



# THE INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL PANEL

Strategy 2017–2020



**FEJL! INGEN TEKST MED DEN ANFØRTE TYPOGRAFI I  
DOKUMENTET.  
STRATEGY 2017-2020**

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# 1.

## OBJECTIVES, VISION AND PRINCIPLES

The International Cultural Panel (ICP) is a binding, multi-ministry forum established to promote cultural exchanges between Denmark and the rest of the world. The ICP was set up in 2010 to follow up on the previous internationalisation strategy for art and culture.

On 1 January 2017, the ICP consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Culture (chair), the Ministry of Business and Growth, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Danish Architecture Centre, the Danish Design Centre, the Danish Film Institute, the Danish Cultural Institute, the Agency for Culture and Palaces, the Danish Arts Foundation and VisitDenmark.

Six years after the ICP was set up, the consensus is that the work of co-ordinating cultural exchange programmes is still relevant and important and that exchanges with other countries have the greatest impact when ministries work together, co-ordinate input and focus on the same goals. The point is to achieve synergies and maximise value for money. In the light of this, the ICP is pursuing the following vision:

*The role of the International Cultural Panel is to contribute to initiatives that strengthen links between Denmark and the rest of the world via encounters with other cultures and countries. The International Cultural Panel's contribution to artistic and cultural development will include relevant narratives about Denmark and the promotion of mutually inspiring, multi-genre collaboration between Danes and people from other countries.*

The ICP's principal objective is to contribute to the development of Danish art and culture. Culture does not exist in a vacuum – it evolves and thrives in interaction with outside influences and the wider world. It is through encounters with other cultures that artists

and cultural practitioners find the inspiration that nurtures a lively, dynamic scene in Denmark.

Cultural exchanges with other countries play a major role in promoting the export of cultural products and narratives about Denmark, both as a nation and as a tourist destination, in marketing cultural tourism and in facilitating cultural dialogue with other countries. Cultural exchange as a source of dialogue is particularly important in countries with delicate political situations, where culture may provide an impetus for people to work together despite political disagreements, e.g. in Turkey and Russia. In this light, the ICP seeks to promote four objectives, all of which are rooted in recognition of the intrinsic value of art and culture.

### **THE FOUR OBJECTIVES**

- To develop and renew Danish art and culture
- To market Denmark as a nation
- To promote cultural exports
- To promote intercultural dialogue.

In various ways, all of the members of the ICP pursue one or more of these objectives, but they may not pursue all four at the same time. Equally, the objectives may not all be reflected to the same degree in specific exchange projects. Depending on the other country involved in the exchange, some cultural initiatives will primarily focus on marketing and cultural exports, while others will place greater emphasis on inter-cultural dialogue. The objectives are, therefore, neither normative nor comprehensive with regard to the content of exchange projects. Rather, they determine whether a particular project is relevant to one or more members of the Panel.

The common denominator for all projects is that they are based on the same principles for cultural exchange – first and foremost, high artistic and cultural quality. The principles are set out below.

### **THE ICP PRINCIPLES**

**QUALITY:** All initiatives and projects must be of high artistic and cultural quality.

**LOCAL INTEREST:** All initiatives and projects must focus on generating interest, reciprocity and local backing in the partner country.

**LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE:** All initiatives and projects must seek to establish networks, narratives and relationships that have the potential to last far beyond the lifetime of the individual project or initiative.

**COLLABORATION:** Whenever feasible and relevant, one-on-one collaborations and partnerships will be facilitated.

**COMMUNICATION:** All projects and initiatives must focus on target groups, communication and profiling.

# 2.

## NARRATIVES ABOUT DENMARK

### 2.1 The role of art and culture in narratives about Denmark

Cultural exchanges with other countries are a significant part of the narratives that provide the framework for spreading knowledge about Denmark and marketing the country abroad – as a cultural nation, a tourist destination and an exporter.

The ICP will play an active role in disseminating narratives about Denmark, albeit in a way that takes into account the arm's-length principle and the right of artists to express themselves freely through their work. Freedom of expression endows art with its own significance, which cannot be imposed externally. Works of art and culture are not created to promote a particular view of Denmark in the wider world. On the contrary, art can and does highlight problems, critiques the status quo and promotes dialogue, criticism and debate. This is in itself a core value, one that art helps promote.

Experience of previous projects indicates that cultural initiatives are more effective if they are based on a shared narrative that is communicated clearly to appropriate target groups. The impact of Danish art and culture is multiplied if the initiative or project is part of a wider narrative. The ICP will, therefore, work with “value narratives” as an overarching theme for its activities. Cultural projects are also an ideal way of promoting tourism in Denmark as part of a wider public diplomacy effort. Ultimately, they enhance Denmark’s international influence and have a positive effect on the country’s reputation around the world. The mantra is: “Show, don’t tell”.

