

**2020 Working Internationally Conference:
Can Museums and Galleries Save UK Diplomacy? Soft Power in Turbulent Times**

**Tuesday 12 March 2020
The Henry Moore Room, Leeds Art Gallery**

Speaker Biographies

Helen Jones, Director of Global Engagement and Strategy, Science Museum Group



Helen has worked in museums for a total of 35 years. It's been quite a journey, from archaeological conservator through training, corporate planning and national partnerships to her current position in the Science Museum Group (SMG). A key feature of her 11 years at the SMG has been developing and implementing of the Group's first International Strategy from 2012. As the Group was starting almost from scratch, this entailed a good deal of thinking about the why museums work internationally, as well as the how and what.

SMG has come a long way, with a range of products and services to offer, strong and fruitful professional networks, a higher at home and abroad and growing income streams. Many people and teams from across the organisation are now involved – including a new Cultural and Commercial Partnerships Unit – and there is a distinctly internationalist outlook throughout the Group. Most importantly, SMG visitors get to enjoy loans, acquisitions and expertise from around the world, and the Group shares what it does with peers and audiences beyond the UK.

Session 1 of the conference should provoke some questions about museums and soft power that can be picked up throughout the conference. Definitions are notoriously elusive or contested, and measurement even more so. We don't want to go down the rabbit-hole of semantics and KPI's on such an occasion; words and numbers are important, but today is for sharing experiences and exploring ideas. There is room for many different activities and player so that we build consensus about what we do in the international arena, why we do it and how to get the best out of it.

In light of the UK Soft Power Strategy – that has so far had limited circulation for understandable reasons – the relationship between Government and cultural organisations is open for discussion. Funding is a perennial issue, though not the only one, but what do stakeholders want and expect?

Soft power is usually framed as the projection of a certain message or image and considered from the 'broadcaster's' point of view. It is fundamentally about what a country, society or organisation *is*, how it behaves and manifests its values, but soft power activity – cultural diplomacy for the purposes of this session – is generally a two-way process involving some exchange. Partners and collaborators choose to work with us so we might ask ourselves why; what do they get out of it? And are our explicit and implicit messages received in the spirit that we intend; are we getting out of it what we think we are; how would we know, and could we do it better?

Kate Arthurs, Director, Arts, British Council



Kate started as Director Arts in May 2018, leading the British Council's global arts programme. Previous roles at the British Council include Director Strategy, Arts, Head of Arts in Mexico, Deputy Country Director Vietnam with East Asia-wide leadership of vocational skills training, and culture and development work in South Sudan.

Kate formerly worked as an independent cultural manager, focused on international literature partnerships. She began her career managing Europe-wide projects at the Foreign Policy Centre and British Council Brussels on themes of diversity, inclusion, soft power and Britain's role in Europe. She is a Director of Wasafiri magazine of international writing and speaks three languages.

Lone Britt Christensen, Cultural Attaché, Embassy of Denmark in the UK



Lone Britt Christensen, Cultural Attaché, Embassy of Denmark in the UK. Lone Britt has an extensive experience in working with international cultural relations, and been working at the Embassy of Denmark since 1997. She has an MA in English and Economics from Denmark including a year at Trinity College, University of Dublin, Ireland. She was part of the first cohort of Oxford Cultural Leaders in 2015.

As an example of a larger-scale cultural project, Lone Britt has been head of the UK Nordic project group, which collaborated with Artistic Director Jude Kelly and the team at the Southbank Centre, London to deliver a year-long cultural programme '*Nordic Matters*' with support from the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2017. Recently she has initiated a strategic cultural collaboration between the former industrial cities of Manchester, Aarhus and Aalborg in Denmark, where the Arts Council of England and the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces also are partners.

Andrew Mackay, Director, Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery



Andrew was appointed Director of Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery Trust in January 2016. He joined Tullie House in 2010 as Head of Collections and Programming and was instrumental in leading several gallery developments including the award-winning Roman Frontier gallery.

Prior to working in Carlisle Andrew was Head of Cultural Services for Craven District Council in the Yorkshire Dales where he was responsible for creating a new department by combining museums, arts development and heritage services and for managing three volunteer-run museums.

Andrew started his career working on the natural history collections in Sunderland before moving to the Science Museum to work on the Wellcome medical collections. He became Keeper of the Shoe Collection at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery in 1988 and Curator/General Manager of the Norfolk Rural Life Museum in 1994. Whilst in Norfolk he

managed the £4m capital redevelopment of the site, which led a 40% increase in visitor numbers.

Andrew has post-graduate diplomas in Museum Studies and Management & Leadership and Prince 2 project management certification. He is a Fellow of the Museums Association and was appointed a Director of the newly established Sunderland Culture in 2016.

Tullie House has been working with independent museum partners in China since 2013, initially with the Imperial Decree Museum in Xuzhou, the Dept of Cultural Heritage in Henan Province and then Tang West in Xi'an. Tullie House has also brokered a developing partnership between the cities of Renhuai and Carlisle.

