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2019

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GREAT

BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND



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UK/Georgia 2019 was an autumn season of more than sixty events jointly presented by the British Embassy in Tbilisi and the British Council in Georgia.

The programme showcased the best that modern Britain has to offer in culture, sport, education and business. The season celebrated the friendship between the UK and Georgia.

The programme was designed to inspire 18 to 35-year-olds in Georgia, with a Youth Board helping set the direction and content of the season. Working with Creative Georgia, an agency of the Georgian government, the aim was to support the growth of the cultural and creative industries and foster the inclusion of disabled artists in mainstream arts practice.



As the UK Georgia 2019 Season comes to a close, we can reflect on an amazing three months of events, performances and shared experiences. When we started planning this over a year ago, although we had big ambitions, we didn't imagine what we would be able to achieve with our partners and friends.

We knew we wanted to share the very best that modern, diverse Britain has to offer. Through dance performances from inclusive companies such as Candoco, inspiring tech startups with StartUp GRIND, DJ sets and workshops, we certainly did that. We knew we wanted to celebrate the ages long friendship between our two countries. So we worked with the British Museum and the Georgian National Museum to create the jointly-curated exhibition around the unique coin of King David The Builder, loaned outside of the UK for the first time in more than 150 years. We have celebrated the enduring contribution to our friendship made by Sir Oliver and Marjory Wardrop. We also knew we wanted to make sure this friendship encompasses this generation and the next. We twinned British expertise with young Georgian creative entrepreneurs, helping to build skills and create careers. We took the British Embassy and the British Council on the road, and through our Pop Up Embassies, we met thousands of young people across Georgia and talked to them about education, the UK and English language. Our Youth Board ensured that all our planning and decision-making reflected the opinions and needs of young people in Georgia.

Most importantly, we learned new things about the UK and Georgia and what we can achieve together. Our success would not have been possible without the support of many, many friends, new and old, inside and outside of government. Of course, special thanks must go to our Founding Partners without whom, none of this would have been possible. Thank you to all of our partners and friends!

Justin McKenzie Smith

Her Majesty's Ambassador to Georgia

Zaza Purtseladze

Director, British Council in South Caucasus and Georgia



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King David the Builder's Coin Exhibition

On 15 September, we opened the **Georgian National Museum** exhibition of the coin featuring the image of the **Georgian King David The Builder**. The coin is an iconic artefact of Georgian culture and was on loan from the **British Museum** until 15 December 2019. A special platform has been commissioned which allows audiences anywhere to see the coin online at: www.britishcouncil.ge/en/king-david

Among the guests of the opening ceremony were **Irina Abuladze** and **Levan Kharatishvili**, Deputy Ministers of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia, and **Rebecca Simor**, the British Council Director of Festivals and Seasons. On 16 September, Dr. **Vesta Curtis**, Curator of the Middle Eastern Coins from the British Museum delivered a lecture, 'What can ancient coins tell us?', at the **BP Auditorium** of Georgian National Museum.

Prof. David Lordkipanidze
Director of the
Georgian National
Museum

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Exhibition of King David the Builder's coin in Georgia is a historic event for all Georgians. It has been a dream of the whole generation of scholars to get a view of the coin. And today this dream has come true. I would like to say a huge thank you for providing this opportunity to the Georgian audiences to see the object from the times of one of the most important kings of Georgia

UK/Georgia 2019 launch event

The launch event for the UK/Georgia 2019 took place at the **Stamba Hotel** in central Tbilisi and was attended by high-level stakeholders from the UK and Georgia, including the **Deputy Ministers of Education, Science, Culture and Sport**, and members of parliament. The Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia, **Mikhail Batiashvili**, Her Majesty's Ambassador **Justin McKenzie** and **Zaza Purtseladze**, the British Council Director in South Caucasus and Georgia, gave the opening speeches.

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Over the next three months, we will celebrate the special friendship that exists between the UK and Georgia and we will put in place the building blocks for future friendship. We hope that the UK season in Georgia will find a place in everyone's hearts.