It is a fundamental principle that we cannot market ourselves as something we are not; we cannot sell something we do not have. As such, it is crucial to be authentic and respect the intrinsic value of art. Ultimately, high artistic and cultural quality helps shape the image of Danish art and culture for which we want to be known around the world. Cultural exchanges must, therefore, start

and end with a concept of quality that in itself helps to market Denmark in a positive manner.

## 2.2 Values

Many different values shape Denmark in different ways: some characterise how the Danes see themselves, while others influence how the rest of the world views Denmark.

People submitted a wide range of proposals for the *Denmark Canon* but in the final version they were honed down to 10 values that have helped shape the country. What they have in common is that they do not necessarily originate in Denmark, nor are they necessarily peculiarly Danish. Taken as a whole, however, they paint a picture that is useful in marketing Denmark as a nation of culture, as a tourist destination and as an exporter.

The ICP will base its cultural exchange projects on the core values listed below. These values are neither normative nor exclusive. Rather, they serve to guide the work of the ICP and will be used for, e.g. the proactive communication of cultural exchange projects where they are relevant and meaningful to art and culture.

### EXAMPLES OF VALUES

- Social cohesion, transparency and democracy
- Freedom of expression and openness to dialogue, inclusion and criticism
- Culture of trust
- Artistic freedom and the arm's-length principle
- Creativity, proximity, diversity and face-to-face dialogue.
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# 3.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 3.1 Priorities 2017–2020

The ICP will concentrate on three geographic areas in 2017–2020: European neighbours, the USA and Asia (China, Japan and South Korea). It will also concentrate events that are of particular relevance to more than one panel member and which are deemed to be capable of making a regional or global impact.

#### GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES 2017–2020

- **EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS:**  
The Nordic and Baltic regions, United Kingdom, France and Germany
- **USA**
- **ASIA**  
China, Japan and South Korea.

The target countries were selected on the basis of ICP's overall assessment of where focusing its efforts would be most effective. Given the significant cultural differences, the specific reasoning behind the selections varies for each country. Nevertheless, the ICP felt that these countries meet all of the criteria for the four objectives across a range of artistic genres. All of these countries are culturally interesting in their own right, and together constitute Denmark's most important export markets. Most of them are also of interest from a tourism point of view. The appendix describes in greater depth the strategic direction for each geographic priority.

The selection of geographic priorities is based on an overall assessment of the following criteria (which have not been prioritised):

- Artistic and cultural interest in Danish artists
- Foreign-policy interest, e.g. establishing platforms for intercultural dialogue in specific countries
- Local demand for and interest in Danish art and culture
- Relevant export and tourism markets and potential growth markets of relevance for spreading knowledge of Denmark
- Potential for Nordic co-operation and/or partnerships
- Strong local representation, in the form of embassies, consulates and cultural institutions.

The Nordic Region differs from the other priority areas in that the ICP wishes to focus on outward-facing Nordic co-operation with countries and regions elsewhere in the world. The Region already has a highly developed form of regional co-operation, backed up by funding programmes. The ICP, therefore, wishes to focus on this external dimension, and to encourage Nordic partnerships wherever they are relevant and will enhance the impact of a given initiative. Particular attention will be paid to Nordic co-operation on relevant platforms so that Nordic efforts can be integrated into the work being done in the other geographic priority areas, e.g. under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers or Nordic projects in the Baltic Sea region. Another priority will be Nordic co-operation on the marketing of Denmark and the Nordic Region, e.g. via collaboration between the Nordic “Visit” organisations.

However, inclusion on the list of geographic priorities does not mean that all of these countries will be in focus at the same time and throughout the whole period covered by the strategy. For example, the focus on the United Kingdom and Japan will be most intensive in 2017 due to large-scale ongoing initiatives. In addition, 2017 is the official Danish-Chinese Year of Tourism. The focus on the Baltic region will be greatest in 2018, when the republics celebrate the centenary of their independence.

# 4

## ORGANISATION AND WAYS OF WORKING

### 4.1 Organisation

The ICP consists of representatives at director level from all of the member institutions. It is a strategic forum that makes overarching decisions about the work as a whole and about specific events on which the members will work with each other. With regard to the working relationship with the project groups, the ICP has overall responsibility and commissions projects. The ICP meets once or twice a year, with secretariat support provided by the Ministry of Culture.

The cultural exchange projects on which members of the panel work together take many different forms, but usually fall under the category of “cultural initiatives”. These involve a large number of related cultural-exchange activities, stretching over a specified period of time, with a common theme and possibly a common logo, which enhances the impact made by the participants and raises Denmark’s profile abroad. Cultural initiatives often take place alongside state visits or export and tourism promotions.

