

REFLECTIONS ON THE

Cultural
Olympiad

and

London
2012

Festival





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CONTENT

INTRODUCTION BY TONY HALL Chair of Cultural Olympiad Board	02
ONCE IN A LIFETIME Summary of Cultural Olympiad	04
THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD AND LONDON 2012 FESTIVAL EVALUATION	18



INTRODUCTION BY TONY HALL, CHAIR OF CULTURAL OLYMPIAD BOARD

When London won the bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we promised that this 'once in a lifetime' event would include a great cultural programme involving people all over the UK. When we are asked why, we go back to the example of Ancient Greece, where the Olympic Games included artists alongside athletes. As recently as the London 1948 Games artists were still awarded medals.



The London 2012 Festival gave great artists from round the world, including the UK, the chance to showcase their creativity. We had over 200 co-commissions in which artists and partners were invited to create 'once in a lifetime' ideas, many large scale, many in unusual places and many offering free tickets or free opportunities to take part.

Our hope was that the cultural programme would be a game changer – putting art at the heart of the Games themselves, showcasing UK world class excellence with high economic stakes to play for cultural tourism and creative industries.

With over 20 million attendances to the London 2012 Festival, communities all over the UK participated with enthusiasm and the majority have been inspired to carry on enjoying culture and creativity. For me, my past colleagues at the Royal Opera

House created highlights like the award winning co-commissions with the National Gallery which made up *Metamorphosis: Titian* and the first concert by homeless people in any Cultural Olympiad. My new colleagues at the BBC broke new ground with the 100,000 free tickets for *Radio 1's Hackney Big Weekend*, two BAFTAs for films co-commissioned with London 2012, and BBC local radio ensuring UK-wide participation in Martin Creed's bell ringing world premiere.

The London 2012 Festival took me from Shetland to Margate, from Belfast to Cardiff, from Hadrian's Wall to Stonehenge, with countless other places in between. I saw artists in fields, boats, bell towers, beaches, castles, ruins, parks, public squares and of course, in theatres and museums.

As the New York Times said of one of our 'once in a lifetime' events, *Peace Camp*: 'in the unlikeliness of its existence and its poetic resonance – the fruit of the infrequent marriage of ample budget and unbounded imagination – *Peace Camp* was a perfect emblem of what London 2012 was able to achieve'. (New York Times, 31 August 2012)

We all hope that the legacy will be more chances to enjoy the fruit of that infrequent marriage of ample budget and unbounded imagination.

Tony Hall, Lord Hall of Birkenhead CBE

'A programme ranging from a bouncy castle Stonehenge to the biggest celebration of Shakespeare's work undertaken is turning out to be a raging success, with huge crowds, diverse audiences, revelatory performances and global media coverage.'

The Times, 7 August 2012



Once in a lifetime

Abstract geometric shapes in magenta and blue at the bottom of the page, including a large magenta triangle and several blue and magenta polygons.

SUMMARY OF CULTURAL OLYMPIAD



‘Not once in a lifetime –
even better’

The Independent, 7 August 2012

The Cultural Olympiad brought together a range of funding, arts, cultural, heritage, local, international and sporting partners in an exceptional grouping which produced a four year UK-wide cultural programme, with the finale of the London 2012 Festival, the largest UK-wide festival ever staged.

It promoted collaborations between arts organisations and their communities on a scale not seen previously, and had an impact round the world. It co-commissioned the best artists from round the world, particularly showcasing UK artists, and co-commissioned them to create new work to rise to the challenge of a ‘once in a lifetime’ event.

For the UK, it offered some new ways of working for arts, culture and creative industries, and some new models for the ongoing funders, particularly the Department for Cultural Media and Sport (DCMS) and Arts Councils.

It offered some new models for the organisers of Olympic and Paralympic Games and other major sporting events in the future.

There were over 43 million public experiences of Cultural Olympiad events. Of these experiences, 39.8 million were at free events and 5.9 million involved active creative participation. Over 45,000 people volunteered, helping over 177,000 events to take place in over 1,000 venues from the Shetland Islands in the north of the UK to the Scilly Isles in the south.

The London 2012 Festival saw public engagement of 20.2 million, of which 15.4 were free attendances. Over 25,000 artists took part of which 1,299 were emerging artists and 806 were Deaf and disabled artists.

This piece attempts to summarise some of the most significant learning points.



UK-wide

Total public engagement of 43.4 million in the Cultural Olympiad UK-wide with 25.8 million outside London.

The Cultural Olympiad engaged communities all over the UK. This was an important benefit to London 2012, and helped to involve communities who felt themselves to be remote from other areas of London 2012 activity, such as the venues for the Games. During the London 2012 Festival particularly, the large scale commissions and special projects helped to create a sense of 'once in a lifetime' excitement which tuned in with the Games.

The UK-wide partnerships helped to build a cultural legacy, for example the partnership with Derry-Londonderry City of Culture 2013, where the joint events in 2012 built up to the 2013 programme; in Scotland also, the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland commitment to a three year cultural plan, starting with 2012 and building up to the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games helped to build an exceptional London 2012 Festival programme and launch a series of artistic collaborations working towards 2014.

TOTAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OF 43.4 MILLION IN THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD UK-WIDE WITH 25.8 MILLION OUTSIDE LONDON

Participation

There were 5.9 million participants in the Cultural Olympiad, of which 4.1 million participated in the London 2012 Festival.

The Cultural Olympiad placed great emphasis on creating opportunities for young people and community members of all ages to become active participants in creative programmes, learning and sharing new creative skills. Programmes such as BP's *Open Weekend*, BT's *Road to 2012*, Panasonic's *Film Nation*, the BBC's *Music Nation*, amongst many others, as well as the large scale learning programmes created by Legacy Trust UK, Arts Councils and the Olympic Lottery Distributor demonstrated a wide range of community based participation programmes. One of the best examples was *Tate Movie* – a large scale project which brought together Legacy Trust UK, BP, BBC, Tate and the Oscar-winning animators, Aardman to teach 34,000 children how to animate, and to create together a film which won its way into the Guinness Book of Records for the largest ever creative team for a film and won a Children's BAFTA for the wit and beauty of the film itself.

The London 2012 Festival built on these opportunities with projects that attempted to offer communities the chance to work together creatively and sometimes simultaneously all over the UK. The Cultural Olympiad 'hit', *Big Dance*, which had been pioneered in London, for the first time rolled out a participative dance programme involving 5 million across the UK. On a smaller scale, the Shetland Film Festival and a range of smaller rural cinemas and festivals round the UK offered an innovative participative programme to develop and share film making skills. Named after the Shetland word for gift, *A Hansel of Film*, created a new model which deserves future life. Artist Jeremy Deller's simple participative commission, *Sacrilege*, inspired communities round the whole UK, and the British Council and GREAT campaign have picked this up as a global model of UK creative excellence

Special events such as the gift of Coldplay's *Viva La Vida*, which united 125,000 local musicians all over the UK in a Bandstand Marathon on the last day of the Paralympics, showed the potential for inspiring communities to create work together. Perhaps the most quoted example however was Martin Creed's *Work no. 1197: All the bells in a country rung as quickly and as loudly as possible for three minutes*, created by 2.9 million participants on the opening day of the Olympics.

