



---

# CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

---

April 2019

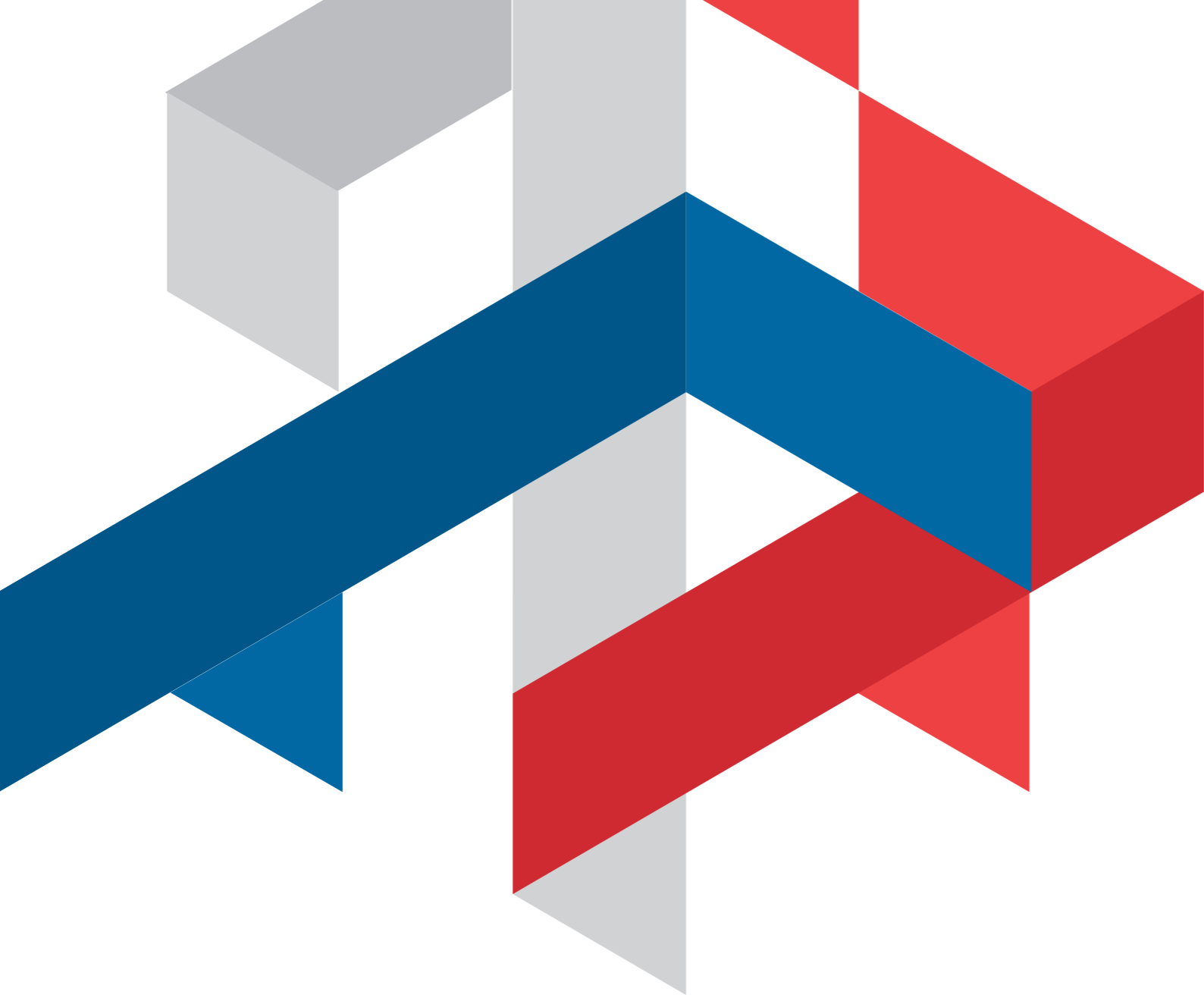
**ual:** university  
of the arts  
london

**YARAT**  
CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE



Ministry of Culture  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Gradcore **GC**



I am very pleased to welcome all Creative Spark participants to Azerbaijan which is also known as the land of fire and famous for its hospitality. I hope your visit to Baku, Azerbaijan's capital city, will be pleasant and memorable because this is a unique place where modern architecture and urban development meets history and tradition.

We are delighted to host you for yet another Creative Spark initiative that supports international university and institutional partnerships and develops enterprise skills amongst young learners. Students are the main beneficiaries of this programme, and we hope that your participation will enhance creative economy partnerships and co-operation between UK and Azerbaijan. During your stay in Baku you will have a chance to visit a number of historical places in Azerbaijan, as well as state-of-the-art buildings that go back in centuries and depict the beauty of the East and the welcoming culture that is represented here.

