LIVERPOOL CITY REGION CULTURE & INTERNATIONALISM RESEARCH

OCTOBER 2020











Cover photography credits:

Front cover: (left) Slavery Rememberance Day Libation – Pete Carr, (right) Kyle Glenn

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This research was commissioned in March 2020 and published in October 2020. The report and associated documents use the term Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) in relation to ethnic minority people. This is based on its use in many of the data sources cited within this research, including the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The International Working Group (IWG) acknowledges that there has been debate on the usage of this term for some time, with it becoming increasingly contested during the life of this research.

The IWG appreciates that there are alternative and more appropriate ways of describing people from an ethnic minority background and will ensure this is reflected in all future work and communications.

International Working Group

Since the completion of this research, the International Working Group has been renamed the International Strategy and Delivery Group (ISDG). This has not been retrospectively amended in the report, however, the IWG will be referred to as the ISDG in all future communications.

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Introduction and Context

Liverpool City Region's Culture and Internationalism Research explores the interaction between culture, education, community and the visitor economy across the six boroughs within Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA).

This report provides a better understanding of:

- The composition of the city's residents including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people
- The international student population
- Visitor profiles and trends

The report has three key sections:

The first section uses the available demographic and ethnicity profiles to provide a profile of the residents across LCR, including BAME groups; some of these communities have been in Liverpool for over a century.

The second section describes the composition of the international student population and uses the findings of the qualitative research to later highlight the challenges facing the Higher Education sector as a result of the decline in the number of international students due to Brexit and COVID-19.

Section three provides an insight into the composition of international visits to LCR as well as the wider functioning of the Visitor Economy (VE) as it pertains to culture.

Each section of the report draws a picture of culture and internationalism by highlighting a number of 'exemplar' projects, which can be viewed alongside this report.

This summative report is supported by three detailed research papers which explore these areas in greater depth. Our work identifies ways to build the positive cooperation needed to develop sustain and enhance an international perspective across the Liverpool City Region.

The report aims to:

- Identify potential opportunities for future development of international work across a range of sectors
- Capture case studies / exemplars and promote stories of the impact and importance of international activity and engagement across the city region
- Make some initial recommendations as to how this work can be continued more effectively, and integrated into the
 work of the LCRCA Cultural Compact and other relevant sectors in the city.

Understanding Internationalism

Internationalism is a dynamic concept which shifts constantly and has different meanings in different settings. There is no clear, fixed definition and it is often a contested term.

For the British Council, Internationalism refers to sustained and cumulative intercultural encounters between people of the UK and people of different countries and cultures, at home and through periods of time spent overseas. This develops a combination of attitudes, knowledge, behaviours and skills that support mutually beneficial collaboration and understanding between people of different countries and cultures. This gradual building of trust, friendship and understanding through meaningful encounters is what the British Council describes as international 'cultural relations'.

In engaging with, and promoting this understanding of internationalism across all strands of LCR's policies and strategies, there is a need to ensure that differences are acknowledged, understood and accepted.

About Liverpool City Region

International Activity across Liverpool City Region

The city region has a vibrant cultural sector which is inclusive in outlook and reflects the creativity of the different BAME groups. The sector is adept in developing the type of international work that has an impact at local and national level, as well as reaching international audiences. Much of this work has been supported by EU transnational programmes that have helped to foster a sector that is confident and outward looking. In recent years, the number of international students, particularly from China, has increased and this has added to the population mix. The growth in the number of international visitors has been accompanied by the recognition of the importance of the Visitor Economy which provides thousands of jobs for residents, especially younger people, in hospitality and across the service sector.



The City Region's Cultural and Heritage Assets

The RSA's Heritage Index (2016) shows that the cultural landscape of LCR is dominated by the concentration of assets and activities located within Liverpool city. The city ranks particularly highly for museums and objects as well as for culture. Sefton and Wirral both score highly due to the landscape and natural heritage of these boroughs (considered to be among the top 3% in England). The RSA research shows that Knowsley and St Helens are less developed than the other LCR areas, however, this is being addressed by LCRCA through various policies and its support for strategic initiatives like Shakespeare in the North.

Arts Council England Active Lives Survey

Data from 2015 – 2017 on participation and attendance at arts and cultural events, is available from Arts Council England (ACE). Unlike the national Taking Part survey, this database¹ provides a snapshot of the engagement levels for each local authority. The national average is 60.6% for the arts and 46.6% for visits to museums/galleries. Analysis (see table below) shows that arts engagement is on a par with or exceeds the national average in two of the six boroughs - Liverpool city and the Wirral. In four of the six boroughs – Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and the Wirral, visits to museums/galleries are either on a par with the national average or exceeds this. Where the boroughs have exceeded the national average, this is marked with a * symbol.

Borough	Arts	Museum/Gallery
Liverpool*	59.0%	56.5%
Wirral*	63.0%	54.3%
Sefton*	53.7%	55.1%
Knowsley*	51.3%	48.8%
Halton	55.9%	41.8%
St Helens	50.7%	41.3%



LCRCA's Cultural Commitment

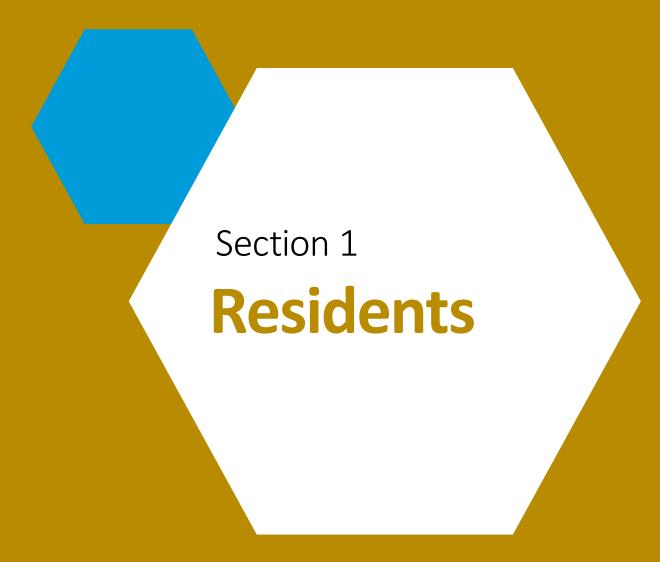
LCRCA is working to a 30 year Culture and Creativity Strategy which is driven by the notion of culture as a catalyst for urban change. It has a strong commitment to international working, which is spread across five cross cutting strands:

- Promoting existing cultural and creative assets
- Creating an environment that nurtures and promotes culture in all its forms
- Raising awareness that individual creativity can lead to moment of innovation
- Creating sustainable models for continued investment in, and access to culture and creativity
- Evidencing the impact and potential of culture and creativity across the LCRCA's areas of responsibility

Research for the LCRCA in early 2020 suggests that 24,000 people are directly employed in the creative and cultural industries across the region. Initiatives such as the annual LCR Culture and Creativity Awards, the Borough of Culture and the promise to spend the equivalent of 1% of the annual £30m devolution funding from central Government to support cultural activities, reflect LCRCA's commitment to expand, develop and sustain culture and creative activity. Culture is also part of the LCR Industrial Strategy. Equally, LCR's Internationalisation Strategy and Action Plan seek to capitalise on assets and connections to drive innovation, creativity and prosperity.

Culture and Internationalism are at the heart of much activity across Liverpool City Region. The LCR Cultural Partnership is leading the development of a Cultural Compact Business Plan. This is focussing on a five year action and delivery plan based on the ambitions of the 30 year Culture and Creativity Strategy. The Compact's Business Plan makes a case for continued investment in culture and urges the Cultural Partnership working with LCRCA and LCC to engage in advocacy at a national level. In addition, the Plan highlights the lack of BAME representation and leadership in mainstream cultural organisations and calls for increased international engagement. During this period, a number of other complementary arts and cultural strategies have been developed including Liverpool City Council's Cultural Strategy, St Helens Borough Council Arts and Culture Strategy and a new Arts and Culture Strategy for Knowsley.





Liverpool has a long and complex international history as a major UK and European port; the Transatlantic Slave Trade (16th – 19th century) is part of Liverpool's story as well as the 19th and 20th century mass migrations to North America. The UK's diversity and internationalism are intrinsically linked - many LCR residents have strong family links across the world. Liverpool is home to several different ethnic groups and includes one of the oldest Chinese communities in Europe as well as the longest and most established African-Caribbean community in the UK.

LCR's population is 1,600,000; of this the population of Liverpool city is 466,415. The region is the sixth most populous urban area in the UK. There is a large socio-economic gap resulting in people with significant wealth living close to areas of multiple deprivation. The LCR population is 92% white; the city region's BAME population is predominantly concentrated in Liverpool comprising 11% of the total city population.

Culture, Community and Internationalism

Cultural organisations in LCR have worked internationally and with community groups for decades. Many programmes have embedded an internationalist perspective across their projects.

BAME cultural activities and engagement

Arts and culture led or created by BAME groups across LCR are frequently held in mainstream or shared spaces like the Bluecoat Arts Centre or Hope University. There are several prominent cultural festivals held each year in Liverpool, and the more popular ones, such as Africa Oye, Liverpool Arab Arts Festival and Indika, festival of Indian culture, draw audiences from across all community groups (including the indigenous white communities). Many BAME cultural organisations also report excellent links with National Museums Liverpool. Having said that, we also heard from groups who told us that there is potential for them to play a strategic role in developing international links across different policy areas which remains underutilised, such as across Higher Education and Trade.



Exemplar: Slavery Remembrance Day

Chief Angus Chukuemeka established the annual Slavery Remembrance Day (SRD).

Chief Angus arrived in the UK shortly before the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war in 1967 and made Liverpool his home decades ago. In 1999 he was a founding member of International Slavery Museum (ISM) steering group set up to organise the first Slavery Remembrance Day. The ISM organised the meeting following the declaration by UNESCO that 23 August would be commemorated as the international day for the remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition. NML's first SRD celebration was mainly a display of arts and crafts, but in 2002 following the City Council's apology for Liverpool's involvement in the trading of enslaved people, Chief Angus introduced the libation ceremony as an important cultural element to remember, honour and celebrate the bravery of the enslaved.

SRD includes this libation ceremony and walk of remembrance, as well as the annual Dorothy Kuya Slavery Remembrance Memorial Lecture delivered in 2019 by historian Johny Pitts. While the lecture attracted primarily Liverpool residents, the Walk and Libation attracted attendees from across the UK. Participants came from overseas and had travelled from countries as far away as China, India and Southern Europe.

There is no meaningful data in terms of the BAME workforce in LCR. Nationally, despite numerous attempts at diversification over the past 30 years, Arts Council England (2016) reports that only 17% of the workforce of arts organisations receiving regular funding are of a BAME background, and in the case of museums, this figure drops to 7%. The Liverpool Cultural Compact urges the LCRCA to tackle this. Click on the image below to view the full video.



"My involvement gives me the opportunity to celebrate the rich and diverse African culture."

Chief Angus Chukuemeka



Creative events for Slavery Remembrance

Social Cohesion, Confident Communities

As well as the Borough of Culture scheme which started in the Wirral in 2019, throughout the year there is a plethora or cultural events and festivals which take place mainly in Liverpool, but attract large crowds from across LCR and North West England. These festivals develop understanding, facilitate integration and help build community cohesion; led by BAME cultural organisations these events are often supported by the mainstream cultural organisations in Liverpool.