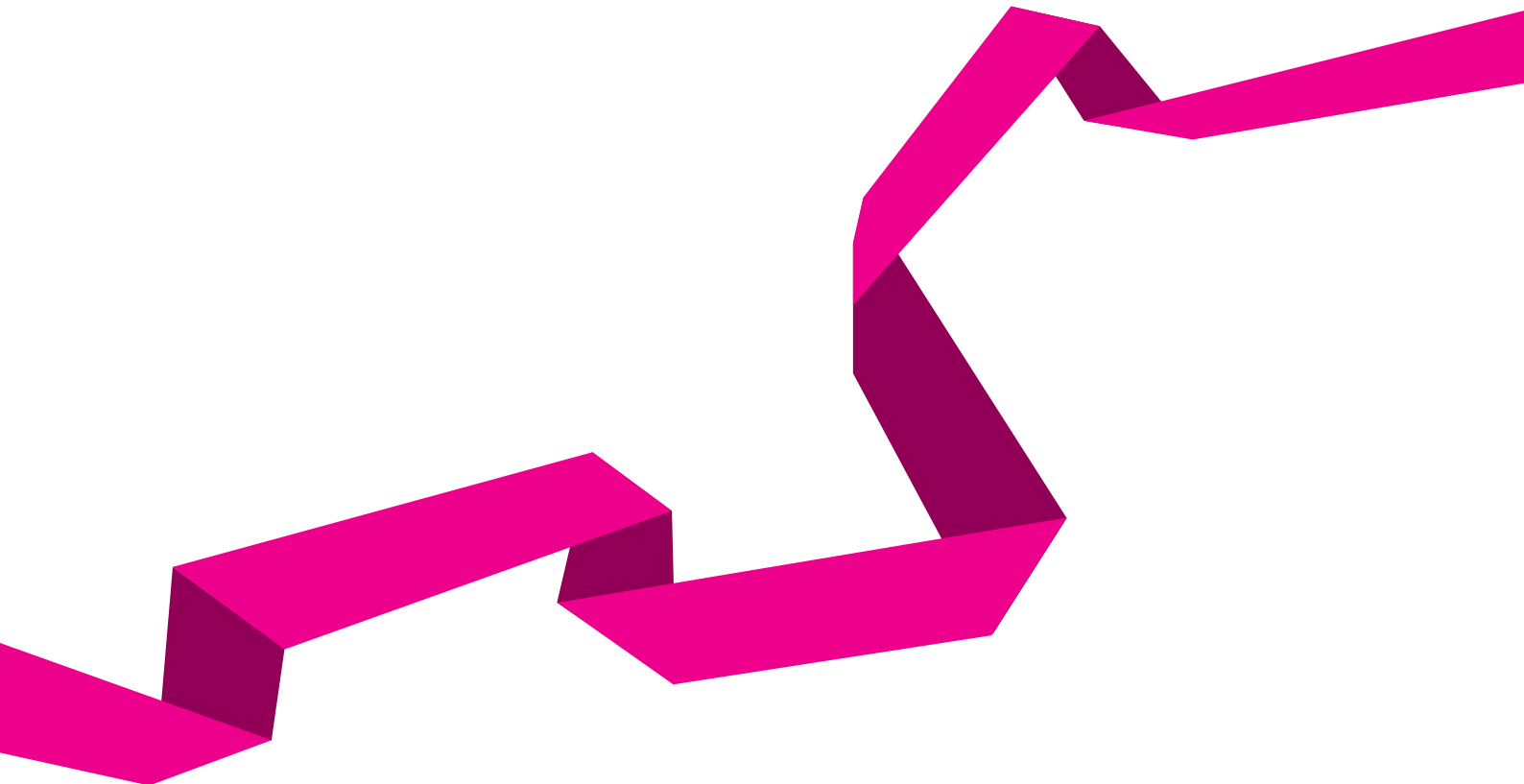
**THERE WERE
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IN THE LONDON
2012 FESTIVAL**

**ALL THE BELLS IN
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Skills development

Many of the participative projects offered the chance to test and develop skills, which with luck might lead people onto more formal learning or training opportunities. But in addition, the Cultural Olympiad offered more formal skills development opportunities, with locally organised schemes in most of the regions and nations.

In the London 2012 Festival, *BBC Radio 1's Hackney Weekend* was a flagship example of a one-off programme offering exceptional training chances for young people in the Host Boroughs. Two other programmes also offered great examples of legacy projects, starting in the London 2012 Festival but now rolling out longer term. The Mayor of London's creative apprenticeships enabled young people to enter paid apprenticeships hosted by London creative industries; similarly the Creative Jobs Programme by Royal Opera House, CREATE, BP, Legacy Trust UK and Arts Council England, enabled 40 paid apprenticeships in the Host Boroughs, which created a model which Arts Council England is now taking forward on a larger scale.





Diversity

Cultural diversity

The Cultural Olympiad promised to welcome artists from every country participating in the Games and, with the London 2012 Festival, to create projects which would showcase talented and culturally diverse UK artists as part of a programme of world class art.

Projects such as *BT River of Music*, which involved over 1,500 musicians from every country participating in the games, on six stages in London landmark sites such as the Tower of London, Old Royal Naval College Greenwich, Somerset House, or the *Poetry Parnassus* at the Southbank Centre which showcased 205 poets from around the world, addressed the scale of the Games. The World Shakespeare Festival and especially *Globe to Globe* united local culturally diverse communities with theatre companies from round the world.

Specialist projects such as *We Face Forward*, bringing 33 artists from 11 African countries to Manchester Museums, *Rio Occupations* and *Back to Black*, bringing over 100 artists from Brazil to collaborate with UK based artists, and Africa Express, which toured 100 artists round the UK on a specially dressed train to offer workshops and concerts with local musicians, showed a passion to share deeper insights into the cultures of specific countries or international regions, many of which have had a longer term artistic legacy.

The programme allowed countries who are sometimes neglected to share their work with UK-wide audiences thanks to international stars such as Daniel Barenboim's West-Eastern Divan Orchestra and Gustavo Dudamel's Simon Bolivar Symphony Orchestra from Venezuela, as well as less well known groups such as the Somalian, Afghani and Palestinian theatre companies which participated in *Globe to Globe*.

THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD PROMISED TO WELCOME ARTISTS FROM EVERY COUNTRY PARTICIPATING IN THE GAMES

'When the Olympics are staged in London in two years time, competitors from every nation will find fellow countrymen and women living here to cheer them on.'