At the British Council, our work in Higher Education focusses on strengthening co-operation between UK and Azerbaijani higher education systems and institutions. To facilitate this co-operation and provide joint research and teaching opportunities for people from both countries, we build capacity in Azerbaijani universities for international collaboration and research excellence. Our close relationships with the Ministry of Education, university faculty members and students position the UK as an attractive partner for reform, for university partnerships and as an attractive study destination. The British Council is actively supporting UK universities to explore this potential for transnational education. We are also supporting Azerbaijan's universities in enhancing graduate employability by showcasing UK's successful experience in developing public and private partnerships. Creative Spark is a fine example where we bring the UK expertise and experience in entrepreneurship education to help develop the creative economy, improve English language skills, and create more opportunities for the future generation.



**Summer Xia**

Country Director | British Cultural Attaché  
British Council Azerbaijan



## CREATIVE SPARK PROJECT

Creative Spark: Higher Education Enterprise Programme is a five-year initiative to help develop the creative economy and enterprise skills across seven countries in Central Asia, (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan), South Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia) and Ukraine.

The programme has been developed in response to an underdeveloped creative sector and a demand for entrepreneurship training in these countries. Creative industries have driven economic growth in the UK. We want to use this experience and expertise to support sustainable development and social welfare.

Creative Spark is managed and funded by the British Council.

The 'Boomerang project' will see a partnership form between Gradcore and the University of Arts London (UAL) in the UK and the University of Culture and Arts and Yarat Contemporary Art Space in Azerbaijan. This cultural exchange project involves students from London and Baku, meeting, experiencing a new culture and developing their creative skills. The project aims to introduce participants to the diversity and social inclusion challenges of their respective countries, and encourage them to use the creative arts to have a positive impact on some of these challenges

This partnership has support from the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan, as well as the British Council as part of the Creative Spark programme. As a partnership, we are united by a shared interest in building greater cultural connectivity and developing the creative and enterprise competencies of students and graduates.

## STACY GRIFFITHS

### Textile Design

I am a multi disciplinary designer, obsessed with materials. Ethics and sustainability play a huge part in my practice as a designer, ensuring I always question my works purpose. I'm currently developing a 'nose to tail' material design solution from by products of the food industry.

I'm looking forward to visiting a new country and experiencing a new culture that I am keen to learn more about. Baku has some of the most ambitious modern architecture sat alongside ancient buildings and I am excited to see that in real life as it will no doubt influence my future work.





## ARTUR GRZESKIEWICZ

Illustration and Visual Media

My practice is mainly focused on textiles and photography. I specialise in knitting, experimenting with different mediums and techniques to come up with the most appealing and interesting pieces. While taking photographs, I focus on political, social and identity issues around us.

I am very excited to get to know what is it like to be an artist in Baku. I'm interested to see which mediums are popular and what artists usually use might not necessarily be well known over here. It's a great opportunity to observe and discover a very exciting and unique culture.



## ALESSANDRO PERCHIAZZI

Course studying/studied -

BA Photojournalism and Documentary Photographer

I am a documentary photographer, my approach focuses on storytelling by using analogue photography. My practice explores the relationships between people and their landscapes.

The Boomerang Project will allow me to create the foundations for a longer term project, and gain a knowledge of what Baku has to offer.



## JAN NARDINI

### BA Ceramic Design



As a designer and ceramicist, I create forms in clay to provoke and delight. With my home base in Oxfordshire, my work is playful and inspired by nature. I believe, the universality of clay and collective act of making connects people across cultures, social groups and all ages

I am most looking forward to sharing the adventure of our exchange between UAL and Azerbaijan Universities. I want to gain new insights from different design and making approaches and collaborating with multi-disciplinary creative students and specialists. Simply thrilled to visit Baku and experience Azerbaijan



## CIARA BROWN

### BA Fine Art

With my creations and interventions, I am hoping to combat ways in which I can critique the consumer culture, which saturates my everyday experience. My aim is to utilise excess stuff, prolong life span of objects and prevent endangered experiences with a multi-media practice.

I am excited to converse with other people who also wish to combat social change through the enterprising of their own interests. Hopefully collaborations will happen. I am looking forward to observing the maximal design which is displayed in traditional and clothing created in Baku.

DEBORAH DE MELLO

MA Fashion Futures

My work is about making people care about sustainability in the fashion context. I explore my creativity different tools, for example: designing clothes; writing and film making. Every time I start a project I ask myself “why should somebody care about about what I am doing?”

