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PUBLIC-PRIVATE SYNERGIES FOR THE ARTS AND CULTURE: KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM MONDIACULT 2025

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Speakers & participants

Moderators

- **Ruth Mackenzie,**
Director of Arts,
British Council
- **Dr. Tiphaine de Mombynes,**
Director, Metis Fund, AFD

Government and Ministerial Representatives

- **Hon. Abla Dzifa Gomashie,**
Minister for Tourism, Culture
and Creative Arts, Ghana
- **Hon. Ummi Bashir,**
Principal Secretary of State,
Department for Culture
and Heritage, Kenya

I. INTRODUCTION

Context: During the 2025 Mondiacult Conference in Barcelona, the Metis Fund alongside the British Council had the opportunity to host two events to invite stakeholders from both the public and private sector to reflect together on financial practices for Arts and Culture and how to level up the existent support. These two events were an official side-event on Monday the 29th, and a close-door working breakfast on Tuesday the 30th. Both discussions were animated around a key question: **how to better bridge public and private finance to optimize the support for Arts, Culture and Sustainable Development?**

The aim of this brief is to capture the key contributions and ideas shared by participants across the events, in order to shed light on the collective effort to bridge public and private financial flows and actions in support of Arts and Culture. It is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis, but to serve as a foundation for continued dialogue and future collaboration among all actors involved.

Institutional and Organizational Representatives

- **Dorine Rurashitse,**
General Director, Africalia
- **Ronan Pezzini,**
Project Coordinator, ICC, AFD
- **Cristina Ward,**
Head of Arts, British Council Spain
- **Maria Garcia Holley,**
Regional Arts Director,
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- **Emil Rodriguez,**
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Sustainable Mobility, CAF
- **Rafael Chueca,**
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Culture and Regional Action,
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- **Edwige Sauzon-Bouit,**
Head of Culture, Expertise France
- **Juliette Janin,**
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Indian Ocean Commission
- **Juan Naya,**
CEO, ISDIN
- **Volodymir Sheiko,**
Director General,
Ukrainian Institute
- **Anna Nsubuga,**
UK Ambassador and Permanent
Delegate to UNESCO
- **Pablo Longoria,**
Executive Director, World
Monuments Fund – Spain
- **Cade Williams,**
Executive Assistant to the
CEO, World Monuments Fund

II. A REMINDER THAT CULTURE MATTERS FOR ALL

It is essential to begin by recalling why this discussion matters. While the value of Arts and Culture is widely acknowledged, there remains a need for concrete tools to demonstrate and communicate their impact.

Responding to this need, the FICS Coalition for Sustainable Development in Arts and Culture—co-chaired by the Metis Fund and the Caribbean Bank—launched in April 2025 the *Benefits of Arts and Culture Compass*. Developed following an extensive literature review, the Compass was further detailed and shared in the study “Public Development Banks – Arts, Culture and Sustainable Development: Why? What? and How?” (Frenoux, 2025).

The Compass provides a structured framework for identifying and analyzing the multifaceted contributions of Arts and Culture to societies through three main and independent pillars: **Economic Benefits**, **Community Benefits**, and **Individual Benefits**. Each pillar is composed of specific, qualitative and illustrative dimensions. For instance, within the *Economic Benefits* pillar, investment in Arts and Culture can stimulate job creation and contribute to industrial growth. Under *Community Benefits*, such investment may foster cultural diversity, inclusion, and intercultural dialogue. For *Individual Benefits*, it can enhance physical health, emotional resilience, and psychological well-being.