Exemplar: Merseyside Polonia

Gosia McKane founded Merseyside Polonia (MP) in 2008, after moving to Liverpool from Poland in 2000. MP was established to support the needs of the emergent Polish Community that arrived in Liverpool after Poland joined the EU in 2004. At MP, Gosia heads up a team of volunteers, and has close links with Polish residents in the LCR and the Polish Society at the University of Liverpool. MP aims to develop positive relations and understanding between the Polish Community and local residents through projects inspired by art, culture and heritage. MP undertook a research project exploring this rich history through archival and oral history, which included stories dating back to 1800s and the experiences of Polish pilots based in the city during WWII. A walking tour introduced in 2019 was the culmination of this process. Click on the image to view the full video.





"When I first came to Liverpool in Church Street I thought 'I will not see anything I know.' When you know the histories you feel you have part ownership of the city." Gosia McKane

Local Cultural Education Partnerships and the offer to Schools

Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEP) across LCR lead several activities which actively contribute to local diversity and inclusion offers. Each local authority has been supported to develop its own LCEP Plan and the activities vary in form from music networks (Halton) to engagement via Borough of Culture activities (Wirral and Sefton) to citizenship initiatives such as the Cultural Citizens Programme throughout Liverpool. Inclusive Schools agendas are often linked to BAME annual calendars of events, examples include the schools' engagement programme of Mandela 8 and the projects delivered by Milapfest during the Diwali – Festival of Lights in the autumn.

The International Working Group and the Liverpool LCEP agree it is vital that the cultural sector and local authorities communicate opportunities for international learning to local schools and communities. Many schools embrace opportunities to educate pupils and staff about Liverpool's global connections and international culture, for example those participating in the British Council's International School Award.

Movema The Liverpool LCEP also promotes opportunities for international learning on www.

culturepool.org, from organisations such as One Latin Culture and Movema (though schools are currently restricted in accessing these because of the pandemic). Cultural organisations can upload their opportunities at any time by visiting the

Cultural Partners page, scrolling down and clicking on 'Add an offer'. Those looking for international learning opportunities can filter the offers by outcomes, one of which is 'global/international learning'.



In a Summer 2020 survey with Liverpool schools conducted by the LCEP, teachers expressed an interest in linking the curriculum to arts and cultural resources and learning about global history, geography and culture. Primary teachers particularly recognise the value of National Museums Liverpool and Tate Liverpool collections, and how these can illustrate stories about people and communities across the world. Teachers would particularly welcome resources that can support learning in relation to Black Lives Matter.

Exemplar: In Harmony – A Global Community

One excellent example of how international awareness can be fostered is provided by a collaboration between All Saints Catholic Primary School, Anfield, Liverpool and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. In Harmony is an exchange programme for schools where success is based around a long-term partnership between All Saints and Milton Marggi School for the Blind in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The project has raised the aspirations of young people in both countries and shows what can be achieved through collaboration when schools work with local cultural organisations like the Liverpool Philharmonic, drawing on the expertise and resources that these organisations can provide. Finally, by engaging whole families through the parents, grandparents and carers of children, the benefits of this type of school exchanges could flow to the wider community.



Digital Exclusion

As international cultural activity moves online post COVID-19, paradoxically, the opportunity to engage and participate in a meaningful way is simultaneously increased and restricted. There is more scope to attract a larger audience, but the audience is limited by its capacity to access the internet.

However, an inability to secure everyday access to computers or high quality broadband, specifically regarding public service provision, information or commercial services, such as banking or retail is a serious challenge for many residents. As educational provision moves online, there is a limited opportunity to use educational and schools' resources and facilities. This includes a School's Virtual Learning Environment and publicly available sites, such as those operated by the BBC or Google. Research completed by the LCEP in June 2020 welcomed the opportunities created through online learning but noted the digital inequality and lack of resources which disproportionately impacts pupils from deprived backgrounds.

Challenges & Opportunities around International work involving Residents

The Research and conversations with stakeholders and the IWG identified the following:

- LCRCA has a unique opportunity to extend and enhance diversity by deepening the education and cultural sectors' engagement with BAME communities through the Culture and Internationalism strategy and action plans.
- Although some organisations in the culture sector are confident about international working and are delivering
 considerable social impact through programmes, there is scope to develop and share skills, expertise and knowledge of
 international working further.
- Internationalism needs to be embedded in regeneration strategies and related programmes to demonstrate the economic and social value for residents through direct employment and indirect benefits, including global citizenship.
- A shared understanding of internationalism among the various stakeholders and partners could enable a consistent framework for measuring the impact of international working at both a strategic level and within individual projects.
- Our research with the International Working Group, identified that a stronger focus is needed on effective communication
 of international learning opportunities with schools and communities. It is vital that LCR cultural sector and local
 authorities communicate opportunities for international learning to local schools and communities. We found that many
 schools embrace opportunities to educate pupils and staff about Liverpool's global connections and international culture,
 for example those participating in the British Council's International School Award.
- The Research also identified some areas to be addressed which cannot be addressed solely through this strategy and the working group. The most significant of these was Digital inclusion. As with many parts of the UK, this needs to be a priority as access to services, education and cultural activity will increasingly be delivered online. Digital activity opens new avenues for international work and collaborations at all levels. The International Working Group and its partners across Liverpool City Region need to contribute to shaping the digital infrastructure to ensure digital international cultural relations becomes universal for all residents across the city region.



About the Student Population

The LCR student population increased by approximately 12% between 2014 and 2019. This was largely driven by growth in numbers at both Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) and the University of Liverpool. Comparable increases took place across the UK sector and major factor behind this was the removal of the cap on student numbers by the Coalition Government which triggered recruitment drives and significant investment in resources and facilities. A demographic dip in the number of 18 year olds has created a pressure on the recruitment of domestic students and this is unlikely to be reversed until 2024. One consequence is that Universities have increasingly looked to the lucrative international student market to fill the gap.

This analysis includes Liverpool Hope, LJMU, Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts (LIPA), University of Liverpool and Edge Hill University within its analytical scope. It is acknowledged that Edge Hill sits just outside LCR, however many of its students live in the city.