Kofi Annan,
British Museum lecture, 2010



Unlimited

Undoubtedly one of the most important legacies from the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad will be the programme *Unlimited*, which created the world's largest ever commissioning fund for disabled and Deaf artists. Huge credit is due to the Olympic Lottery Distributor, Arts Council England, Creative Scotland and Arts Councils in Wales and Northern Ireland, British Council and LOCOG for conceiving the project and for the administration and curation of the commissions, which offered the chance to develop ambitious and innovative work across all art forms. This has already demonstrated legacies in the touring of the commissions and artists internationally, and in the establishing of a £1.5 million fund by Arts Council England to carry on the ground-breaking work.



Large scale innovation

The Cultural Olympiad programme and the co-commissions for the London 2012 Festival offered an exceptional chance to invite artists to think big, dream up ideas of larger scale and/or larger artistic risk than they normally had the chance to develop. The strapline of the London 2012 Festival was 'once in a lifetime', drawn from the desire to equal the 'once in a lifetime' experience of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The brief to artists and cultural organisations was simply to create a world-class excellent piece which could live up to the challenge of being 'once in a lifetime' by being created especially for London 2012, or by its scale or innovation or both.

The London 2012 Festival team worked with partners to create co-commissions that tested us all in terms of scale, risk, unusual challenges and which required new partnerships locally to deliver huge scale innovation. From the participation of every Parliament building, including Big Ben diverting from schedule to help Martin Creed, to the Birmingham Police tweeting about the rehearsals of Stockhausen's World premiere opera, to the extremities of weather faced by *Peace Camps* on the beaches round the UK, to Elizabeth Streb's extreme action dancers 400 metres up on the London Eye - these commissions and many more built the UK cultural sector's ability to plan and deliver world class innovation.

**THE LONDON
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THE BEST WAY TO
MATCH THE 'ONCE
IN A LIFETIME'
CHALLENGE WAS
TO INVITE ARTISTS
TO CREATE NEW
WORK**

Free

The UK is celebrated round the world for its free national museums, and their contribution to cultural tourism figures is well known. Eight out of 10 of the top tourist attractions in London are free museums, attracting over £1 billion in tourist income, according to Visit Britain.

The Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival programming placed a great emphasis on free activities and attendances, firstly to ensure that all members of the UK community would be able to participate, and that price barriers did not deter community members.

The evaluation shows that free tickets enabled new audiences, especially young people, to attend festival events. Audience surveys also suggest that they feel positively about the experience, and are therefore willing to continue to attend cultural events.

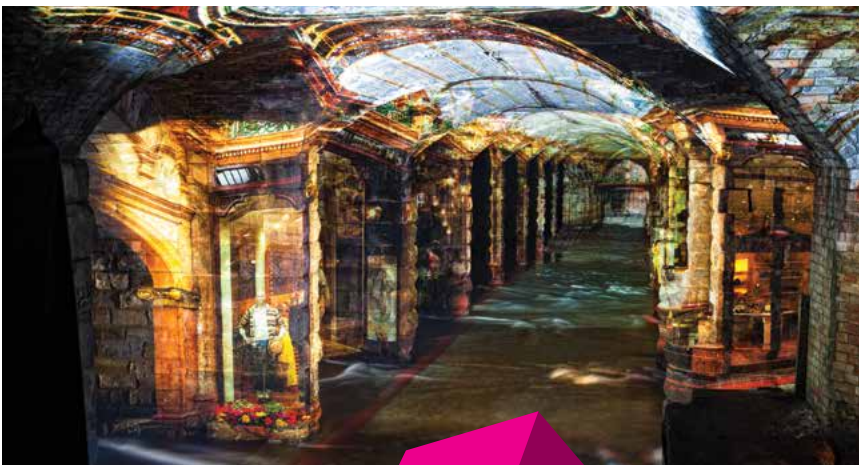
Free entry also allows the cultural organisations to experiment and to programme more innovative artists as well as emerging artists. Audiences are more generous with their time and more willing to experiment with unfamiliar art, if they are not paying to attend. Examples such as *Land of Giants* in Belfast, with over 20,000 attendances for a show combining unfamiliar art forms and artists in inclement weather, and attendance figures of over 1 million for Tino Seghal and *The Tanks* at Tate Modern, show how successful this policy can be.

In addition, the free programme reminded international media and potential cultural tourists of the great benefit of visiting the UK, as Munira Mirza, London's Deputy Mayor for Culture, memorably said: 'As sun is to Spain, so culture is to London'.

**39.8 MILLION
PUBLIC
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OF FREE EVENTS
AT THE CULTURAL
OLYMPIAD, OF
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Unusual venues

Taking creative and cultural events out of traditional cultural venues was also a feature which enabled non-traditional arts audiences to have access to cultural events. The use of the public realm, parks, streets, squares, shopping centres, has long been a traditional audience development policy especially for local authorities. The London 2012 Festival saw also heritage and natural sites of outstanding beauty, beaches, English Heritage and National Trust sites, become priority sites for local and national tourist bodies. This has contributed to the audience development points raised above, and also to the points below on cultural tourism.





Cultural tourism partnerships

One of the most important areas of partnership and innovation was led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to foster and encourage programming which would attract domestic and international tourists. The aim was to encourage tourism not just in 2012, but to use the events of 2012 as marketing material to stimulate cultural tourist visits in 2013 and years beyond.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the programme itself and the media coverage it attracted contributed to the UK rising from fifth to fourth most popular tourist destination (according to the Nation Brands Index). In a survey by Visit Britain, 74 per cent of tourists agreed that coverage of the Games had made them aware of the UK's diverse cultural experiences and events.

Visit England and Arts Council England have agreed to continue working together on joint initiatives, and the Mayor of London's office is working with the GREAT campaign and British Council to tour one of the London 2012 Festival's 'greatest hits' - Jeremy Deller's *Sacrilege* - round the world, extending the use of artistic commissions to raise the profile of cultural tourism to the UK.

International partnerships

International co-commissions and partnerships to create the commissions and projects for the London 2012 Festival involved cultural and creative industry partners in every continent of the world. These co-commissions both brought extra financial resource to the festival programme, and also brought world class artists and cultural partners to the UK.

But even more significantly, they enabled the UK and UK-based cultural organisations to showcase their work to audiences and markets round the world, in the countries of their co-commissioning partners. The showcasing and exporting of UK artists and creative industries is one of the simplest ways to contribute to economic growth, and open new markets.

Digital

The London 2012 Festival did not only create the opportunities to raise the profile of UK creative industries, cultural and heritage organisations through the co-commissions described above. It also offered opportunities through the digital programme to showcase the work of UK creative industries round the world.

Pop Up

Digital marketing enabled large scale innovations such as the Pop Up programme of the festival to take place. The marketing of large scale free events such as *Piccadilly Circus Circus* at the last moment, used not only the London 2012 Marketing and Digital teams' expertise but also partners such as the Mayor of London, BBC and individual digital celebrities such as Stephen Fry and Eddie Izzard. The use of social media throughout the London 2012 Festival, including events which trended such as *All the Bells*, will offer lessons for future festivals as well as future Games.