“Culture is a missing pillar for the World’s priorities and Sustainable Development Goals”

RUTH MACKENZIE

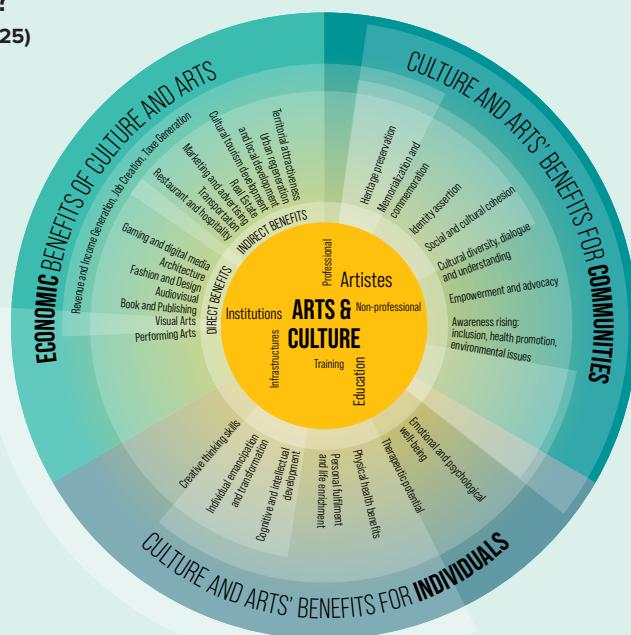
DIRECTOR OF ARTS, BRITISH COUNCIL

Focusing exclusively on one of these pillars—for example, public development banks often prioritizing the economic impact of cultural and creative industries, as shown in the study—would risk overlooking the broader significance of Arts and Culture and their essential value for humanity.

By using the Compass during both our events at Mondiacult, participants were able to situate their respective activities—whether as public or private actors—within this broader framework, reflecting on benefits that were taken care of, and those that remained underfunded and insufficiently recognized. The exercise allowed us then to understand existing roles, revealed areas of overlap or neglect, and underscored the importance of complementarity in the allocation of financial resources for certain dimensions of Arts and Culture.

Why arts and culture matter?

(de Mombynes and Frenoux, 2025)



III. WHAT ARE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS FUNDING? (FACTUAL OVERVIEW)

Using the Compass as a starting point for reflection, we first sought to understand, based on the discussions and interventions during the events, where each actor -public and private- was positioned. This allowed us to map the areas each sector was focusing on in terms of funding, and subsequently work collectively to identify gaps and potential bridges for collaboration.

Public Sector Funding

Based on the exchanges, public institutions -including governments, public development banks, intergovernmental agencies, and national cultural agencies focus primarily on infrastructure, heritage, and the creative economy.

Before examining the public sector priorities in detail, it is important to contextualize the different roles and approaches of the various actors involved:

Governments around the table, such as Ghana and Kenya, primarily channel funding through their Ministries to support public cultural policies, emphasizing the **Economic Benefits** of Arts and Culture while also promoting **Community Benefits** through broader access and participation.

Public Development Banks like the French Development Agency and the Latin American and Caribbean Development Bank allow and complement these efforts by mainly providing loans and subsidies that also focus on **Economic Benefits** through cultural infrastructure, heritage preservation for tourism, and the development of **Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)**.

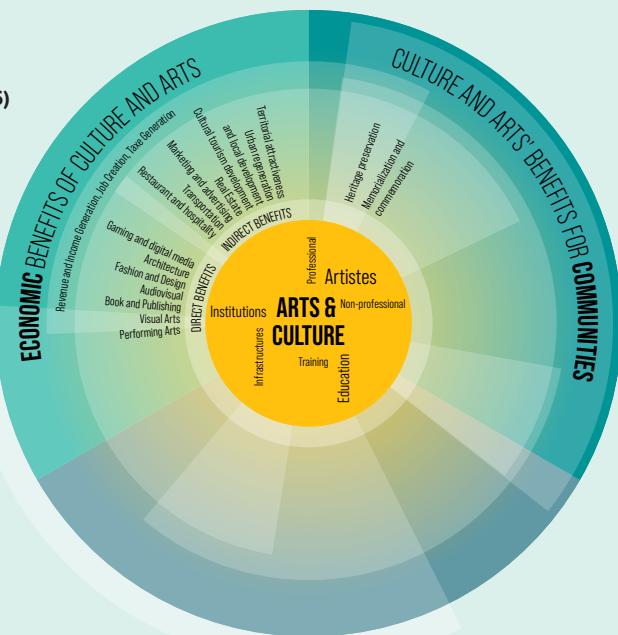
National cultural agencies, such as the **British Council** or the **Ukrainian Institute**, adopt a different approach, through subsidies and prioritizing **cultural diplomacy** and, in specific contexts, like Ukraine's, **post-crisis support**.