The Student Population across Liverpool City Region

Fig.1: Total Student Numbers in LCR Universities from 2014-2019					
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Liverpool Hope	5550	4940	5240	5200	5100
LJMU	20635	21875	22445	23230	24030
LIPA	715	720	745	795	820
University of Liverpool	22715	24775	27070	28795	29695
Edge Hill	16170	15540	15220	14255	13835
Total	65785	67850	70720	72275	73480

(Source: HESA)

International Students

The increase in the international student population over the past five years is just over 36% indicating a rate of increase that is three times the figure for the overall student population across the Liverpool City Region. By far the largest number of international students is at the University of Liverpool. This is not surprising given that the University is a member of the Russell Group, and the international market is acutely sensitive to status and league table positioning. Moreover, the University has a well-established and carefully modelled academic partnership with Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University and this drives recruitment.

Total International Students in Liverpool City Region (continued)

Fig.4: International students in LCR Universities from 2014-19 (Source HESA)					
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Норе	220	209	165	185	180
LJMU	1275	1410	1575	1635	1775
LIPA	160	160	165	170	185
University of Liverpool	6865	7315	7485	7960	8715
Edge Hill	255	260	240	286	340
Total	8775	9354	9630	10236	11195

(Source: HESA)

The number of international students has grown across the sector, with the exception of Liverpool Hope where the figure is low. However, international students are typically a far lower proportion of the total student body in the post 1992 Universities where growth in students' numbers has been driven by increases in UK students, widening participation initiatives designed to increase access in demographic groups traditionally under-represented in HE and the expansion of subject areas to address specific areas of student or employer led demand.

Looking across the UK, the increase in the number of international students in Liverpool city region is far greater than could be expected. The number of international students in the UK increased from 436,600 in 2014/15 to 485,645 in 2018/19. To illustrate this difference, the 2014/15 figure for the whole of the UK is 89% of the 2018/19 total whereas the corresponding 2014/15 figure for Liverpool city region is 78% of 2018/19 total.

This growth in numbers has obviously been accompanied by a considerable increase in income and this has been used to support a raft of activity, including research and capital investment.



The International Student Population: Origin of International Students across Liverpool City Region by HEI in 2018/19

Fig. 5: Breakdown of International Students by Geographical Region beyond EU in 2018/19

	Africa	Asia	Australasia	Middle East	North America	South America	Other Europe ¹²
Норе	15	190	0	5	10	0	5
LJMU	115	385	10	695	75	10	35
LIPA	0	25	0	5	40	0	85
University of Liverpool	275	6295	50	780	165	50	100
Edge Hill	30	190	5	5	10	0	5

Liverpool University

(Source: HESA)

- The large number of international students from Asia at the University of Liverpool are predominantly from China.
- LIPA has 185 international students out of a total student population of 800. This high proportion of non UK students is an unusual student profile, but is quite normal for a specialist performing arts provider.
- LJMU's relatively high Middle Eastern cohort includes 215 from Kuwait, 210 from Qatar, 85 from Saudi Arabia, 70 from Oman and 60 from UAE.
- The number of EU students has increased in recent years but this is expected to fall after Brexit.

The Chinese Student Population

The number of Chinese students in LCR increased from 4150 in 2014 to 5550 in 2018. Not only is this group growing numerically but it has now reached a point where the number of Chinese students at the University of Liverpool is more than double the total number of international students at all the other LCR Universities. HESA data shows that the number of Chinese students in all UK Universities was 21% higher in 2018/19 than 2013/14. The rate of increase in LCR, and particularly at the University of Liverpool, is far higher than the average across UK Universities and is primarily driven by the academic partnership with Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) which is now firmly established as one of the leading Sino-Foreign Universities in China.

The Student Perspective

Two student focus groups took place as part of this study. The first involved students from the University of Liverpool and the second drew on a cohort from Edge Hill and LIMU. Key themes emerging from the groups addressed awareness, access and affordability of local resources such as transport, ticket availability for cultural events, communications and listings.

There was a feeling that induction and pastoral support was good at a local level, but there were no significant links between Universities and there is scope to connect students in a practical way. More could be done to find ways to enable students to get to know Liverpool as a place.

All students were interested and willing to attend events or activities organised by, or for, international students.

It was notable that University of Liverpool students were less invested in Liverpool as a place and more enthused by academic status of the University.

There is a particular need for a pastoral policy and practice that is sensitive to different ethnicities. Discussion considered the cultural experience of navigating Liverpool as people of colour and the difficulties faced when trying to establish social connections beyond a peer group of international students. Establishing an opportunity to know local people was a potential area of focus for these students.

The perspective of Staff

Relationships across HEIs at local, national and international levels are regularly formed because individuals have shared interests or a common experience. This is particularly the case with international collaborations which often emerge out of shared research or pedagogical interest.

There is broad support for a more coordinated approach to student induction and pastoral support for international students and those from particular international community groups where the overall cohort in Liverpool City Region is relatively low. This could take a collaborative, simple and practical form. For example, advice on sharing accommodation for students from a country where there is a low cohort in the area.

Staff with responsibility for larger groups of international students felt it was important to be sensitive to different ethnicities and take time and effort to understand differences within groups. International students are heterogenous and should not be treated homogenously. They should be seen as people with different needs and outlooks rather than as a single group or set of larger groups.



Exemplar: Open Eye Gallery

Liverpool has the oldest Chinese community in Europe, dating back to the 1850s. and Liverpool's Universities have one of the largest bodies of students from mainland China / Mandarin speaking cohort. Between 2017 and 2020, a strand of Open Eye's work focused on developing exchanges with China and Hong Kong. This included 78 partners, 123 artists, and many participants from the community resulting in 34 exhibitions in 23 venues. There were 444,086 visits (77,000 in China, 367,086 in the LCR).

Over four years Open Eye exhibited 104 Chinese contemporary photographers or artists. LOOK Photo Biennial 2019 was the final large-scale realisation of Open Eye's focus on China and Hong Kong.