Digital communications

Broadcast partners, BBC in particular, were invaluable allies and the communications plan led by London 2012 and the specialist communications consultancy Bolton & Quinn, working with all the cultural partners, ensured an exceptional level of free editorial coverage by broadcasters and media from round the world.

Digital art

Perhaps the most significant innovations were the digital commissions and digital art in the London 2012 Festival. These included the programme by Yoko Ono at the Serpentine Gallery and on live sites round the UK, the co-commissions by Samsung and the Cultural Olympiad festival, *Abandon Normal Devices*. Special commissions such as Eddie Izzard's de Coubertin lecture with the BBC offered replicable models for future programmes. A special mention should go to Channel 4 for their virtual DJ party, which was such an artistic success that it has already been repeated by Channel 4 for New Year's Eve 2012.

The largest scale digital experiment for 2012 was *The Space*, a partnership between Arts Council England and the BBC to create a commissioning digital platform, showcasing many London 2012 Festival and Cultural Olympiad partners and commissions. Arts Council England and the BBC have already announced that this will have a future life beyond 2012.



Olympic and Paralympic Games

In addition to those discussed above there were further significant achievements which future Games hosts might develop further:

Olympic Truce

As well as *Unlimited*, inspired by the Paralympic Games, the theme of Olympic Truce proved to be a point of inspiration for artists and arts organisations. This was a starting point for some of the most important commissions, from *Mittwoch aus Licht* to *Peace Camp*, from the partnership with Peace One Day to Oscar Munoz's work in Belfast. The Olympic Truce also provided a framework to allow work by politically marginalised artists and communities, such as the homeless, to be celebrated by the Royal Opera House and Streetwise Opera. The New York Times wrote of the London 2012 Festival commission *Peace Camp*: 'the glowing tents called to mind a refugee camp in heaven, and it also suggested a very different reality of a Europe fractured by dissent over immigration and integration. But it was also the perfect image of the kind of utopian peace among nations and peoples that the Olympics would like to conjure.'

Games themes

Artists and cultural institutions of course also offered work directly inspired by the Games, from Richard Long's *Box Hill Road River* on the Zig Zag road at Box Hill (part of the Olympic cycling road race course), to *The Olympic Journey* partnership between the Royal Opera House and BP, the *BT Road to 2012* with the National Portrait Gallery, the innovative partnership of London 2012, Film 4 and BBC Film in commissioning leading UK film makers, and the commissions in the Olympic park, curated by Sarah Weir. Above all, the Mayor of London's commission of the ArcelorMittal Orbit by Anish Kapoor did more than any other cultural event to ensure that the Cultural Olympiad aim of putting 'culture at the heart of the games' was achieved in every shot of the Olympic Stadium throughout the coverage of the Games. Together with the great achievement of the Opening Ceremonies, which showed the world the quality and values of the UK creative industries and arts, the Games-themed cultural events shone through the cultural programme overall.

The initiative of the Secretary of State for Culture for the State of Rio in approaching London 2012 Festival and offering to develop joint programmes which could begin in 2012 and build up to Rio 2016 was a single act which led to major artistic collaborations in the London 2012 Festival, including the highlight event *Rio Occupations*. The artists and partners in Rio and the UK continue to work together towards 2016.



Partnerships

All the achievements of the Cultural Olympiad relied upon exceptional partnerships, combining public and private partners, from international to local arts working with economic development, tourism, local and national government, private sponsors and private companies, trusts and philanthropists, public broadcasters and media partners and above all lottery funders, Legacy Trust UK, the Olympic Lottery Distributor and Arts Councils of the Nations.

The partnerships were led by an exceptional group, that represented many of the partners and embodied the spirit of partnership, the Cultural Olympiad Board.

There is no doubt that this Board was central to the success of the Cultural Olympiad and particularly the London 2012 Festival, bringing the involvement and leadership of the cultural sector to LOCOG, becoming an official committee of the Board of LOCOG, and represented on the Board by the Cultural Olympiad Board Chairman, Lord Hall. This way of working is strongly recommended to future Games. The Secretary of State is also considering whether to invite a small sub-group from the Cultural Olympiad Board - the Director General of the BBC, Chief Executive of Arts Council England and Deputy Mayor for Culture from the Mayor of London's office - to become a standing committee ready to provide the Government with cultural leadership for future initiatives and projects of national significance.

The Evening Standard said on 26 July 2012, 'Bringing the arts together is the Games' real legacy,' and The Guardian on 10 September 2012 predicted, 'London 2012 Festival success signals new era for culture.' We hope they will prove to be right.

Ruth Mackenzie CBE
April 2013





THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD AND LONDON 2012 FESTIVAL EVALUATION

Executive summary by Dr Beatriz Garcia, Head of Research, Institute of Cultural Capital and Senior Research Fellow, University of Liverpool with Tamsin Cox, Head of Policy and Research, DHA, Research Associate, Institute of Cultural Capital



1. Introduction

The UK bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games promised a Cultural Olympiad that would champion culture and education alongside sport, celebrate the work of Deaf and disabled artists, and inspire young people all over the UK.

Established as a four year, UK-wide programme, the Cultural Olympiad was developed by and for communities, especially young people. The finale of the Cultural Olympiad was the London 2012 Festival, a UK-wide festival showcasing the best of the Cultural Olympiad and commissioning work from world-leading international and UK artists. The London 2012 Festival promised a 'once in a lifetime' event with world class artists from round the World and the UK to serve communities throughout the UK, to commission innovative work which would highlight hot spots for cultural tourists, and offer free participation opportunities for local communities.

These promises translated into the largest cultural programme of any Olympic and Paralympic Games, and a geographical scale unmatched by any previous UK cultural festival. The Games also promised a legacy for those who participated, and this is reflected in the continued life of many of the new partnerships, festivals and commissions continuing to serve audiences beyond 2012.

This report summarises the key findings from the Institute of Cultural Capital¹ evaluation of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. These findings are organised in five main areas:

- raising the bar for cultural programming
- engaging audiences and communities
- developing tourism
- governance and partnership approach
- placing culture at the heart of the Games

This summary is complemented by a full evaluation report and dedicated case studies, which can be downloaded at www.artscouncil.org.uk/london-2012

1. The Institute of Cultural Capital is a strategic collaboration between the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University.

2. Overview

What is the Cultural Olympiad?

A Cultural Olympiad is a required element of any Olympic and Paralympic Games and is part of the International Olympic Committee's ambition to present the Games as the blending of 'sport, culture and education'.² The London 2012 bid presented its cultural programme proposal in 2004 as part of the bid chapter dedicated to 'Culture and Olympism'. This chapter included the vision for the opening and closing ceremonies, the torch relay, a network of big screens or live sites, an education programme, and a four-year Cultural Olympiad to start at the end of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.