In January 2020 a major exhibition – Treasures of China – opened at Tullie House. Andrew will explain the challenges and nuances of working with the independent museum sector in China and how these have contributed to a well-developed China themed programme in Carlisle.

Terry Simioti Nyambe, Assistant Curator of Ichthyology, Livingstone Museum, Zambia and ICOM Executive Board



Terry is the Southern Africa regional representative of AFRICOM and Vice-President for Wildlife & Environmental Conservation Society of Zambia (WECSZ) – Livingstone Branch. He is Chair of ICOM Zambia, a Board Member of CIDOC (2013-present), member of ETHCOM (2011-present) and a member of the ICOM Strategic Planning Working Group (2012-present).

Terry has an M.B.A. from Heriot-Watt University, a B.S. in Ecology from the University of Zambia, a Diploma in Information Technology and a qualification in Museology studies, Minpaku.

In session 2, Terry and Tonya will discuss restitution and decolonisation through the lens of soft power. Terry shared with us some questions for thought and discussion:

- We live in a century when the indigenous communities and those that were colonised are now demanding their cultural heritage property back to their communities. Should all cultural property be repatriated or returned?
- When cultural property is returned, it revitalises the culture of the original communities as the tangible comes into contact with the intangible values to complete the story. The value of the return of cultural property to original communities is immeasurable. What value can soft power add to this vital process?
- Many museums around the world are now engaged in activities to return cultural objects that were collected during times of war or colonial era. Would we be right if we called this decolonisation of museums?

Dr Natalia Grincheva, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Melbourne



Dr Natalia Grincheva is a 2020 Research Fellow at the University of Oxford in the Digital Diplomacy Research Center and an Honorary Research Fellow at the Digital Studio of the University of Melbourne. Most recently, she was appointed to the Associate Professor position in the Department of Media at the National Research University “Higher School of Economics” in Moscow, Russia.

She pursues her career in the field of digital humanities focusing on development of new computational methods to study museums as important players in creative economy and actors of soft power. Dr Grincheva is also a Lead CI and Conceptual Designer of the award-winning digital mapping system Museum Soft Power Map.

She is holder of numerous academic awards and fellowships, including Fulbright (2007–2009), Quebec Fund (2011–2013), Australian Endeavour (2012–2013), SOROS (2013–2014) and others. She has successfully implemented a number of research projects on new forms of contemporary diplomacy developed by the largest internationally recognized museums in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific. Her publication profile includes over 30 research articles, book chapters and reports published in prominent academic outlets. The most recent publications are two monographs: *Global Trends in Museum Diplomacy* (Routledge: 2019) and *Museum Diplomacy in the Digital Age* (Routledge: 2020).

Natalia’s presentation will announce a publication of a new book, *Museum Diplomacy in the Digital Age* as well as sharing the most interesting insights from it. The book explores online museum spaces as sites of contemporary cultural diplomacy. It argues that in an era of rapid technological progress and instant Internet communications a wide variety of online museum programs create unlimited opportunities for cross-cultural interactions and exchanges which a half-century ago were possible only under strict control by national governments. In a time when travel and communication technologies were quite limited, cross-cultural contact established among museums and their international audiences was a top-down exercise that was controlled and commissioned by national governments. The book invites readers to look behind the scene of the largest world museums, such as the British Museum, the Guggenheim, the Australian Museum and others, to explore how their online spaces shape informational and cultural environments of national and international audiences and provide virtual channels for intercultural dialogue.

The second part of Natalia’s presentation will showcase results of the recently completed research project that has sought to define, explain and deconstruct the “soft power” of museums. Spanning museums’ contributions to place branding, urban regeneration and the development of tourism, the concept of “soft power” is an increasingly valuable metric for museums, providing a unique set of insights. Developed in partnership with Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI), the award-winning pilot web application, Museum Soft Power Map, enables users to explore a geographic spread of ACMI’s cultural resources, social outputs and political outcomes. Multiple layers across several datasets visualise ACMI’s cultural collections, online audiences, international partnership networks and the impact of traveling exhibitions. The interactive session will aim to demonstrate the app as well as to explore opportunities for potential research partnerships with UK museums.

Nick Marchand, Head of International Programmes, Victoria & Albert Museum



As Head of International Programmes, Nick takes the lead for the V&A's international work, working with senior managers across the V&A to create an imaginative and ambitious strategy for the next 10 years. With an overall ambition to extend the reach and impact of the V&A's collections and ideas on the international stage and global creative industries community, Nick's role builds on the V&A's existing reputation for partnership-building, thought leadership, touring exhibitions, training and licensing.

Prior to the V&A, Nick was Director Arts, China and North-East Asia for the British Council, managing teams across Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong and Singapore. In China, he also acted as Counsellor (Arts and Culture) for the Cultural and Education Section of the British Embassy. Nick was Creative Director for the 2015 UK-China Year of Cultural Exchange and led on arts programmes for Shakespeare Lives (2016), Spirit of Youth (2017) and Inspiring Women in the Arts (2018). Before China, Nick was the British Council's director in Australia, which delivered major programmes including the Accelerate cultural leadership programme for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and the GREAT Arts campaign in 2013.