I am from Brazil and for this reason I have never had much contact with the culture from Azerbaijan. So I am very excited to learn more about it. I am also looking forward to meeting the other students taking part in the exchange, and to collaborate with them.

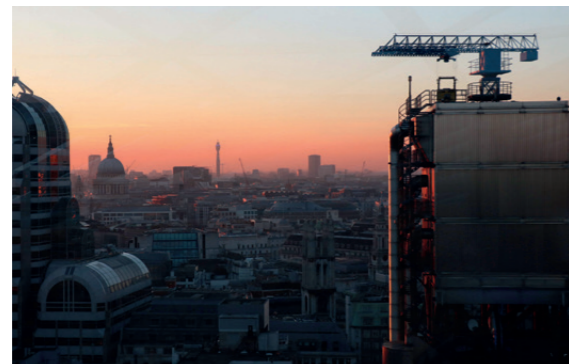
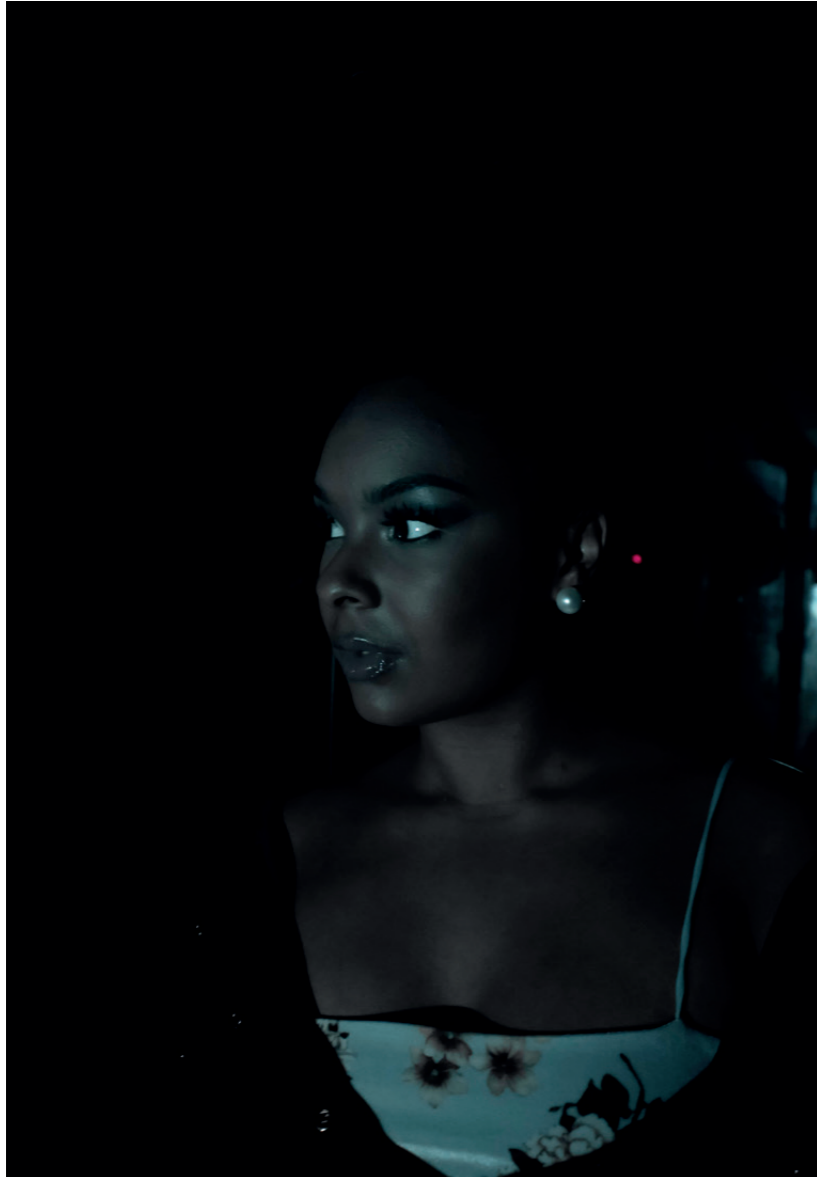


NATALIA ZMARZLIK

BA Journalism

First of all, I do not consider myself as an artist, I just write sarcastic and funny articles about my own experiences, especially about my self-development process and about art. At the same time I try to do some architecture photography, as I appreciate the beauty of the buildings.