British Ambassador and Wounded Warriors at the Coin Exhibition

The British Ambassador hosted a tour of the Coin Exhibition at the **National Museum of Georgia** for 18 War Veterans and their support staff.

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Justin McKenzie Smith
Her Majesty's
Ambassador to
Georgia



GREAT campaign on Tbilisi public transport

The British Embassy in Tbilisi took UK/Georgia 2019 in to the public space, with eye-catching branding on **Tbilisi Metro, buses and bus stops**. This campaign ran up to the end of the season in December.

Nabihah Iqbal liveset and workshop

Nabihah Iqbal, the versatile British producer and DJ, performed at **Mzesumzira Club** to start the season's music programme. She led a cultural skills workshop for local Georgian musicians, sharing her experience of DJ-ing and marketing her work online.

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**Nabihah
Iqbal**
Musician,
producer,
and DJ

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In our times it is even more important to have cross-cultural connections, and to be able to share different ideas through music. I am very happy to be here in Tbilisi. You have your own unique language and alphabet - it's very European and at the same time not European at all. It is its own place.

Jamz Supernova in Tbilisi

The British musician, DJ and **#SelectorRadio** presenter **Jamz Supernova** to play the live set and lead a workshop in Tbilisi. A keen agent for change, Jamz created **DIY Generation** – a spotlight on amazing young people building and owning their own careers, highlighting women and people of colour. Jamz will also conduct a workshop for the up-and-coming Georgian DJs.

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Maka Dvalishvili

Founder and
CEO
Georgian Arts
and Culture
Centre



Tbilisoba

Every year Tbilisi celebrates the day it was founded. The British Embassy participated by promoting the city of **Bristol**, twinned with Tbilisi, and of course the UK/Georgia Season. It also live-streamed simultaneously from Batumi and Tbilisi. Distinguished visitors included the **Georgian Prime Minister** and **Speaker of the Parliament**.

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Crafting Futures forum

The British Council hosted The Crafting Futures networking forum, supported by **Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia**, in partnership with **Georgian Arts and Culture Centre**. Crafting Futures supports practices and people through research, collaboration and education. More than 20 representatives of crafts sector from the UK, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan attended.

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It's extremely important, that *Crafting Futures* starts in Georgia. Today's meeting brings together crafts professionals from all the participating countries, and it's an amazing networking opportunity for us to share experiences, discuss challenges and explore solutions as well as shaping the programme in each country.

Creative Enterprise Programme

Nesta, the British innovation foundation, partnered with **Creative Georgia** to deliver a three-day training workshop for 23 creative entrepreneurs, aimed at developing creative ideas into business plans. Five participants were selected and mentored to pitch their proposals at the Cultural and Creative Industries Youth Forum held on 15-16 October.

Irma Ratiani, Director of Creative Georgia/ National Cultural Foundation of Georgia and **Zaza Purtseladze**, British Council Director in South Caucasus and Georgia, gave the opening speeches.

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**Steven
Lee**
Nesta
associate

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It's an honour to be invited to Georgia and be able to share some wonderful things, British culture and creative industries are known for. And it's fantastic to share knowledge, skills and tools, that are going to set our incredibly enthusiastic entrepreneurs, who're just embarking on a journey, as business people.

Startup Grind

British Embassy in Tbilisi, in partnership with the **Georgian Innovation and Technology Agency**, supported **Startup Grind Georgia** to bring UK talent into the Georgian ecosystem to share knowledge and inspiration.

The partnership also envisions Georgian citizens travelling to the UK for immersion experiences, allowing them to bring back resources and networks that will bridge the UK and Georgian startup ecosystems. UK support was focused on Cyber Security, Fintech, and Angel investment.

