

# Report on the IFACCA Researchers' Workshop

Singapore, 9-10 March, 2007

## Background

On 9-10 March 2007, the second workshop for IFACCA researchers was held in Singapore, hosted by the National Arts Council of Singapore (NAC) and IFACCA. Fifteen delegates from seven countries attended the workshop (participants are listed at the end). This paper contains a summary of discussions, recommendations and outcome of the workshop.

The objectives for the workshop were to:

- discuss arts policy research in general;
- provide updates on research work in progress within each participant's agency;
- learn about other major arts research initiatives currently underway;
- share knowledge and experiences;
- provide feedback on IFACCA's own research activities; and
- develop proposals for joint projects.

A variety of topics were on the agenda for the workshop, including: IFACCA's research on statistical indicators for arts policy, independence of government arts funding, and models for research in national arts agencies<sup>1</sup>; round-up of participants' current research priorities; prioritising future IFACCA research topics and maximising awareness of IFACCA's research reports; ConnectCP, the international who's who of cultural policy; major performing arts organisations; and IFACCA's website redevelopment. A summary of the discussions is below.

## Discussions

### IFACCA's research activities

Delegates were provided with a list of IFACCA's current and possible future research topics. After discussing a number of topics in some depth, delegates were asked to identify priority topics. Out of 31 topics, the following eight were considered of higher priority, with votes from three or more participants:

- Artists' remuneration, status of the artist legislation, working conditions and employment of artists
- Arts advocacy arguments public attitudes and public value of arts
- Audience development, community development: initiatives, strategies, policies, ethos; arts organisations focus on audience
- Creative industries policies/programmes
- Cultural Diversity: meanings, policies, programs

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<sup>1</sup> All research topics can be viewed at [http://www.ifacca.org/ifacca2/en/organisation/page09\\_BrowseDart.asp](http://www.ifacca.org/ifacca2/en/organisation/page09_BrowseDart.asp)

- Ideas for updating and improving cultural statistics
- Inter-country comparisons of public expenditure on the arts and culture, including accounting for (indirect) support mechanisms
- Mapping of cultural organisations.

Throughout the workshop, various ideas were discussed and suggestions made for improving, promoting and disseminating IFACCA research. Workshop participants supported the idea of providing executive summaries of D'Art research reports, both in online and in pamphlet formats.

### **ConnectCP**

Sarah Gardner presented an update on the ConnectCP project, the 'online who's who of cultural policy, planning and research ([www.connectcp.org](http://www.connectcp.org)), which has profiles of more than 400 cultural policy experts around the world. Participants provided positive feedback on the project and discussed ways to further raise awareness of ConnectCP.

### **Statistical indicators for arts policy**

There was a wide-ranging discussion about cultural statistics and indicators generally, as well as on IFACCA's own agenda and further work on indicators and statistics.

Delegates supported the idea of IFACCA progressing analytical work on international data comparisons by concentrating on either advancing methodological issues or producing data on a particular topic such as government expenditure. They also supported the notion that IFACCA could investigate the practicality of developing an online facility for sharing information on the topic. They noted that both of these options have resourcing implications for IFACCA.

Delegates agreed that focussing on a particular policy topic was also a good idea for IFACCA to advance its work in statistics and indicators. There was general agreement that the topic of cultural diversity would be highly relevant in light of the convention on cultural diversity and the theme of the next World Summit. It was agreed that IFACCA should stay in contact with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics about its work on indicators for cultural diversity.

### **Models for research in national arts agencies (D'Art no. 26)**

There was general approval to proceed in publishing D'Art report 26 (subsequently released on 19 April.<sup>2</sup> It was noted, however, that the report would soon be outdated due to the restructuring of a number of agencies included in the report, such as Arts Council England.

The possibility was discussed of IFACCA providing a password protected area of its website for member agencies to put up their research plans etc. It was agreed that

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<sup>2</sup> Policy research by government arts agencies: a review of approaches;  
<http://www.ifacca.org/files/Policyresearchgovernmentartsagencies.pdf>

IFACCA would look at the possibilities once again once the new IFACCA website is bedded down.

Researchers discussed issues surrounding external perceptions of the independence or objectivity of research undertaken by agencies, and of managing relationships with other divisions within an agency (such as artform grant divisions), whose overriding need is for research evidence that supports their advocacy arguments.

During this session and at other times during the workshop, issues and processes for commissioning and disseminating research were discussed. It was agreed that these could be interesting areas for IFACCA to investigate further.

### **Major performing arts organisations (D'Art no. 27)**

Sarah provided an update on the D'Art and mini-summit planned for 2008.

### **'Independence of Government Arts Funding' research paper**

Participants discussed the discussion paper 'Independence of Government Arts Funding: How much influence do governments have over arts funding and how much influence should they have?', released to members only in March 2006. There was strong support for the proposal to produce a monograph based on the discussion paper and the staging of an international meeting or mini-summit on the topic, with particular support in the possibility of holding a mini-summit on the topic in Latin America.