Further breaking down the areas that these public actors stated supporting we found:

- **Cultural Infrastructure and Heritage Preservation Includes:** Safeguarding heritage, maintaining museums, and developing cultural infrastructure, often linked to local, national and/or regional development or tourism.
- **Creative and Cultural Industries Development Includes:** Supporting economic growth through entrepreneurship and professionalization, recognizing CCIs' contributions to jobs and GDP, developing further the frameworks of Intellectual Property.
- **Education, Access, and Inclusion Includes:** Strengthening arts education, cultural participation, local organizations, and amateur practices.
- **Emergency and Post-crisis Support Includes:** Funding heritage protection, documentation, and artistic projects in fragile or conflict-affected contexts to foster resilience and social cohesion.
- **Cross-sector Initiatives:** Linking culture with environmental, social, or technological programs, such as heritage preservation combined with ecological restoration or social inclusion projects.

Why arts and culture matter for public sector?

(de Mombynes and Frenoux, 2025)



Private Sector Funding

Private actors —including foundations, corporations, philanthropic organizations, and individual donors— often support more flexible, community- or individual-oriented, and experimental initiatives. It is useful to further distinguish the nature of these actors. In our discussions, two main types of private funders emerged: investment-driven and philanthropy-driven.

Investment-driven actors, such as banks or venture capital firms, generally prioritize financial return, economic stability and growth, and sponsorship opportunities.

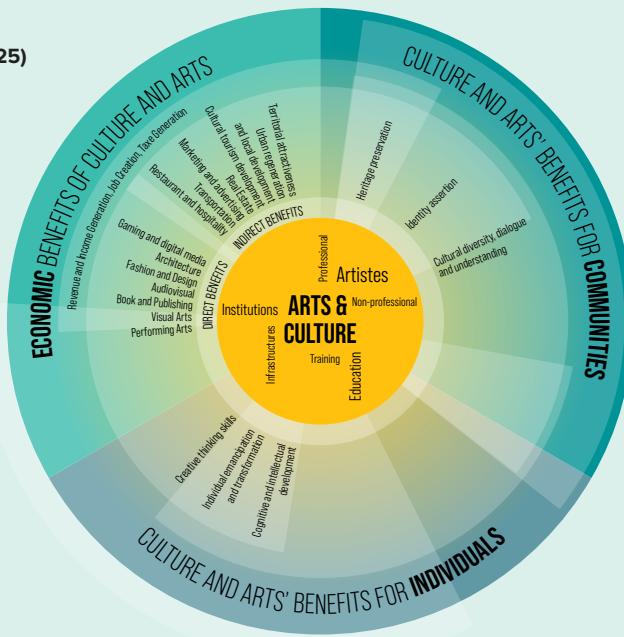
In contrast, philanthropy-driven actors tend to focus on Community and Individual Benefits, funding heritage, individual and collective artistic expression, and cross-sector initiatives that leverage Arts and Culture to generate benefits in other domains.

Looking more closely, the discussions highlighted the private financial sector's support for Arts and Culture in the following ways:

- **Creative and Cultural Industries Development:** Supporting entrepreneurship and professionalization, particularly in audiovisual and digital sectors, with partnerships -at times with public actors that also support industrial growth- to build skills and connect creators to broader networks.
- **Philanthropy and Sponsorship:** Funding heritage restoration, exhibitions, and cultural events, often aligned with CSR goals.
- **Community and Smaller-scale Initiatives:** Supporting grassroots initiatives, local collectives, and emerging creators through microgrants and networks that improve access, visibility, and connections.

Why arts and culture matter for private sector?

(de Mombynes and Frenoux, 2025)



IV. MAIN FUNDING GAPS

Once the funding priorities of each actor were identified, it became clear that these differing approaches and areas of focus often result in underfunded segments within the cultural ecosystem. While both public and private sectors actively invest in infrastructure, heritage, and high-profile programs, discussions highlighted significant funding gaps that need to be addressed in order to better realize the whole potential benefits of Arts and Culture.