As part of LOOK Photo Biennial 2019, photographer Yan Wang Preston created a series of images made with male Chinese students who were studying at the University of Liverpool. The series, 'He,' spoke to the question 'What makes you a man?' The students who participated were photographed at Crosby beach and the images were shown in a public space in Liverpool's Fabric District during December 2019. Yan's work with Chinese students showcased the experiences of this section of LCR's population.



Challenges and Opportunities working with International Students and Higher Education

The Research and conversations with stakeholders and the IWG identified the following:

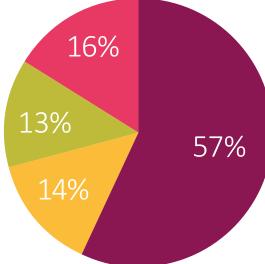
- For many Universities, particularly those in the Russell Group, the international market is dominated by the recruitment
 of students from China and in 2020/21 this was severely disrupted by the ongoing public health crisis. Publicly available
 projections suggest that the number of international students could fall significantly in the short term and this is only likely
 to return to current levels by 2025. This will inevitably require different actions from Universities and new ways of working.
 The IWG can support this.
- Ensuring the best possible approach to protecting and enhancing the international student experience is likely to become a key factor that differentiates success and failure in a very difficult recruitment climate. This will inevitably require a response from Universities and it may well be that some of these take place within the University (e.g. around induction) while others could operate at a wider City Region based level (e.g. orientation, local transport).
- There needs to be a more structured approach to working with international students that could improve the collective experience of international students across LCR.





In 2018, there were over 67.3m visitors to LCR – a 5% increase on the previous year. The VE is now established as a major driver of growth and prosperity, worth over £4.93bn in GVA and providing over 57,000 jobs with over 25% of the workforce aged 16-24. It has many strands including conventions and conferences, events and cultural tourism.

Spread of visits to LCR



Giant on the Beach at New Brighton
Credit: Mark Barrow

ST. HELENS, HALTON & KNOWSLEY



SEFTON

WIRRAL

Liverpool City Region

The majority of staying (overnight) visitors to the LCR are domestic, though 14% come from overseas. However, Liverpool is in the top five most visited towns/cities in Britain and 845,000 overseas visits were made to Liverpool in 2019. The top six countries of origin for visitors to Merseyside were Ireland, Germany, USA, Sweden, Spain and Australia.

This table details the economic activities of overseas visitors in 2018, with 2017 as comparison.

Fig. 6: Economic activities of overseas visitors in 2017/2018				
	2018	2017		
No. of Visits	844,260	-7.3%		
Total expenditure	£334.60m	-11.69%		
Total nights	3.98m	-2.37		
Average length of stay	4.72 nights	+5.35%		
Average spend per visit	£396	-4.81%		

(Source: HESA)

Liverpool's cultural offer is pronounced. Of England's top 20 most visited free tourist attractions (2018), three, namely the World Museum Liverpool, Museum of Liverpool and Merseyside Maritime Museum were in Liverpool. Two of the top ten events in the LCR in 2018 were cultural events with a particular international focus (Africa Oye, International Music Festival), especially as Liverpool's VE depends on events and half of the most visited events in LCR (2018) were arts and cultural events (all of them were in Liverpool).



In 2018 the most visited paid attractions were Knowsley Safari Park (572,241), The Beatles Story (290,000) and Speke Hall, Gardens & Estate (211,903), LCR's major National Trust property.

Fig. 8: Most visited free events in 2018				
Event	LCR	Visits		
Giants Spectacular	Liverpool & Wirral	1,300,000		
Mersey River Festival	Liverpool	548,577		
Grand National	Sefton	144,760		
River of Light	Liverpool & Wirral	119,000		
Southport Air Show	Southport	80,000		
Africa Oye	Liverpool	60,000		
Clipper (Boat Race)	Liverpool	60,000		
International Music Festival	Liverpool	52,781		
Southport Flower Show	Southport	56,181		
Southport Food & Drink	Southport	29,500		

(Source: HESA)



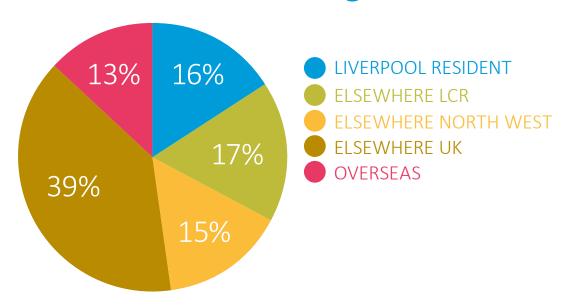
National Museums Liverpool

The most substantive data on international visitors to specifically LCR's arts and cultural offer comes from National Museums Liverpool's (NML) research conducted by North West Research.

Overall, 13% of NMLs visitors were from overseas, with Europe being the most common point of origin (North West Research, 2019).



NML total Visitor Origin



Visitors to NML also visited Tate Liverpool, the Anglican Cathedral, Mersey Ferries, the Metropolitan Cathedral, Chester Zoo, The Beatles Story. The Albert Dock venues (International Slavery Museum, Maritime Museum and Museum of Liverpool) tended to receive a much higher proportion of visitors from further afield (i.e. beyond the NW) and the top reason for visiting NML was to attend an exhibition (29.9%), followed by 'just passing' (20%). North West Research reflect that 'the further the distance, the lower the draw... 61% of [LCR] residents said that the venue was their main reason for the visit to the area compared to 30% of those from elsewhere in the UK and 14% of those from overseas'.

Major stakeholders in the LCR Visitor Economy including Marketing Liverpool, associated Beatles attractions and the Beatles Legacy Group, agree that the LCR still has much to do in order to capitalise on The Beatles with international audiences and as huge soft power attractors, even though there is a significant GVA and jobs increase year on year as a direct result of Beatles tourism. Some improvements have taken place to support The Beatles popularity as an international driver for visitors, working with Cavern City Tours who have significantly contributed to 'The Beatles industry' in the city. They have been good partners in helping the city to sell its wider offer, through the messaging of 'come to Liverpool because you are a fan of The Beatles and see what else the city has to offer'.