Prior to the British Council, Nick was Artistic Director / CEO of Griffin Theatre Company (Australia's new writing theatre), and a producer at Sydney Theatre Company's Wharf 2 Theatre.

Paul Brummell, Head of Soft Power and External Affairs Department, Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)



Paul Brummell is a career diplomat and joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in 1987. He has served as HM Ambassador to Turkmenistan, HM Ambassador to Kazakhstan and concurrently Kyrgyzstan, High Commissioner to Barbados and the countries of the Eastern Caribbean, and HM Ambassador to Romania. He is currently Head of Soft Power and External Affairs at the FCO.

Paul has also authored or co-authored three travel guides.

Cat Lumb, Producer: *Jallianwala Bagh 1919: Punjab under Siege* | Secondary and Post-16 Co-ordinator (Humanities/Arts), Manchester Museum



Cat Lumb has over a decade's worth of experience in the Learning Team at Manchester Museum, developing innovative programming for 11-18 year olds in collaboration with University of Manchester students and freelance artists. Her skills lie in excellent relationship management and leading ambitious projects. Throughout her time at the Museum, she has provided hundreds of students with the opportunity to display their work on various themes within the Museum itself.

In 2019 she was Project Manager for *Jallianwala Bagh 1919: Punjab under Siege*; a partnership exhibition with The Partition Museum in India, which was the first step in

developing a five year, sustainable partnership which will contribute to Manchester Museum's *hello future* redevelopment. *hello future* will create a new Exhibition Hall, South Asia Gallery, Chinese Culture Gallery, the world's first Centre for Age Friendly Culture, and a new entrance for the Museum with visitor facilities that focus on inclusive accessible design. This £13.5m transformation will support the vision to become a more inclusive, imaginative, and caring Museum that is relevant to the diverse communities we serve.

In 2019 Manchester Museum, UK and The Partition Museum, India, collaborated to create and develop *Jallianwala Bagh 1919: Punjab under Siege*, an exhibition that opened at Manchester Museum in April 2019, along with two capsule versions of the exhibit in Birmingham and London.

Based on a larger exhibition at The Partition Museum that explores the legacy of a British troops who open fired on a group of peaceful protesters on 12th April 1919, colleagues from both institutions spent five months condensing the existing text and adapting it for a UK audience in an attempt to decolonise the traditional Anglo-centric narrative.

During this presentation Cat, Project Manager for the exhibition from the UK side, will outline the approach taken and provide a brief overview of working practices and lessons learned during this time. She will offer practical tips to support sustainable international co-working and explore the practical elements in overcoming perceived barriers of working in this way and how successful global partnerships originate from shared values.

Dr Sarah Worden, Senior Curator African Collections, National Museums Scotland



Sarah Worden is senior curator of the sub-Saharan African collections at National Museums Scotland (NMS) and has a research background in African textiles and dress, with doctoral research into Hausa textiles in Northern Nigeria.

International research projects include a 2019/20 AHRC/GCRF funded project *Women's Identity, Textiles and Heritage: Coastal Style in Mozambique* investigating the role of the capulana cloth in Mozambique. Other textiles research includes study and collection of contemporary political and religious printed cloths from Malawi, and investigation of barkcloth in the Museum's 19th century collections and in contemporary practice in Uganda. More broadly, other research interests include the history of the Museum's African collections and contexts of collecting, including Scottish missionary collections from Africa. Sarah has curated special exhibitions at NMS include *Dr Livingstone I Presume?* to commemorate the bi-centenary of Livingstone's birth in 2013 and *The Art of African Metalwork* in 2019.

Sarah's presentation will focus on the development and delivery of an international partnership project between National Museums Scotland, the Museu das Pescas and the Museu de Fortaleza in Maputo, Mozambique, eastern Africa, to investigate the history and contemporary use of textiles and dress on the coast of southern Mozambique. Among the least developed countries in the world, coastal communities in Mozambique are under

threat, and material practices and living traditions lost, through resource exploitation and environmental change. The aim of this project is to contribute to local knowledge and awareness of the significant role of Marine Cultural Heritage (MCH), as identified in the Rising from the Depths research challenge, in the maintenance of community identity in the face of cultural change. <https://risingfromthedepts.com/>

Working in the local coastal community of Katembe outside Maputo city *WITH Coastal Style* aims to research the role of the capulana, a printed cotton cloth, as a material symbol of Mozambican female identity and cultural heritage, and, in so doing, identify and promote women's issues in maritime communities. The one-year project (started in June 2019) had a number of objectives including the collection and recording of information from individuals as a community resource; to co-develop a museum exhibition and a cross-disciplinary workshop in Maputo; to co-develop an itinerant educational resource for schools and communities outside the city. This presentation will reflect on the success and challenges of this multi-faceted approach.