08-10
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The Unlimited forum

The British Council's four-year arts and disability programme in Georgia culminated in an international arts forum about inclusion: Unlimited: Making the Right Moves. **Giorgi Volski**, Vice Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, **Her Majesty's Ambassador in Georgia** and **Levan Kharatishvili**, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport welcomed participants to the Parliament of Georgia. The forum gathered artists and policymakers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine and the UK.

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The Unlimited Forum exceeded our expectations; so we are keen to host a wider inclusivity forum for all Eastern Partnership countries next year.



Givi Mikanadze
Head of the
Administration of
the Parliament of
Georgia

Disability Arts showcase

The Unlimited forum closed with a show at the **Tbilisi International Festival of Theatre**, which featured **111, Face In, Let's Talk About Dis** and the premiere of **The Argonauts**, a dance performance with disabled and non-disabled dancers from the South Caucasus. This was developed with **Candoco Dance Company** and **Lost Dog Dance** from the UK.

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All the activities by the British Council and the British Embassy are geared to learning something new and important, to break your own frames of mind, that resist to show your best.

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**Irma
Zveriashvili**
Disabled
dancer

Studio Wayne McGregor's collaboration with Tbilisi International Festival of Theatre

A co-production between world-famous British dance company **Studio Wayne McGregor** and **Tbilisi International Festival of Theatre** was performed outdoors in the historical quarter of Tbilisi, attracting over 3,000 spectators. Over 40 Georgian artists, dancers and choreographers had worked together with SWM to create a breathtaking show, with music specially created by **Scanner**.

UK/Georgia 2019 Youth Board

For the first time in Georgia, ten aspiring young leaders with background in creativity and UK/Georgia cultural relations were selected to sit on the **Season's Youth Board**. They acted as ambassadors of the season shaped the season's events and activities, and ensured that they reach young audiences.



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I believe that involving young Georgian people and spreading the word is paramount in bringing positive changes and developments in Georgian culture and education.

Pop-up Embassies

British Embassy organised various Pop-up embassy events around Georgia, reaching out to different groups of people: local communities and government in **Nasakirali**; media and civil society representatives in **Batumi**, and young people in **Telavi, Zugdidi and Pankisi gorge**.

We promoted studying opportunities in the UK with **Chevening scholarship**, learning English and other programmes run by the British Council, as well as creating awareness of our programmes. Activities ranged from quizzes with UK Season branded prizes, sporting games for kids and other fun events to interest youths, including personally meeting the British Ambassador.

Ambassador for a Day competition

A competition for young Georgians to submit a short story about their ideal day with a famous or influential British person to win the chance to become Ambassador for the day. The winner, a **14-year-old girl named Sieda from Pankisi**, wrote about **Lucy Hawking** and the work she does to raise awareness about autism. Sieda attended meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and visited the Coin exhibition at the National Museum.



**Baya
Kvitsiani**
Youth Board
member



Culture and Creative Industries (CCIs) Youth Forum

In partnership with **Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia** and **Creative Georgia**, the inaugural CCIs Youth Forum brought leading voices from the UK creative industries together with young creative entrepreneurs and students from Georgia to share experiences and build connections. Over 150 participants attended panel discussions and workshops. **Justin McKenzie Smith**, HMA to Georgia, welcomed the forum participants. Among the speakers were **Levan Kharatishvili**, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Georgia, and **Sara Pepper**, Director of Creative Economy, Cardiff University.

15-16
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Levan Kharatishvili
Deputy
Minister of
Education,
Science,
Culture, and
Sports of
Georgia

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Our Ministry always welcomes such significant events in Georgia, and British Council is undoubtedly one of our most loyal partners for years. Most importantly, on the basis of the experience now being created by UK/Georgia 2019 Season, we're already preparing to host the Georgian season in the UK in 2020.

Creative Spark English Club

This newly opened English Club is in partnership with **Business and Technology University (BTU)** in Tbilisi under the umbrella of the British Council Creative Spark programme. The English Clubs focus on four key areas: Learning to Learn and Language Skills, Language Skills and Professional Skills, World of Work, and Entrepreneurial Skills. The programme will last 20 weeks and will involve 20 selected students.