There is broad agreement among cultural and visitor economy stakeholders that music heritage in the city shouldn't just be about The Beatles as there are many other musical styles and traditions the city region could be celebrating from its past as well. Partners, also agree that there needs to be equal emphasis on the current music offer, which will attract fans from across the world with great and diverse artists, venues, club nights, festivals taking place in the city region throughout the year.



Exemplar: Liverpool Arab Arts Festival

One example is the annual Liverpool Arab Arts Festival (LAAF) which has been presenting excellent programmes showcasing artists from the Arab and Islamic cultures of the world, since 1998. Liverpool has one of the oldest Arab (Yemeni) settlements in the UK (over 100 years) and in recent years, many of the refugees displaced by war and conflict in the Middle-East, have also settled in LCR. LAAF attracted more than 30,000 people in 2019, although, only around 10% (3,000) of the audience is of Middle Eastern origin.

In July 2020, LAAF showcased 16 events with artists based across the globe. All events were free with donations encouraged. While some required booking, others were streamed on LAAF's social media pages, and some were streamed from outside the UK (a LAAF first). Data provided by LAAF suggest that 46% of tickets were booked overseas and that international audiences came from the Middle East, North Africa, Canada, USA, Australia, Italy, and Brazil. This is a marked increase from the 9% international audience reached in 2019, and 11% in 2018.



- Culture is a major draw for tourism, which in turn supports many jobs in the LCR. Those
 consulted felt the relationship between the Visitor Economy and the cultural sector needed to be
 strengthened, especially with smaller-scale organisations spread across Liverpool city and the wider city region that are
 not based in spaces readily accessible to tourists, like the Albert Dock.
- Through cross-promotional activities, visitors coming to Liverpool for major sports events or business conferences, could be encouraged to stay longer and explore the city region and LCR's wider cultural offer.
- Our consultation confirms that there is a sense that the way Liverpool is 'sold' does in some instances overemphasise
 the established 'The Beatles and Football' branding of the city. This can mean that opportunities to present a more
 vibrant, contemporary narrative about the city region is missed. The Beatles Story was indeed the most visited paid
 tourist attraction in 2018, and sport is a big driver of visits to the North West generally. This does not diminish the large
 numbers of visits to art galleries and free festival events like Africa Oye, or the potential overlap between the different
 audiences, which could be promoted through a more integrated approach.
- Our research encountered a sense that what 'makes Liverpool what it is' are chance, small-scale cultural experiences.
 These could be better incorporated into the image of Liverpool projects to the world, not only to better 'sell' the city but to also respect and celebrate the diverse experiences to be enjoyed in the LCR. There is an opportunity now to tell diverse stories and to enrich the city region by inviting a larger number of more international visitors.
- People coming to the LCR from different places will bring their own cultural viewpoint with them. This was clear from
 what we know, for example, of how North Americans experience a visit to the city region compared to visitors from the
 Middle East. It is important to be aware of and adapt to these cultural differences not least because Liverpool has deep
 histories with many countries and visitors may be encountering the LCR from within these histories.
- Stakeholders also expressed a view that Liverpool City Region should also be presented as a safe place to travel, where visitors can get to know a 'warm and friendly' community. This is supported by visitor statistics and could be addressed in partnership with tourism organisations, such as Visit Liverpool.
- The impacts of COVID-19 are difficult to gauge with any accuracy however, over the next 3 5 years it is likely to be negative, both in terms of international visitors and overseas workers that the Visitor Economy depends upon. COVID-19 has also created some opportunities and there is a need to harness some of the online work being done in the LCR (see 'Spotlight: LAAF), including the new skill-sets developed by many cultural workers. These online festivals and cultural events promote a positive image of the UK to international audiences and may attract visitors from the UK and abroad in the future. At the same time, to maximise the potential for online work, LCR/IWG needs to have a better understanding of the current digital audiences and conversion rates for international visitors.



Recommendations

Liverpool City Region is well-placed to embed a structured approach to culture and internationalism across all its policies and strategies. The cultural sector is confident about international working, is a key part of the Visitor Economy, and is delivering considerable social impact through its programmes.

Regeneration strategies for Liverpool City Council and the city, the suite of growth strategies for the LCRCA and those of the constituent local authorities all recognise the importance of cultural sector to place-making and economic wellbeing. They also recognise the diverse makeup of the city region's population. This creates a strong base to embed internationalism and diversity at the heart of regeneration work in the future.

Recommendation 1 – Internationalism:

Action is required to overcome some key barriers to further engagement around international work and culture where understanding can currently be characterised as confused and inconsistent. The IWG should ensure that a widely understood concept of internationalism is developed, articulated and shared within the Cultural Partnerships' Culture & Creativity Strategy and the Cultural Compact Business Plan. This should be in simple, plain non-arts language which helps to build an interlocked programme of activity. This needs to be flexible enough to engage with:

- Residents
- Representative community groups, multi-cultural organisations and networks
- Wider communities
- Local Authorities and partner organisations
- Higher Education

This should draw upon the experience of the British Council, the IWG members, the Cultural Partnership members and the case studies.

Credit: Hannah Busing

Recommendation 2 – Diversity:

There is a close link between the diverse communities of the region and internationalism. This is an untapped resource and a more strategic and inclusive approach is needed to realise the value that these organisations bring to LCR and the opportunities they provide for all residents. Liverpool's past links with slavery have a global historical dimension that should also be reflected in its international engagement with residents of and visitors to the city in particular. This is most relevant to Liverpool and its historical position as a Port City.