The key critical funding gaps identified:

Human Capital and Capacity Building
- To ensure all types of benefits

Despite investments in the creative industries, funding for **training, skills development, and professionalization** of cultural actors remains limited. Many creatives and cultural institutions struggle to navigate funding systems or engage with financial actors effectively, especially youth and emerging talent. Strengthening these human capacities is essential to ensure long-term sustainability and maximize the impact of existing investments.

“It is time that we take our youth to be an integral part of the human capital. CBC is Curriculum Based Initiative under the Education Ministry, where we are using our children and youth to bring up the arts and talent that [they] have. Arts and culture -although they are passion-driven -should be a source of income for the generations and the youth”.

HON. UMMI BASHIR, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE, DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE AND HERITAGE, KENYA

Community and Small-scale Projects

- Primarily to ensure benefits for Communities and Individuals

Infrastructure and institutional programs dominate public funding, leaving **local and individual grassroots, and small-scale initiatives** under-resourced. Philanthropic actors partially fill this gap, but **community engagement, amateur artistic practices, and informal cultural sectors** still lack consistent support. These smaller-scale interventions are crucial to activate the cultural ecosystem and complement the larger institutional and entrepreneurial programs, as well as to bring life to the infrastructural programs already funded.

“Cultural and CCI should be placed at the center of policies for regeneration and local development. [They provide] identity, cohesion, and a shared ‘world in common’.”

ANNA NSUBUGA
UK AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT
DELEGATE TO UNESCO

Data, Research, and Evidence

- To ensure all types of benefits

While the economic contributions of culture are increasingly recognized, systematic **data collection and research on social, cultural, and individual benefits** remain underfunded. Existing evaluation efforts are fragmented, making it difficult to advocate for targeted investment and to design programs and public cultural policies that respond effectively to local needs.

“All the time I have to prove what I’m doing. There needs to be better and more data.”

DORINE RURASHITSE, DIRECTOR, AFRICALIA

V. PUBLIC-PRIVATE FUNDING: HOW TO BETTER WORK TOGETHER?

The central question bringing us together was how to better bridge public and private funding to strengthen support for Arts and Culture.

What emerged most compellingly from these discussions was the shared recognition that all types of financial flows—public and private alike—are tools to achieve societal impact through the support of Arts and Culture. Each financial stream plays a vital role in its own right, reflecting the unique interests, mandates, ambitions and constraints of its respective actors.

Therefore, when we speak of bridging public and private finance in the Arts and Culture sector, we are not referring to a uniform or systematic collaboration across all areas, but to a beneficial mobilization of different tools to achieve certain goals. As the compass illustrates, each financial actor already contributes distinct yet complementary benefits. The discussions at Mondiacult served thus as a strong reminder for all stakeholders to remain attentive to where different financial flows are directed—both to reinforce their own actions and priorities, but also to identify the spaces where public–private collaboration can be the most effective tool.

The challenges and recommendation

After identifying the current funding gaps—outlined earlier—participants were invited to explore potential solutions. Interestingly, opportunities for engaging public–private collaboration often emerged from a common challenge-solving perspective. Both financial sectors encounter obstacles in developing, diversifying, scaling, and sustaining support for artistic and cultural initiatives across all dimensions of benefit—even when their ambitions extend beyond purely economic outcomes.

Many of these challenges overlap between sectors and can, in fact, create opportunities for bridging through strategic collaboration.

These challenges include:



Differences in language and understanding between public financial actors, private financial actors, and cultural stakeholders.

Each actor speaks its own financial language. For example, public institutions often operate on longer timelines, following formal procedures and riskier approaches, while private actors tend to move faster, with greater flexibility but sometimes less emphasis on social or cultural impact since short-term financial returns are indirect. While it is essential for each to continue strengthening their own actions, it is equally important that they develop a better understanding of one another. This lack of mutual understanding often prevents financial actors from having a clear view of each other's priorities, mechanisms, and contributions—limiting their ability to identify spaces for smart and effective collaboration.

Moreover, cultural actors themselves often lack familiarity with financial language and mechanisms. This makes it more difficult for them to understand or mobilize available financial tools, resulting in unequal access to funding opportunities—most often favoring larger, well-established institutions over smaller or independent ones.

