

World Cities Culture Forum Announces Four Leadership Awards across 9 Global Cities

In the inaugural Leadership Exchange Programme, nine cities will collaborate and develop creative solutions to urban challenges, from climate change and threats to affordability, to community engagement

LONDON, UK – May 2, 2018 -- With support from Bloomberg Philanthropies and Google Arts & Culture, today the World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF), a coalition of 35 global cities, announced it will bring together cultural leaders from nine cities to take part in its inaugural Leadership Exchange Programme. This first-ever exchange is designed to support world cities develop best practices for advancing cultural projects and shaping public policy. Culture and industry leaders from **Amsterdam, Austin, Buenos Aires, London, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Toronto and Warsaw** have been chosen to participate in four exchanges.

Cities are laboratories for the development of creative solutions to some of our planet's most complicated challenges. Issues ranging from climate change and threats to affordability, to social cohesion and citizen engagement are common in world cities. Members of WCCF are united in the belief that culture plays a critical role in offering innovative solutions to these challenges. The Leadership Exchange Programme will be a catalyst for positive change in cities.

The inaugural awards will support four exchanges which will develop dynamic solutions to the following challenges:

- *Urban affordability for the creative sector.* The City of Toronto, led by not-for-profit creative placemaking organisation Artscape, will host **Austin, Amsterdam, London, New York, San Francisco, Sydney and Warsaw** to share strategies to retain and grow affordable creative spaces.
- *Re-purposing waste creatively.* **London** will participate in an exchange with **New York City** to explore the innovative 'Materials for the Arts' programme, where waste materials from different sectors are diverted from the waste stream and repurposed by schools and cultural non-profits.
- *Culture and reconciliation.* **Sydney** and **Toronto** will collaborate in a city-to-city exchange, sharing new ideas for celebrating Aboriginal communities and promoting their visibility.
- *Culture in local communities.* **Buenos Aires** will work with **London** to explore the newly launched London Borough of Culture, which will shine a spotlight on local culture and get citizens involved with culture on their doorstep.

Kate Levin, Chair of the Leadership Exchange Jury and Bloomberg Philanthropies Arts program lead, said, 'The jury was so impressed by the insight and expertise evident in each proposal from Member Cities. By creating the opportunity for cities to learn firsthand about the activities and approaches of their peers, the Leadership Exchange Programme will advance the unique capacity of the creative sector in addressing civic issues.'

'The World Cities Culture Forum is the principle leadership network for culture in cities and in only a few years 35 global cities have joined this movement' said Justine Simons OBE, Chair, World Cities Culture Forum, 'today marks an important new landmark, this leadership programme will enable cities to share the world's most ground-breaking projects and further our belief that if cities are to thrive in the 21st century, culture must be an essential ingredient.'

'We look forward to celebrating and showcasing the stories of culture and the creative industries from the world's great cities, in partnership with the World Cities Culture Forum.' Amit Sood, Director, Google Arts & Culture.

Notes to editors

About World Cities Culture Forum

The World Cities Culture Forum is a leading collaborative network of 35 world cities who believe culture is the golden thread for urban policy. It brings together city leaders to share, debate and inspire each other. The Forum publishes the world's most comprehensive data on culture and cities, carries out research on new policy trends and convenes themed symposia, regional summits and workshops including an annual World Cities Culture Summit hosted on a rotating basis by member cities. In 2018, the Summit will be held in San Francisco.

The World Cities Culture Forum is an initiative of the Mayor of London, organised and coordinated by BOP Consulting (<http://bop.co.uk>). For more information about the forum and the summit, go to www.worldcitiescultureforum.com or follow on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in over 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2017, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$702 million. For more information, please visit www.bloomberg.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Snapchat](#), and [Twitter](#).

About Google Arts & Culture

Google Arts & Culture is an innovation partner for cultural institutions. The team provides technologies that help preserve and share culture and allow curators to create engaging exhibitions online and offline, in museums. The Google Arts & Culture app is free and available on the web, on iOS and Android, allowing users to explore exhibitions from over a thousand museums.

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