Historically BAME Cultural Activities & Engagement has been undervalued partly due to lack of awareness and mapping of the activities of diaspora organisations. In view of the Black Lives Matter movement and in the interests of fairness and social justice, there is an opportunity to extend diversity and enhance internationalism across LCR by deepening the IWG's engagement with BAME groups. There are now 11,000 International Students across LCR and they make up a significant proportion of the LCR's BAME population.

The understanding of internationalism should be underpinned by a deep appreciation of the value of diversity and a commitment to mainstream Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across all the city region's culture and internationalism work. This commitment should be expressed in the form of a pledge by the IWG and the Cultural Compact business plan, supported by EDI impact assessment and other LCRCA tools.

Recommendation 3 – Strategic alignment:

Policy makers need to consider how the full range of relevant LCR cultural strategic offers can be better aligned to facilitate international working through the LCR Cultural Partnership. Consideration also needs to be given to ensure alignment with the Cultural Strategies for the individual Boroughs including the latest versions for Liverpool, Knowsley and St Helens. The IWG needs to be fully embedded within the Cultural Partnership for the City Region rather than working as a standalone group. Its action plan arising from this research should also be integrated within the Compact Business plan for the LCR Cultural Partnership going forward.

Engagement with international activity needs to be set as a policy goal within the broader LCR Cultural Strategy and initiatives, programmes, projects and funding streams that underpin it. The IWG should work through the Cultural Partnership and its wider networks to ensure integration with other strategies for the LCR.

The development of more coherent strategic connections between the LCRCA Culture and Creativity strategy and the cultural strategies developed by some of the constituent local authorities would lay the foundation for a clear direction for the development and implementation of internationalism in policy and practice across the city region. There is a strong argument for building more strategic links and partnerships between the arts sector & community sector as well as economic development strategies in LCR.

Recommendation 4 – Building shared civic ownership of internationalism across the city region:

It is vital that internationalism as a key agenda for LCR as a progressive city region should be jointly owned by all partners. The IWG should ensure that its engagement work includes residents and communities across LCR and that it works through the LCR Cultural Partnership and other strategic delivery vehicles to actively involve the city's diverse residents in policy making. To support this, a mapping exercise of the key strategic forums across the LCR should be identified where an International Champion would carry responsibility for embedding internationalism across relevant strategies, initiatives and programmes.

Recommendation 5 – Socialising this research:

The IWG should prioritise creating an Engagement Plan to share this research with stakeholders who contributed to the research, as well as the cultural sector, creative industries, respective local authority leaders and officers, visitor economy and HE partners, and other strategic bodies invested in the city region's international positioning and success. The short report and the adaptive PowerPoint can be used alongside case studies to bring internationalism to life and ensure partners are engaged with this work going forward.



Recommendation 6 – Data-gathering:

There is already a body of good practice across the city region around international engagement with residents, international students and international visitors. The case studies developed as part of this study exemplify good practice and should be used to inspire the work of other partners. There would be significant benefit in identifying ways of sharing this good practice more widely and capturing other exemplars in the future.

The IWG should also use the template developed in the case studies to gather similar case studies of international work taking place across the city region. These should also be widely shared so a repository of case studies can be built and made accessible to the cultural, education and civil society sectors.

Further research is required to map the international connectivity of the cultural and creative industries sector across LCR. This was intended to be part of the research but it wasn't possible to deliver this due to constraints and challenges experienced by the sector throughout the Covid-19 lockdown period. This research should be commissioned in a light-touch way by the IWG, so the Cultural Partnership fully understands the opportunities this sector represents for building strong enduring international relationships.

More qualitative and quantitative research is needed to develop a fuller understanding of the LCR's ethnic make-up and distribution of its intersecting diverse communities, residents and workforce. This should be done in collaboration with the six constituent local authorities of LCR, the LCRCA Evidence unit and the six local CVS organisations drawing on the local knowledge and insight of their member community and voluntary groups.

Recommendation 7 – Coordination and communication:

There is a wide range of international engagement taking place across the city region with the audiences identified and a mix of different strategic bodies and forums who are working internationally. This includes civic leaders, city mayors and the LCRCA Mayor.

The IWG could take the lead on a system of gathering information on international activity of all scales. For example, a Google Form could be devised through which cultural organisations can report when they are hosting an event with an international reach. This event could then be promoted through LCR channels to generate shared audiences. After the fact, organisations could deposit documentation (e.g. visuals) of the events to enrich LCR's 'marketing' of its cultural offer. Part of thinking beyond the 'usual suspects' would be to encourage celebrating and promoting local talent, including from the art schools.

It is recommended that the IWG builds an easy to use calendar or planning grid which captures this range of international activity taking place within the city region and overseas to build international relationships, including visits by delegations, cultural events, and study trips. This would serve as a central point of coordination to enable joint planning and maximise opportunities through working in partnership and a joined up approach. The Group can then act as a point of coordination for this shared resource.

The IWG should also work with the Cultural Partnership to build on the 'brand values' work carried out by Liverpool City Council to extend and deepen the narrative surrounding the heritage and experience of LCR for all audiences. This development of a shared story would encourage audiences to engage more broadly with culture across the city region and support greater dispersal of international visitors.



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Recommendation 8 – Enhancing the International Student Experience:

IWG should explore with its Higher Education membership and partners establishing an informal cross University LCR International Student Experience Forum, which could act as an advocacy and 'good practice' group for the entire University sector to collaborate on the provision of a suite of engagement activities, pastoral support and events for international students (over 10,000 people). The detail of what this Forum could deliver is in the separate specific HE report.

Recommendation 9 – Enhancing the International Visitor Experience

LCR should create opportunities for IWG members (and the cultural, educational and community sectors they represent) to engage regularly and systematically with key players from the VE sector across the LCR. This could be via a new forum, or through existing structures, to support ways to work together to promote the breadth of the city region internationally, presenting a fresh, new, diverse and contemporary narrative that reflects Liverpool and the six boroughs.