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Neil Brand

Silent film pianist and composer



20th Tbilisi International Film Festival opens with Alfred Hitchcock's *Blackmail*

With a special focus on the UK, the 20th Tbilisi International Film Festival opened with Alfred Hitchcock's silent classic *Blackmail*, set to music by British composer **Neil Brand** (accompanied by Alter Orchestra, led by **Mirian Khukhunaishvili**). A 90-second short film competition, DepicTI!, partnered TIFF with **Bristol Encounters Festival**. And elsewhere there were contemporary British movies alongside world-renowned classics.



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This night was extraordinary in terms of many circumstances. I've never been so happy with performance of one of my scores at such a high level. And the best complement I had is that we forgot that the orchestra was live; that is wonderful.

Film screenings

As well as the British film programmes at **Batumi International Art House Film Festival** and **Tbilisi International Film Festival**, we hosted film screenings through the season including National Theatre Live at the **Amirani Theatre**. The British Embassy also hosted a screening of the documentary film, **Wave Goodbye to Dinosaurs**, portraying women's participation in the Northern Irish peace process. Viewers were in tears after the screening. Due to demand, an additional screening was added at the Pop Up Embassy in Zugdidi.

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**Anna
Meredith**
Award-
winning
musician

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Varmints is a very special project to me. I normally only perform it with a small band, but now is amplified and expanded to play with Tbilisi Youth Orchestra. Meeting young players and seeing how they perform, have been inspiring for all my band.

Varmints with Anna Meredith and Tbilisi Youth Orchestra

Anna Meredith, a genre-crossing composer and producer described as ‘one of the most innovative voices in British music’, and her band performed *Varmints* (Scottish Album of the Year Award, 2016) in the Marjanishvili Theatre with the newly established Tbilisi Youth Orchestra. Led by **Mirian Khukhunaishvili** and **Mikheil Mdinardze**, it was the orchestra’s first experience of performing with an electronic band.

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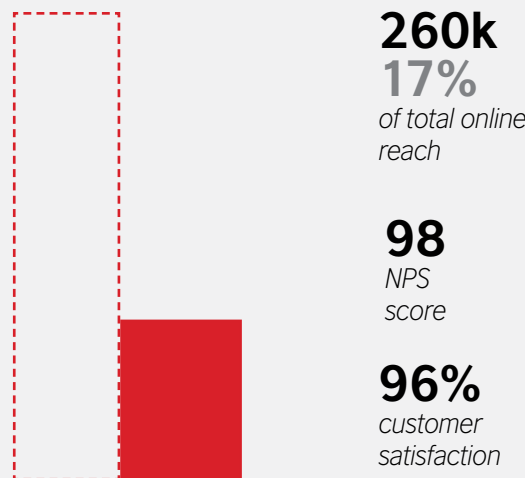
UK/Georgia 2019 in numbers

The statistics for the UK/Georgia 2019 season were compiled using the RECA framework (reach, engagement, conversion and advocacy).

Conversion



Engagement



48k
face-to-face audiences

82k
website visits

2.8m
people reached in Georgia

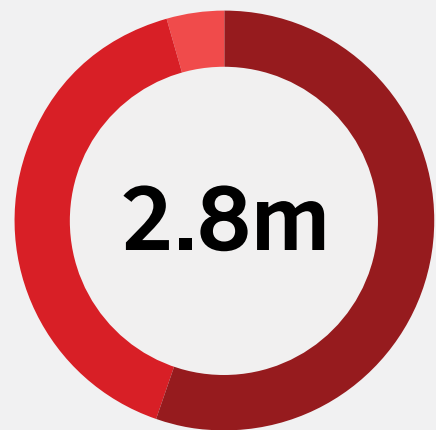
260k
engagements online

Reach

1.5m
reached online

1.2m
people reached through TV and radio

130k
reached via online outlets



Advocacy