*Project groups* are established on an ad hoc basis in response to specific decisions on cultural initiatives, based either on geographic priority or on a strategic event. It is the task of the ICP, where necessary and relevant, to lay down objectives and success criteria for the project groups. Project groups are operational bodies. As well as representatives of the ICP member institutions, they may also consist of other stakeholders with an interest in a particular initiative. Depending on need, and where the scope of a project requires it, steering groups may be set up to deal with the overall management of each individual project. The Agency for Culture and Palaces provides secretariat services for the project groups. A permanent management group has been established for Nordic cultural initiatives, the remit of which

involves initiating and co-ordinating Nordic cultural initiatives under the auspices of the Council of Ministers.

In addition to the ICP and the project groups, a steering group on international cultural exchanges has been established under the co-operation agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture. It makes decisions on financial priorities for the pool of approx. DKK 8.9 million set up under the agreement. Of this, around DKK 4.5 million has been earmarked for the ICP action plan, while the remainder has been allocated to recurring tasks such as state visits, culture seminars and Danish diplomatic representations abroad.

#### **4.2 Open calls**

Where relevant, the ICP can – within the framework of the strategic priorities set out in the action plan – issue open calls for proposals on which the Panel members may wish to work with each other. A recent example of this was the open call issued to gauge interest in a Nordic cultural initiative in 2017.

#### **4.3 Mid-point Evaluation**

In 2018, the ICP will conduct a mid-point evaluation of its current strategy in order to facilitate reassessment and adaptation if this is deemed necessary. A full evaluation of the strategy will be conducted in 2020.

# APPENDIX

## GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES

### **European neighbours**

In light of Brexit and other recent events in Europe that are presenting serious challenges to the European sense of community, the ICP thinks the time has come for closer co-operation and greater cohesion. In this context, culture can act as a foundation for promoting peace and establishing a sense of shared identity, by weaving the national and the European together into a shared narrative about what we have built together and what we have in common.

The ICP's European Neighbours priority will focus on two tracks. One consists of the big European nations – the United Kingdom, France and Germany – which have long been important partners for Danish cultural exchange programmes. These are great cultural nations and important outlets for Danish artists. All three have good local Danish representation, comprising strong networks with wide-ranging experience of cultural co-operation. They are also Denmark's most important export and tourism markets.

The other track consists of the Nordic Region and the Baltic Sea. Denmark plays an active role in Nordic co-operation through the Nordic Council of Ministers, and has a great sense of affinity with the other Nordic countries. The ICP will focus on closer Nordic co-operation on projects and initiatives that fall within the Nordic external dimension. Good Nordic cultural exchange and funding programmes already exist. The ICP will focus on the external dimension, e.g. by setting up Nordic cultural initiatives in selected countries, in which artists from across the Region are represented.

In the Baltic Sea region, the ICP will improve on the existing good relations fostered by the Danish Cultural Institute's offices in Riga, St Petersburg and Warsaw. The Danish Cultural Institute already serves as a good platform for cultural exchanges, and there are advantages to be gained from incorporating it into the

activities of the ICP. Specifically, this could be done as part of the celebration of the centenary of the Baltic countries' independence in 2018. This could serve as a platform for cultural exchanges and cultural initiatives on a large or a small scale.

One example of a large-scale cultural initiative is Nordic Matters, which was launched in London in 2017. Under the auspices of the Nordic Council of Ministers, a proposal has also been received for Nordic co-operation in Paris in 2018, as well as for a possible Nordic initiative outside of Europe, perhaps as part of the ICP's activities in 2017–2020.

## **USA**

The USA is a dominant presence in art and culture, and has long attracted Danish artists working in all genres. In other words, the USA is pretty much omnipresent in the international cultural sphere. It is also an important ally and export market, as well as a priority market for tourism. In the USA there is great interest in both Danish and Nordic culture, thanks in part to the Nordic Cool initiative in Washington in 2013. In particular, there is considerable demand for Danish design and architecture, an outstanding example of which is the success of Bjarke Ingels.

## **Asia - China, Japan and South Korea**

Since 2010, the ICP has focused on China as a special geographic priority. This culminated in the Danish-Chinese cultural initiative of 2014–2015, which was a huge success and led to many enquiries and requests for new collaborations. The ICP will build upon the momentum generated by the cultural initiative in China, but also extend its focus to other parts of Asia, including Japan and South Korea. Cultural bodies in all three Asian countries have expressed interest in working with Danish artists. These countries are also major growth markets with interesting tourism perspectives. Danish interests are reflected in the partnership agreement with South Korea, which the prime minister signed in October 2016. Work is also being done at inter-governmental level on the official Danish-Chinese Year of Tourism in 2017.

Another specific initiative in 2017–2020 is the continuing follow-up on the cultural initiative in China 2014–2015. Danish-Japanese diplomatic relations are being marked in 2017 with a large-scale cultural initiative being staged in both countries. Similarly, South Korea plans to celebrate its diplomatic relations with Denmark in 2019, which may provide excellent opportunities to establish cultural initiatives of all sizes.