that everyone can express and enjoy diverse cultural expressions.** We invest in people who might otherwise not have the chance to upgrade their skills and networks. We also invest in developing and implementing policies that are based on evidence and are inclusive. The goal is to support communities to build thriving cultural and creative industries.

### How we work

We support projects that aim to make a difference in the areas of publishing, visual arts, media arts, performance arts, cinema/ audiovisual, music and design in countries of the Global South. **To date, 44 per cent of IFCD funds have been invested in Africa,** with an increasing priority given to Small Island Developing States. Through an open and competitive process, we fund innovative projects with up to US\$ 100,000, implemented over a 12–24-month period. The projects are evaluated based on their relevance, feasibility, financial management capacity, expected results, as well as sustainability.



### Putting the landmark 2005 Convention into practice



To date, more than 150 countries and the European Union have signed up to the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

This landmark Convention provides an action plan that ensures artists, culture professionals and creative practitioners, as well as all citizens, have the capacity to create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own.

The IFCD puts this important Convention into practice.

## Our impact

Since the IFCD was launched in 2010 as part of the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, **we have invested more than US\$ 9.4 million in 129 projects across 65 Member States.**

This has helped:

- Develop and implement **cultural policies** that have reshaped entire sectors, creating widespread social and economic benefits.
- **Build the skills** of cultural entrepreneurs and create new cultural industry business models.
- Create **new income opportunities** for women, youth, indigenous people and other marginalized groups.
- Identify new markets for creatives to share diverse cultural expressions and for more people to access these.
- Allowed more people to shape their societies' narrative, promoting **social inclusion and fostering peace.**



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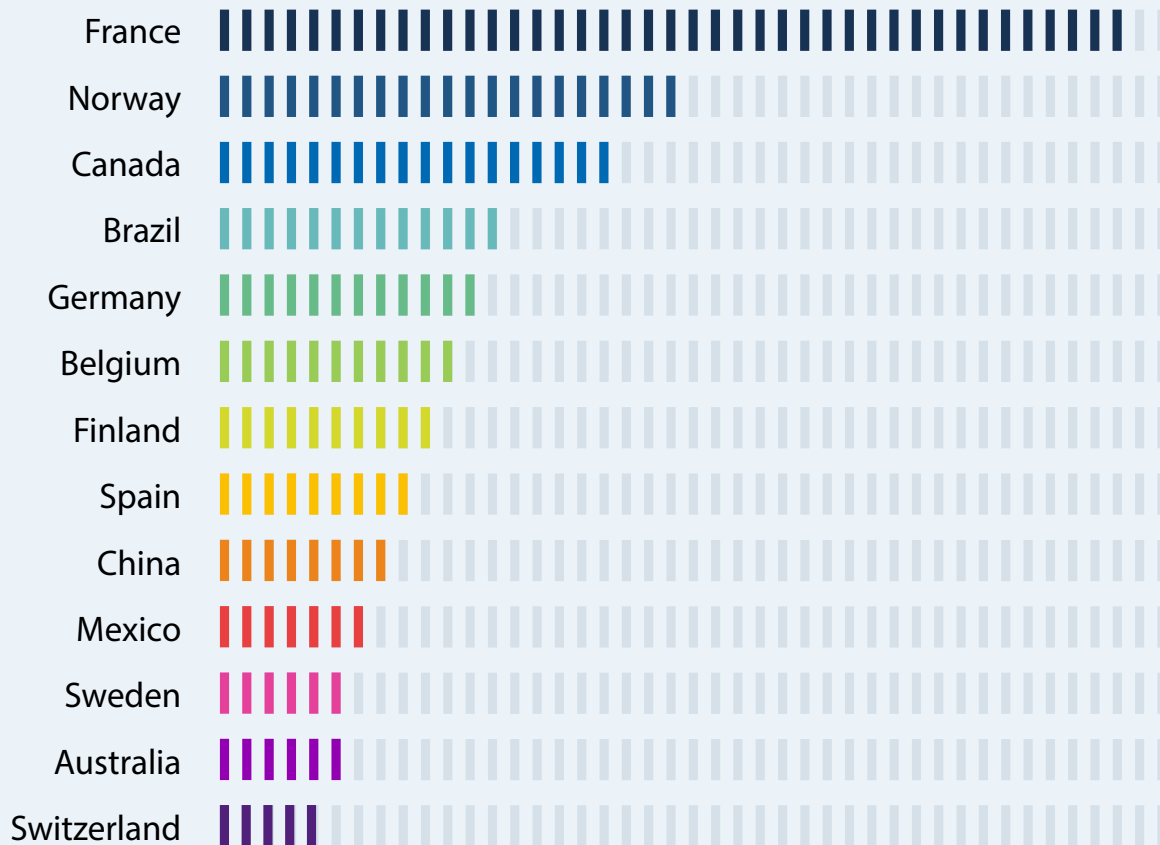
## We have invested in 129 projects across the globe



**Our work is all thanks to our donors who are governments, private sector organizations and individuals who believe in the power of creativity to make a difference.**

In 2021, 55 countries made their donations and we'd like to say a big thank you to all of them, especially our top ten country supporters.

### Top donor contributions







## **When you invest in the IFCD you are championing cultural diversity**

By supporting the IFCD, you are championing cultural diversity and helping keep the heartbeat of societies strong. Your contribution supports the emergence of cultural and creative sectors that are fostering social cohesion, economic opportunities and the diversity of cultural expressions.

This helps advance the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Now, when people need creativity more than ever, we are counting on you so that everyone can reap the benefits of the creative economy.

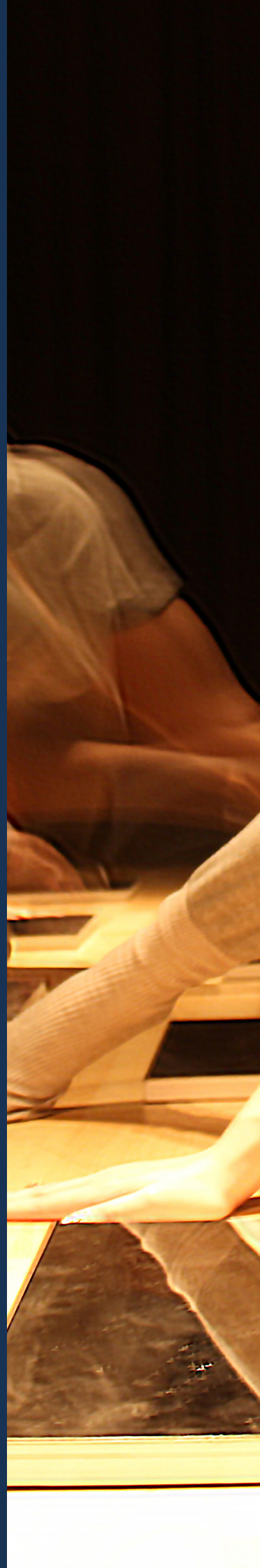
Contact us to find out how you can become a **champion** for cultural diversity today!

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