As a result of taking part in the project I would like to write a series of articles about Baku- its fascinating people the incredible architecture of the city. I would like to take photos of the buildings so I could create an art exhibition and include them in the articles as well.



## DOMINIKA CHMARA

### Media Communications

I'm a multidisciplinary creative interested in both the practical side of the media industry as well as the more theoretical side of it. I'm a Freelance graphic designer, photographer, post production re-toucher and editor, but am also studying and working within Media Communications.

What are you looking forward to about the Boomerang Project and why?

I'm looking forward to learning more about the culture of Azerbaijan, experiencing the creative environment of Baku and expanding my international, professional network further. I believe The Boomerang Project will be an amazing.



## GHAJAR TAJMOHAMMAD

### BA Painting

Art for me, is a bridge to a home lost in displacement. My bridge connects my English upbringing to my Afghan heritage, it does this by merging the two contrasting culture's visual styles together to produce paintings. Whilst the core element of my practice is constituted by color.

I am looking forward to attending the workshop and events surrounding this project, as I feel these will aid my business idea to grow and materialise.

Baku as a country itself also excites me for its intriguing geographical placement in two contrasting cultures.



## GABRIELA-VALENTINA GROZAVU

Illustration and Visual Media, Year 1

As a visual artist who is passionate about bright colours and green fields, I want to use my art superpower in a sustainable way, to raise awareness and provide solutions for environmental issues.

What are you looking forward to about the Boomerang Project and why?

I am excited for this unique opportunity to learn how to effectively use my skills in order to create a world of values, exchange ideas and find solutions which will have a comprehensive contribution to today's society and enjoy an amazing atmosphere offered by the beautiful Baku.



## MARTIN EDMONDSON

Martin is the CEO and founder of Gradcore, a social enterprise focused on graduate recruitment and employability. Martin has nearly 20 years' experience working across graduate recruitment and Higher Education, and is a Director of the Institute for Student Employers.

Martin has advised the UK government and the EU on graduate recruitment, written for a wide range of newspapers, journals and websites, and has spoken regularly at conferences across the UK, Europe and US. He is originally a music and english graduate, and spent some time in Azerbaijan in 2015 working with a range of universities on employability.



## JOHN CUSWORTH

John is the Partnerships Director at Gradcore. John has worked in entry level recruitment and employability for over 15 years.

John has led the graduate recruitment campaigns for multiple global leadership schemes and has delivered award winning student and graduate employability programmes working in Higher Education.

In 2015, John was part of a UK delegation to Azerbaijan, showcasing our work in the UK. He delivered a workshop advising Universities on how to optimise the connectivity of graduates with the local labour market.



## RICHARD SANT

Richard is Head of Careers & Employability, University of the Arts London. As Head he has developed and launched the Creative Attributes Framework, a model of employability and enterprise for a creative curriculum. Previous experience includes running a business dealing in early European textiles, working at the University of Portsmouth as Director of the Centre for Enterprise in the Faculty of Creative Industries and leading the MA Creative and Cultural Leadership.

He has a particular interest in creating models of employability and developing ways to create new ways to measure it including designing the Employability Self Efficacy (ESE) test at Solent University.



## TESSA READ

Tessa is Deputy Head of Careers and Employability at the University of the Arts London (UAL). Tessa was key in initiating the student led creative collective, KNKTU, which creates a space and programming activity for students who are first in their family to go to university. Prior to this she worked in Widening Participation at UAL. Her interest lies in addressing inequality and under representation within the cultural industries. She is a graduate of both Manchester University and Sussex Universities. She has worked in both India and South Africa, working closely with local social enterprises and has a strong interest in social entrepreneurship learning. She continues to work with Design Against Crime Research Centre (CSM) supporting research in design-led social innovation and enterprise.

## UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON

University of the Arts London values the project's commitment to building greater cultural connectivity, and the opportunity to further develop the creative and enterprise competencies of our students and graduates. We are particularly interested in facilitating international mobility for our students and we look forward to taking the project forward and developing new sustainable partnerships in Azerbaijan.

## AZERBAIJAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE AND ARTS

ASUCA are very pleased to be a part of the Creative Spark program and cooperate with one of the world's most prestigious art and design universities – The University of the Arts London. Thanks to the students' exchange, they will learn about the partner's culture, take part in master classes and lectures, improve their English and learn how to design their start-up ideas in the form of a project.

## YARAT CONTEMPORARY ART SPACE

YARAT facilitates exchange between local and international artistic thought through its exhibition and education programmes, artist residency, special workshops and public events. We believe that the Creative Spark project will enable our youth to get closely acquainted with UK's creative industries and get practical guidance for future realization of their ambition.