Chronological milestones

2008

In 2008, the Cultural Olympiad launched two engagement programmes:

- the Inspire programme allowed organisations to carry an 'Inspired by 2012' mark to associate cultural, sporting and educational activity with London 2012. Between 2009-12, 564 projects took place and were licensed under the culture strand
- Open Weekend was an annual, UK-wide three-day event running from 2008-11. It included thousands of projects which brought together cultural and sporting activity and encouraged broad involvement in the lead up to 2012

It also launched a series of eight 'major projects' designed to highlight distinct Cultural Olympiad themes and values:

- **Stories of the World** was the largest youth participation programme ever undertaken by museums in the UK
- **Somewhereto** created a network of spaces enabling young people to pursue their creative and sporting passions
- **Film Nation** engaged young people as artists and producers of film
- **Discovering Places** explored heritage and open spaces in built and natural environments throughout the UK, emphasising less well known (hidden) places
- **Artists Taking the Lead** invited artists to present a 'big idea' to celebrate the Cultural Olympiad. Panels of local artists selected one proposal from every nation and region for a major commission
- **Unlimited** was the largest ever UK commissioning programme for excellent art by Deaf and disabled artists

2. Olympic Charter, International Olympic Committee (IOC), 2012

- the **World Shakespeare Festival** demonstrated the international appeal of Shakespeare and fostered exchange and collaboration between UK and international theatre companies. It incorporated Globe to Globe, the performance of Shakespeare's 37 plays by 37 countries and in 37 different languages
- **Sounds** was an umbrella name for a series of flagship international music projects:
 - **BBC Proms**, the world-famous classical music festival
 - **BBC Hackney Weekend**, a music festival in East London bringing together the biggest names in popular music
 - **BT River of Music**, six stages of free music across London presenting work from all 204 nations competing in the Games
 - **Youth Music Voices**, a vocal ensemble of 100 young people performing throughout the Cultural Olympiad
 - **Music 20x12**, a programme of 20 contemporary 12-minute compositions by UK composers
 - **Music Nation**, a weekend of live music events involving a nation-wide collaboration of the UK's orchestral and music-making communities

2009

In 2009, Legacy Trust UK announced 12 new programming strands, complementing regional programmes and incorporating many projects licensed with an 'Inspired by 2012' mark. BP and BT signed up as Premier Partners of the Cultural Olympiad, each in addition supporting particular strands such as *BT's Road to 2012* and *BP's Open Weekend*. The Olympic Lottery Distributor also awarded a grant to the Cultural Olympiad programme.

2010

In 2010 the Cultural Olympiad Board started work to oversee the management of the overall programme. This Board appointed a Director of the Cultural Olympiad and, together, they developed the concept of the curated **London 2012 Festival** as a culmination of the Cultural Olympiad in 2012.

The London 2012 Festival was a curated programme, which included a range of projects developed in the earlier years of the Cultural Olympiad and 200 new commissions and co-commissions with flagship UK and international organisations.



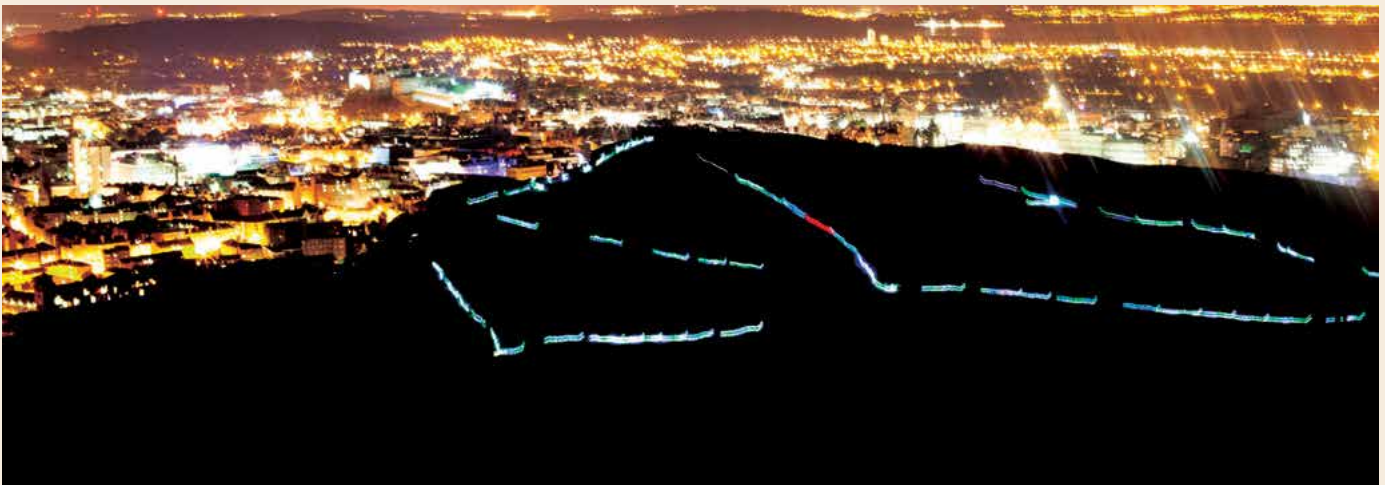
3. Impacts and achievements

The Cultural Olympiad in numbers

- **177,717** activities
- **40,464** artists, of which **6,160** are emerging and **806** are Deaf or disabled
- **5,370** new artistic works or commissions
- **10,940** new partnerships formed with cultural organisations, businesses, educational organisations, local authorities and sport organisations
- **43 million** public engagement experiences
- **204.4 million** broadcast and online views and hits
- over **70 per cent** of London 2012 Festival audiences agree that being part of the London 2012 Festival was a 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience
- over **165 hours** of BBC coverage of London 2012 Festival programming (excluding news) in 2012
- **1,574** UK national and **4,126** regional clippings mention the Cultural Olympiad or London 2012 Festival between 2003 and 11 September 2012
- **364** international press clippings from **38 countries** cover the London 2012 Festival between July and September 2012
- by the end of 2012, art critics produce **42** UK articles choosing Cultural Olympiad activity as their top highlight or cultural pick of 2012

This evaluation covers all events that were part of the Cultural Olympiad, including the London 2012 Festival. Where relevant, specific mention is made of London 2012 Festival data and distinctions are made between Festival and non-Festival findings. By default, all references to the Cultural Olympiad include London 2012 Festival related findings.

Note: the full evaluation report that complements this summary also includes an overview of findings relating to the Open Weekend and Inspire programmes. However, within this summary, most findings exclude these two programmes due to lack of comprehensive data availability, so total figures should be considered slight understatements.



Raising the bar for cultural programming

Unlike many recent host nations, the UK – and London in particular – was already positioned as a cultural and creative world leader, and so the Cultural Olympiad could not be expected singlehandedly to reposition London's cultural profile in as dramatic a fashion as had been the case for Barcelona or Sydney. Despite these caveats, hosting the Cultural Olympiad made a significant impact on the approach to cultural programming in the UK and the profile of its delivery partners. This is particularly noticeable in the scale and diversity of the programme, the emphasis on new work and on distinct values and themes, the development of new partnerships, and the volume of positive media coverage.

i) Scale and diversity

The scale and diversity of the 2012 programme was significant, with a large volume and range of activities, geographical coverage, art forms and nationalities.