The IWG should support VE stakeholders and business owners (through the appropriate VE channel) to promote longer stays in the region, ensure a wider distribution of international visitors and visits across the LCR and upskill the VE workforce to be interculturally literate and internationally-facing. The detail of the scope of work is mapped out in the VE report.

Recommendation 10 – Developing an International Outlook in young people and communities across Liverpool City Region

Effective networking across sectors, and marketing of education offers, is essential to raise awareness of Liverpool's international heritage, connections and opportunities with children and young people. The Liverpool Cultural Education Partnership are currently represented on the IWG and work closely with the Liverpool Learning Partnership on ensuring opportunities for international learning and experience are shared widely with schools, teachers, children and young people through www.culturepool.org and direct marketing.

The IWG could play a stronger role in promoting this information platform for schools and cultural organisations. This platform could be a useful point of coordination and joined-up marketing for such opportunities, including opportunities from the British Council and other global learning providers.

Liverpool City Council/Marketing Liverpool to extend and develop the narrative surrounding the heritage and experience of LCR for all audiences. This development of a shared story would encourage audiences to engage more broadly with culture across the Liverpool City Region and support greater dispersal of international visitors.



Recommendation 11 – Action research:

Culture is a living process and this needs to be recognised in the way of working for the IWG and its partners. The IWG should, through the Engagement programme where the research is shared, identify some action research or 'test' international activities, micro-projects and events which would enable partners to trial new ways of working together.

Examples of these might include:

- Developing an international student 'welcome to the city region' programme which is co-designed with HE, cultural partners and existing international students more embedded within the city region;
- Building sample itineraries for international delegations to the city which can form the basis of collaborative hosting;
- Designing a virtual tour of the city region, its stories, places and people that could be used to share with potential visitors and delegations;
- Delivering a small training programme for volunteer photographers who 'shoot' the city region and its hidden gems for sharing with international visitors via social media platforms.

These small pilots or prototypes could help build a model for future ways of working which have creativity at their heart, reflect agile ways of working and offer opportunities for 'digital international cultural relations'.

Recommendation 12 – Digital cultural relations:

Digital inclusion needs to be a priority as access to services, education and cultural activity will increasingly be delivered online. Digital activity opens new avenues for international work and collaborations at all levels.

The IWG should carry out a light-touch mapping of the existing digital assets of the city region and collaborate with the visitor economy, higher education and Creative and Digital Industry partners to understand their digital reach, impact and potential. This digital mapping would identify platforms which residents are using for international communication and collaboration and should seek to build an understanding of barriers for participation in online programmes experienced both locally and globally.

Recommendation 13 – Priority countries and cities:

The IWG should agree on priority cities and countries based on the city region's existing civic, business and cultural networks. This targeted approach should support the individual ambitions of the respective members and stakeholders as well as the wider international ambitions of the LCR. This can be informed by insight and intelligence from the British Council as well as from LCRCA's own policy and Insight teams

Recommendation 14 – Evaluation and monitoring:

Research with stakeholders across the LCR has demonstrated that there is no consistent process or agreed shared method for measuring the impact of international working at a strategic or even programme level. This research is a step in the right direction as it highlights the gaps. We would recommend that a consideration of international working is adopted as a regular monitoring and evaluation activity by cultural, educational and civil society / community organisations. Partners with an interest in international work should engage in regular knowledge sharing to exchange tools, resources and insight which can support with this work.

The IWG should identify a simple evaluation and monitoring framework for the impact of international work with the three target audiences. This should be built on data that is already captured, while also identifying fresh evidence (qualitative if necessary) to illustrate impact and return on investment. Evaluation and monitoring activities of the cultural, educational and visitor economy sector need to address international work and international audiences as a matter of routine. This needs to be embedded as a core principle of the action plan for the IWG going forward.

The IWG needs to work to ensure internationalism is embedded in the development, monitoring and evaluation of work with community groups across LCR's cultural ecology. This can be addressed through the work of the Cultural Partnership and the respective Cultural strategies of the local authorities. The IWG provides a route to achieve this.

Conclusion

These recommendations are supported by specific actions in the accompanying reports which focus on Residents, International Students and International Visitors. Combined, they make up the basis of an action plan for the IWG, its partners, city region networks and stakeholders. Additional recommendations and actions may be identified through the Engagement Plan and through further discussion with stakeholders.

Acknowledgement

Liverpool City Region's Culture & Internationalism work and research was led by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority in partnership with the British Council. An International Working Group oversaw the research process and the writing of this report, plus the backing documentation. Membership included representation from arts, education and civil society and the research was carried out by a team from Culture in Flux. The report is co-authored by Culture in Flux and the International Working Group. Thanks is due to all those who contributed to the research process.

All images in this report, the accompanying research papers and case studies are reproduced with the kind permission of the rights holders, comprising the following people and organisations, and were taken by various photographers.

Open Eye Gallery

Yan Wang Preston

All Saints Catholic Primary School

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

Merseyside Polonia and friends

National Museums Liverpool

Liverpool Arab Arts Festival

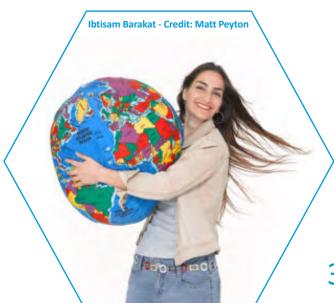
University of Liverpool

Liverpool Hope University

Liverpool Institute of the Performing Arts

Liverpool John Moores University

Africa Oye



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In addition to the above, the Research Team also consulted with a representative meeting of organisations from COoL (Cultural Organisations of Liverpool), LARC (Liverpool Arts and Regeneration Consortium) and the Culture Officers Working Group from across LCR.

Two representative focus groups with international students from Universities across LCR also contributed to the study.

Thanks is due to everyone who contributed.

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However I think you have to click on this one first to get to it http://iccliverpool.ac.uk/?research=the-art-of-social-prescribing-informing-policy-on-creative-interventions-in-mental-health-care

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