Other ideas that were put forward in relation to the paper included developing an historical analysis or 'timeline' of policy changes relating to the issue of independence across a selection of countries, and undertaking case studies from selected countries.

Delegates also discussed the issue of independence in relation to research and information provision in cultural policy. Difficulties in developing 'principles' or standards of independence of cultural policy research were discussed, along with tensions between the independence and policy relevance of research.

### **Cultures and Globalization Series**

In the absence of Helmut Anheier, a brief explanation of the project was provided by Sarah and Christopher. The first volume of the Series has been published.<sup>3</sup> Lydia Deloumeaux informed the workshop that the next UNESCO World report, due for release in May 2008, will be on Cultural Diversity.

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<sup>3</sup> Information is at <http://www.sagepub.com/booksProdDesc.nav?level1=A00&currTree=Courses&prodId=Book230745>

## Other topics

A number of topics not on the original agenda were discussed at the workshop.

### Encouraging new researchers

Participants discussed how to encourage research in cultural policy, and especially ways to encourage and attract young, emerging or new researchers into cultural policy research.

### UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics

Lydia Deloumeaux of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) provided a presentation on the process for redesigning and updating the UNESCO framework for cultural statistics, which was first released in 1986.<sup>4</sup> The UIS aims to have a draft framework completed by the end of 2007 so that it can be sent to UNESCO member countries for official consultation, with the final framework to be endorsed at the general conference in October 2009.

Delegates were very supportive of progress to date and provided feedback on various aspects of the draft framework. It was proposed that IFACCA distribute a draft revised UNESCO Statistical Framework for Culture to its network for comment (this was done on 12 June 2007).

### Culture 360

Katelijan Verstraete, of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), described progress on the *Culture 360* portal project, due to be released in July 2007.<sup>5</sup> Culture 360 will be a database of information on cultural projects, organisations and other connections between European Union and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) countries.<sup>6</sup> It will be a database of cultural resources, links, will have a features section for highlighting themes, news and events, and will have an interactive 'virtual space' that will allow postings via 'Wikis', blogs etc. Participants discussed the possibility of using such a portal as a base for undertaking research and analysis – for example, the numbers, outcomes and impacts of artistic exchanges, or assessing the effectiveness of bilateral agreements.

It was agreed that the IFACCA secretariat will follow up with ASEF to ensure collaboration where possible.

### Compendium of cultural policies in Europe

Vladimír Bína, from the Directorate General for Culture and Media of the Netherlands' Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, gave a presentation about the Compendium for Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. A joint venture between the Council of Europe and the ERICarts Institute, realised with a community of practice of independent cultural policy researchers, NGOs and national governments, the Compendium is an expanding Europe-wide information and monitoring system on cultural policy measures, instruments, debates and cultural trends. The Compendium is at <http://www.culturalpolicies.net>.

<sup>4</sup> The culture part of the UIS' website is at [http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?URL\\_ID=3754&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201](http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?URL_ID=3754&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.asef.org/index.php?option=com\\_project&task=view&id=1023](http://www.asef.org/index.php?option=com_project&task=view&id=1023)

<sup>6</sup> <http://asem.inter.net.th/>

## Conclusion

In an evaluation of the workshop, participants rated the workshop a success, and agreed that similar workshops should be held in the future. Sarah Gardner noted the challenge for many countries in sending a delegate to meetings such as this, and it was generally agreed that it is preferable to align future meetings with a related event, conference or meeting.

The IFACCA secretariat provided a report on the workshop to the IFACCA board at its meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, which directly followed the researchers' workshop.

The meeting closed with thanks to Mr Lee Suan Hiang and the organising team at the Singapore National Arts Council.

Any comments and suggestions about the IFACCA workshop can be emailed to [info@ifacca.org](mailto:info@ifacca.org).

## Participants

The following people attended the workshop:

- Kristin Mirkova Razsolokova, National Culture Fund, Bulgaria
- Vladimír Bína, Directorate General for Culture and Media, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Netherlands
- Eileen Mok, Hong Kong Arts Development Council, China
- Lydia Deloumeaux, UNESCO Institute of Statistics, Canada
- Kate Wallace, Scottish Arts Council
- Sarah Gardner, IFACCA
- Christopher Madden, IFACCA
- Lee Suan Hiang, National Arts Council Singapore and board member of IFACCA
- Susan Loh, National Arts Council Singapore
- Sharon Chang, National Arts Council Singapore
- May Tan, National Arts Council Singapore
- Ang Thing, National Arts Council Singapore
- Kennie Ting, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts, Singapore

Observers:

- Venka Purushothaman, LASALLE College of the Arts
- Katelijne Verstraete, Asia-Europe Foundation

Date: June 2007