Since the start of the Olympiad in 2008, 177,717 activities took place, of which 33,631 (19 per cent) were concentrated in the 12-week London 2012 Festival period. The volume and type of activity during the London 2012 Festival broadly corresponds with the total activities presented as part of the Liverpool 2008 European Capital of Culture, which is an indication of the Festival's scale over a concentrated period of time.

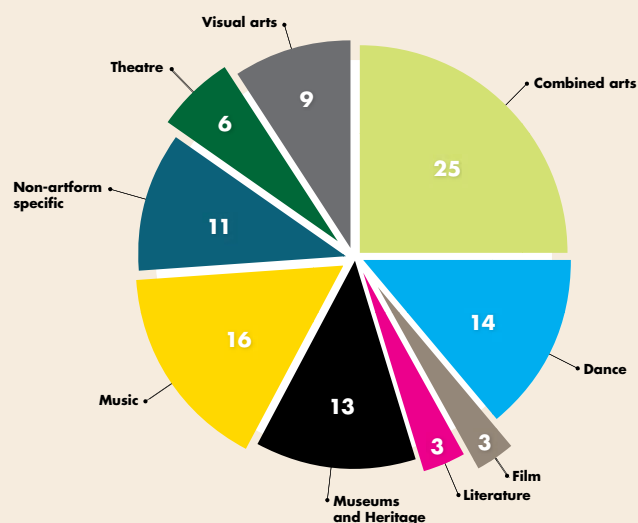
Overall, 40,464 artists were involved, with support from 19,248 technical and administrative staff, and activity took place across all UK nations and regions, with some regions presenting as high a volume of activity as London.

Activity cut across all art forms, with a slight dominance of combined arts (mainly involving outdoor activities, proving that the Cultural Olympiad met its objective to animate public spaces and bring art outside of usual spaces) and dance (which is reflective of the impact achieved by one flagship mass participation project, Big Dance). The London 2012 Festival's explicit emphasis on excellence and world-class artists is reflected in the higher presence of certain art forms, such as theatre – which was dominated by the World Shakespeare Festival – and the visual arts – which included a wide range of high profile retrospectives.

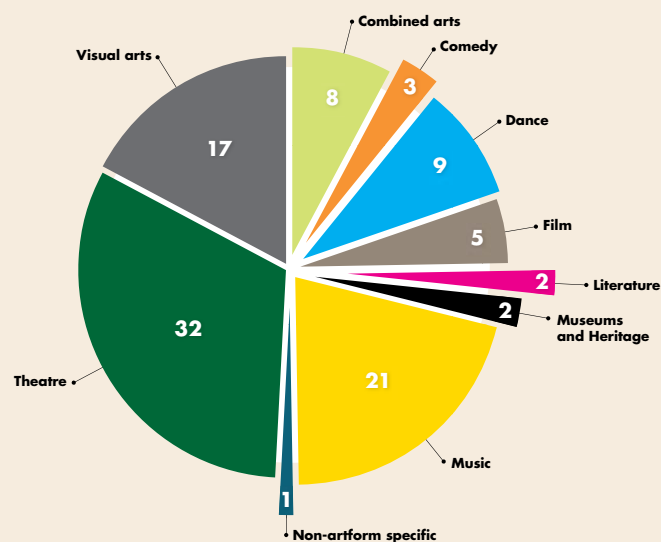
The 204 Olympic nations were represented by artists in two events – BT River of Music (free concerts across London presenting music and collaborations from the competing nations) and Poetry Parnassus (a week of poetry in translation at the Southbank Centre). The five continents were also represented in a larger number of projects.

Figure 1: Art form by project

Non-Festival projects (%)



London 2012 Festival projects (%)



Source: ICC/DHA Project Survey

ii) Emphasis on new work

The Cultural Olympiad placed particular emphasis on new work: new commissions, new productions and premieres, new partnerships and new ways of working.

Half of the projects claimed that their work resulted in new products, totalling 5,370 actual new artistic works or commissions, and ranging from films to public artworks, fanfares, carnival floats and costumes, plays or graphic murals. The most common aspects considered new or different by projects were opportunities for new partnerships (for 56 per cent of projects), followed by reference to greater scale, complexity or ambition in their work and the opportunity to work with new art forms or artists.

The Cultural Olympiad supported new projects which will continue beyond 2012, with 52 per cent of projects indicating that they will continue in a similar form. Projects expected to continue include festivals, employment and training programmes, and touring productions, and they cut across most Cultural Olympiad strands: from the original major projects (close to half of all projects within *Artists Taking the Lead* and *Unlimited*, and more than a quarter of *World Shakespeare Festival* projects); to London 2012 Festival Commissions; and projects funded via the Legacy Trust UK across all UK nations and regions.

iii) Emphasis on distinct values and themes

Because of the way the programme developed over time, a number of distinct values and themes emerged. This thematic emphasis provided a platform for different kinds of artists (including 6,160 emerging artists) to come into the limelight and encouraged different ways to experience the arts. These themes were:

- **free opportunities** – the London 2012 Festival promised ‘10 million free opportunities’. Free activity cut across all strands of programming and resulted in 15.4 million free audiences or participants within the Festival, and an additional 23 million in the broader Cultural Olympiad
- **children and young people** – 40 per cent of projects targeted children or young people, a majority of which were led by young people themselves as artists or producers (such as Tate Movie3 and Somewhere to_
- **Deaf and disabled artists** – the Cultural Olympiad involved 806 Deaf and disabled artists, mainly through the flagship programme Unlimited and the dedicated regional programme Accentuate
- **iconic and unusual places** – programming took place across many of the most recognisable outdoor tourist attractions in the UK, from Stonehenge to Hadrian’s Wall
- **digital activity** – the use of digital activity was pervasive throughout the programme, with nearly 70 per cent of projects using digital technology in their dissemination or approach to public engagement. An additional 40 per cent of projects used digital activity in the creation of the artistic programme itself, an approach that was particularly noticeable in the largest outdoor interventions, such as *Speed of Light* at Edinburgh’s Arthur’s Seat and *Connecting Light* at Hadrian’s Wall⁴

iv) Development of new partnerships

The Cultural Olympiad included work across all the major sub-sectors in the creative industries⁵ and, in some notable instances, the ‘once-in-a-lifetime’ nature of the programme encouraged creative partnerships in the private sector on a scale not previously attempted. Across the programme, 19 per cent of projects indicated that they established new partnerships with creative organisations, and 14 per cent of projects reported working with new partners in the private business sector, accounting for a total of 3,348 new business partners.