“Regional organizations can play several roles. [Such as] Creating spaces to discuss, to involve actors that are not cultural and need to be convinced, tackling structural barriers.”

JULIETTE JANIN, HEAD OF DEPARTMENT, INDIAN OCEAN COMMISSION

Recommendations

Participants recommended to establish forums, observatories, and collaborative spaces for cultural actors, policymakers, and financiers to exchange knowledge, coordinate efforts, and include local communities in decision-making. Then, use these spaces to develop shared frameworks to reconcile the different timelines, risk tolerance, and expectations of public and private actors.

Additionally, to commonly invest in training programs for bankers, investors to adapt to the cultural sector, and cultural professionals to understand financial institutions were also suggested to strengthen financial literacy and cooperation on both sides.

Participants also stressed the importance of education policies that position Culture as a cross-cutting priority, encouraging greater cultural and financial literacy from an early stage.

"We formulated a strategy built around three key pillars. First, the mobilization of knowledge to develop effective policies and programs. Second, the use of both traditional and innovative financing instruments to support public and private sector. And third, the promotion of partnerships to achieve greater scale and foster regional efforts aimed at understanding and strengthening the entire value chain."

EMIL RODRIGUEZ, DIRECTOR OF HABITAT AND SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY, CAF

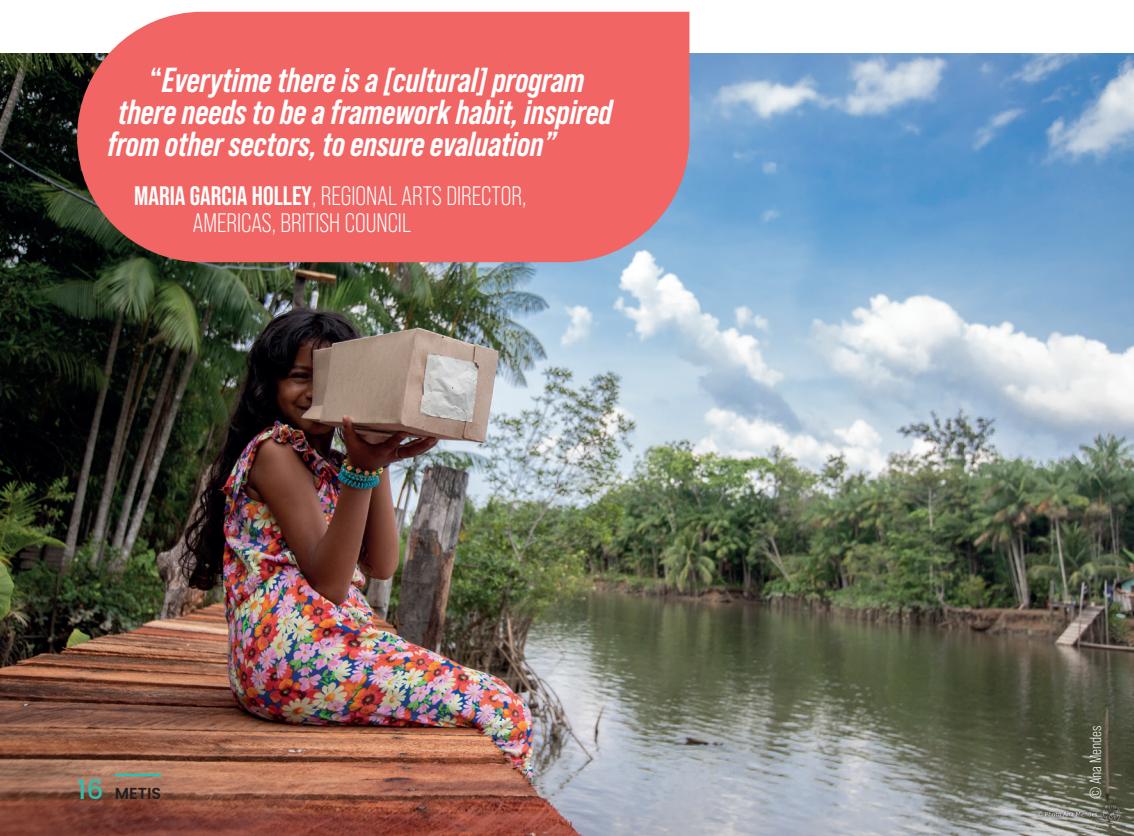
Insufficient data and evidence to demonstrate the importance of Arts and Culture for economies, societies, and individuals.