Some individual projects specifically undertook activity to support business development in the creative industries. This is the case for *Igniting Ambition*⁶ in the East Midlands, which leveraged £428,200 from the European Regional Development Fund Competitiveness programme to augment £642,300 of Legacy Trust UK funding.⁷

v) Volume of positive media coverage

Despite a slow start securing national coverage in the early years, the final 2012 Cultural Olympiad programme was very well received by the media. UK national press critics were 50 per cent positive and less than 4 per cent negative in 2012, while regional stories were 70 per cent positive about the quality of programming in 2012.⁸ International media from more than 38 countries offered coverage of Cultural Olympiad events⁹, and the London 2012 Festival secured 165 BBC broadcast hours in 2012.

By the end of 2012, a range of London 2012 Festival events were highlighted as part of critic’s ‘best of 2012’ picks across art forms. The event gathering the highest volume of praise was Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch’s *World Cities 2012*, a month-long season of contemporary dance co-productions presented by Sadler’s Wells and the Barbican¹⁰. London 2012 Festival activity also secured a number of national awards, including three BAFTAs and a series of theatre awards.

3. Tate Movie was a UK-wide film project involving thousands of 5-11-year-old children in the production of a new digital film.

4. *Speed of Light* was a large scale public art intervention described as a ‘mass choreographed act of walking and endurance running’ (ICC/DHA Project Survey) and involving hundreds of runners wearing specially designed light suits and performing nightly at different locations within Arthur’s Seat; *Connecting Light* was an art installation involving hundreds of balloons led by internal LED lights and spanning the length of Hadrian’s Wall. The lights responded to messages sent via digital media by audiences on site or across the globe.

5. As defined by *Creative Industries Mapping Document*, DCMS, 2011

6. *Igniting Ambition* was the Cultural Olympiad’s regional programme for the East Midlands. It was funded by the Legacy Trust UK to develop a business support programme aimed at growing creative industries in the region between 2009-12.

7. *Evaluation of Creative Innovation Programme*, Focus Consultants, 2012

8. *UK National and Regional Press Content Analysis*, ICC/ University of Liverpool, 2003-12

9. *International Press Clippings*, LOCOG/BoltonQuinn, June-September 2012

10. *UK National and Regional Press Content Analysis*, ICC/University of Liverpool, December 2012

Figure 2: Public engagement across the Cultural Olympiad

	London 2012 Festival	Non-Festival	Total
Attendances and visits - paid	4,765,931	160,031	4,925,962
Attendances and visits - free	11,303,193	21,211,396	32,514,589
Free Participants	4,123,953*	1,801,961	5,925,914
Volunteers	12,208	33,389	45,597
Total free public engagement (attendances and visits - free, participants and volunteers)	15,439,354	23,046,746	38,486,100
Total public engagement	20,205,285	23,206,777	43,412,062

Source: ICC/DHA Project Survey and LOCOG Audience Data

* Participants in the Festival include an estimated 2.9 million people who participated in *No 1197: All the bells in a country rung as quickly and loudly as possible for three minutes* by Martin Creed on the morning of the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony (27 July 2012), and 890,120 participants in StoryLab – Summer Reading Challenge.

Engaging audiences
and communities

The volume of public engagement across the Cultural Olympiad was huge, with audiences, visitors, participants and volunteers estimated at 43.4 million¹¹, and an additional 204.4 million reached through broadcasts and online viewings.

The programme engaged audiences in both nation-wide and multi-regional programmes, and the projects targeted different kinds of audiences, including young people, disabled people and those from ethnic minorities. Activities engaging young people were particularly strong, with 40 per cent of projects targeting children and young people. These participants were supported to develop their creativity, engage in projects with an international profile, interact with digital technologies and develop their leadership skills.

Audience feedback was very positive, with almost 80 per cent saying that the event they attended exceeded their expectations, and a range of data indicates that the Games motivated people to engage in culture. In the State of the Nation survey for September 2012 for example, 35 per cent of UK respondents agreed that more people will take part in

cultural activities due to the Games. The same survey shows 12 per cent were motivated to take part more, and 11 per cent agreed that they were motivated to try a new or different cultural activity. Data from the Taking Part survey for September 2012 shows that 5.2 per cent of those who already participate in arts and cultural activities felt motivated to take part on more because of the Games. As more data emerges, it will be interesting to see if this translates into new or more frequent audiences and participants in the future.

In line with this, there has been a range of positive media coverage relating to engagement opportunities within the Cultural Olympiad. Of all regional press coverage on the Cultural Olympiad, 34 per cent focused on its ability to be inclusive and accessible, and this coverage was 78 per cent positive. Nationally, the proportion of coverage focused on inclusion rather than other themes is lower, but equally positive (70 per cent), with the remainder being neutral.

11. These figures do not fully represent the range of public engagement in Open Weekends and Inspire projects as data is not available. Overall engagement in the Cultural Olympiad is likely to have been higher.

Developing Cultural tourism

Across the Cultural Olympiad, programming and partnerships supported tourism and raised the profile of activities, venues and places to both UK and international visitors.

It is estimated that the London 2012 Festival engaged 126,000 overseas visitors, and the Cultural Olympiad attracted 1.6 million UK visits during the period July–September 2012¹². Visits associated with the Games show a significantly higher spend per visit than those for the average tourist.

There is evidence of both sustained tourism development, with festivals and venues establishing their profiles over time, and significant one-off activities which encouraged different types of visitors, or new perspectives on existing tourism attractions. Venues such as Tate Modern, the British Museum and the National Portrait Gallery hosted major exhibitions and events, while locations like Ironbridge Gorge and the Lake District worked to establish their profile with tourists for cultural activity over several years.

The UK's overall rating in the Nations Brand Index went up one place in autumn 2012, reflecting significant rises in the rating of the UK's sporting excellence, natural beauty and tourism¹³. There is opportunity to build on this positive profile, particularly in the context of VisitBritain's work, the GREAT campaign, and the new partnership between Arts Council England and VisitEngland.

Governance and partnership approach

Governance

The governance for the Cultural Olympiad evolved from 2008 onwards. Initially, the London Organising Committee for the Games (LOCOG) serviced an advisory committee chaired by Jude Kelly, Artistic Director of the South Bank Centre. In 2010, LOCOG, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Mayor's office created a new Cultural Olympiad Board, chaired by Tony Hall (then Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House) with membership from leaders of major cultural institutions including the BBC and the major funders of the Cultural Olympiad. Tony Hall represented culture on the main LOCOG Board and the Cultural Olympiad Board became a formal sub-committee of LOCOG in 2011, thus embedding culture into the governance structure of the Games.

LOCOG also appointed a small culture team, and DCMS, Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Arts Council Wales and LOCOG funded 13 creative programmers located in each region and nation. This network built up local relationships as well as some inter-regional collaborations. The arts councils, British Council and other funders also created small teams to work on the Cultural Olympiad, as did the BBC.

At this early stage diverse teams created diverse opportunities for cultural and community organisations, but the lack of a single management structure impeded the development and delivery of a single vision. Whilst this could be considered a strength for the grass roots and community-led programmes of the Cultural Olympiad, the public struggled with the idea of what a Cultural Olympiad was. This led to the creation of the curated London 2012 Festival, which promised a single vision and clear identity.

¹². Great Britain Day Visits Survey, VisitEngland

¹³. Foresight 111, VisitBritain

Partnerships and funding

The total budget across the four-year Cultural Olympiad was £126.6 million. It came from a diverse range of sources and was mainly distributed by LOCOG, Arts Council England, Legacy Trust UK, and a smaller proportion via the Greater London Authority. National Lottery and public funding was made available to Cultural Olympiad projects through Arts Council England, Legacy Trust UK and Olympic Lottery Distributor.

In addition, a large number of organisations were involved as co-funders and provided funds direct to projects. Olympic sponsors BT and BP became Premier Partners of the Cultural Olympiad, and Panasonic, Samsung, Freshfields, and BMW became Olympic Sponsor partners, alongside other public sector partners such as the British Council, arts councils in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and bodies promoting tourism. Funders supported projects directly in some instances, rather than routing funding via LOCOG; and the cultural partners were in many cases able to secure funding from non-Olympic sponsors as well as local government, public funding bodies, charitable foundations and individual donors.

The diversity of funding sources is generally considered a strength for the development of a cultural programme; however the lack of a dedicated central budget meant that funder conditions were not always aligned with the Cultural Olympiad core vision and that in many instances, each new idea required dedicated fundraising and funding applications. A significant ring-fenced budget delivered through LOCOG would have allowed the Director to plan and commission work more swiftly and confidently.



Figure 3: Cultural Olympiad income by distributor and expenditure by area

Income by distributor		Expenditure by area	
LOCOG	£ 33,795,041	Overheads, staffing and resources	£ 9,439,623
Arts Council England	£ 36,362,949	Marketing and communications	£ 4,428,926
Legacy Trust UK	£ 35,702,327	Programme	£ 112,750,989
Greater London Authority	£ 4,618,000		
Co-funding	£ 16,141,221		
	£ 126,619,538		£ 126,619,538

Source: LOCOG, Arts Council England and Legacy Trust UK

Placing culture at the heart of the Games

The Cultural Olympiad's network of partners and sophisticated branding strategy ensured that culture was placed at the very heart of the Games. The high profile of the Games helped bring the Cultural Olympiad to the general public's attention, and contributing artists and partners benefitted from being part of the Games experience.

The Cultural Olympiad relied on a wide network of partners, many of whom were central to the delivery of the Games, to ensure that culture became an important part of the Games. The two Premier Partners, the Cultural Olympiad Board, DCMS and the Greater London Authority were all of particular assistance in positioning the cultural programme as central to the broader Games experience. In addition, the appointment of 13 creative programmers, and the development of nationwide funding schemes such as those developed by the Legacy Trust UK, facilitated the presence and positioning of the cultural programme in every nation and region, and contributed to the perception that communities could join in the Games experience beyond London and beyond sporting arenas.

The Cultural Olympiad's sophisticated branding strategy also maximised opportunities for cultural organisations to be associated with the Games. The Inspire and London 2012 Festival marks used the London 2012 logo without the Olympic rings, which facilitated the inclusion and recognition of a wider diversity of cultural organisations than had been possible in previous games. The London 2012 Festival was fully integrated within the Look of the Games programme, which enhanced the visibility and association of cultural activity with the rest of the Games during the Olympic and Paralympic fortnights. Visual marks associated with the Cultural Olympiad applied equally to the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the programme was presented as a single entity across both. In this context, activity dedicated to showcasing the work of Deaf and disabled artists was presented as not only relevant to the Paralympic Games, but developed throughout the four years of the Cultural Olympiad. This allowed greater opportunities for their work to grow and develop and is seen as significant to enhancing project sustainability.

14. These projects are: *BT River of Music*; the entire *Globe* programme; *How Like an Angel*; *Mittwoch aus Licht*; *The Big Concert*; *Compagnie Carabosse* at Stonehenge; *Mandala*; and *Piccadilly Circus Circus*



There was a marked growth in awareness of the Cultural Olympiad as part of the Games throughout the UK, and particularly London. People tended to agree that the Cultural Olympiad was a relevant dimension of the Games, with 29 per cent of the UK population aware of the Cultural Olympiad or London 2012 Festival by the end of the Games. This went up to 40 per cent of Londoners, while 19 per cent of the population and 84 per cent of London 2012 Festival attendees believed the Festival made a positive contribution to the Games. Over 70 per cent of Festival audiences agreed that being part of the London 2012 Festival in the context of the Games was a 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience and that attending a London 2012 Festival event had a positive effect on their overall Games experience.

Evidence of the cultural programme adding value to the Games experience is also apparent in the media coverage and the UK press in particular. In 2012, 67 per cent of national articles mentioning the Cultural Olympiad or London 2012 Festival made this reference significant to the story; this is the case for 75 per cent of regional stories since 2008. In addition, 30 per cent of national stories refer to the Olympic Games or both the Olympic and Paralympic Games, evidence that a considerable proportion of coverage identified Cultural Olympiad events and activities as part of the Games, rather than treating them as part of a separate arts and cultural offer.

Finally, the majority of programme delivery partners and contributing artists also considered the Games connection relevant and saw added value in being part of the Cultural Olympiad. According to 45 per cent of Cultural Olympiad delivery partners, a key benefit of being part of the programme was 'feeling part of a bigger national celebration', to 'attract different participants or audiences' and to 'gain greater national profile'. Contributing artists, such as young people and artists working on the Deaf and disabled art programme Unlimited, highlighted: operating at a greater scale and with more space for innovation; positive brand association; and opportunities to attract greater media attention as some of the key additional benefits.



4. Technical note

Key data sources

The findings presented here are informed by the following primary and secondary sources:

Primary research conducted by the Institute of Cultural Capital (ICC):

- the Project Survey undertaken by ICC/DHA includes data from 648 projects from across the Cultural Olympiad, with the majority of data being completed by 551 projects
- UK press content analysis of clippings mentioning the Cultural Olympiad and London 2012 Festival from the bid stage to the end of the Games (2003-12)
- 40 stakeholder interviews
- case studies on projects representing four main programming areas: Deaf and disabled artists, young people, training and skill development, and tourism development
- Social Media Impact Analysis (2012)

Secondary data:

- the London 2012 Festival Audiences survey, undertaken by Nielsen/LOCOG with analysis from ICC/DHA, surveyed a total of 1,868 audience members across eight projects in the London 2012 Festival
- the State of the Nation polling survey, undertaken by Nielsen/LOCOG between July 2011 and September 2012
- data collated by LOCOG on venues, audiences, events and international press clippings
- a range of national datasets, including Taking Part (DCMS), International Passenger Survey (ONS) and Great Britain Tourism Survey (VisitEngland)
- a selection of evaluations on specific Cultural Olympiad projects or programmes

Research team

This evaluation has been led by Dr Beatriz Garcia (ICC Head of Research and Senior Research Fellow in Sociology, University of Liverpool) as Evaluation Director with support from Tamsin Cox (DHA Head of Policy and Research and ICC Associate).

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