The need for stronger evidence and more consistent data collection to demonstrate the real benefits of Arts and Culture was underlined. Some participants emphasized that, without robust data, it remains difficult to challenge prevailing social paradigms that place Arts and Culture at the lower end of national and international priorities. As a result, efforts to channel additional funding toward existing gaps become even more complex and constrained for both public and private actors.

This observation, however, was challenged. In reality, there is already a substantial amount of studies and research on the subject. Therefore, the argument of a lack of data to justify inaction should not be used as a barrier to taking action.

“Everytime there is a [cultural] program there needs to be a framework habit, inspired from other sectors, to ensure evaluation”

MARIA GARCIA HOLLEY, REGIONAL ARTS DIRECTOR,
AMERICAS, BRITISH COUNCIL



Recommendations

Participants recommended joining efforts to improve data collection and to develop shared indicators that better capture the societal, cultural, and economic impact of Arts and Culture. Inspiration could be drawn from data methodologies used in other sectors.

"I am wary of those who call for ever more data before being convinced that action is needed. The data already exists, and the research is extensive. It is important to highlight this first, and therefore to act accordingly, while continuing to improve data systems."

TIPHAINE DE MOMBYNES, DIRECTOR, METIS FUND



Existing larger financial systems—often public—that are not well equipped to finance or support small-scale or community-based initiatives.

Larger funding actors, often public, such as governments and Public Development Banks, typically focus on major institutions, infrastructure projects, or heritage programs. While this provides stability and long-term support, it can sometimes overlook grassroots, informal, or experimental initiatives. Similarly, large private investment actors, such as commercial banks, tend to prioritize large-scale and profitable cultural ventures.

Yet it is important to underline that small-scale funding is crucial in the cultural sector—arguably more so than in many other sectors (water, education, energy, agriculture, etc.). Dedicated mechanisms for small funds are therefore essential to sustain the vitality of the creative ecosystem as it was conceived. As noted earlier, the lack of this small-scale funding system results in uneven coverage across the cultural ecosystem, where small-scale and community-based projects—crucial for cultural diversity and innovation—remain under-supported.

In this context, philanthropic organizations possess valuable expertise that can help bridge this gap. Their experience in supporting smaller, community-driven, and experimental initiatives positions them as key partners in expanding funding opportunities and fostering a more inclusive cultural financing landscape.

“La Caixa Foundation seeks to create networks, with every kind of practitioner and institution. I think it is the way to cover this gap because big institutions don’t manage to reach small artists working in villages for instance”

RAFAEL CHUECA, ASSOCIATE GENERAL DIRECTOR OF CULTURE AND REGIONAL ACTION, LA CAIXA FOUNDATION

Recommendations

Promote the use of blended finance, co-funding, and cross-sector platforms to combine public legitimacy with private flexibility and networks that are more accessible to smaller-scale projects. Several participants also emphasised the crucial role of private philanthropic actors in sustaining and advancing grassroots initiatives, and encouraged stronger collaboration between public institutions and philanthropy to support these efforts.

"If we want to fully support the broad benefits that arts and culture bring to societies, we must also recognise that small-scale funding is crucial to sustaining the sector's vitality—perhaps more so than in any other technical field. This calls for a jointly designed mechanism. This is precisely what we are seeking to promote through the Metis Fund."

TIPHAINNE DE MOMBYNES, DIRECTOR, METIS FUND



Administrative and regulatory barriers that may limit the private sector's ability to engage or invest effectively.

It was stated by some actors that private initiatives sometimes face limitations from public frameworks, such as difficulties in obtaining permits, restrictive regulations, lack of enabling policies or few tax incentives for individual donors. This constrains their ability to act independently and reduces the potential for private support to multiply Arts and Culture initiatives.

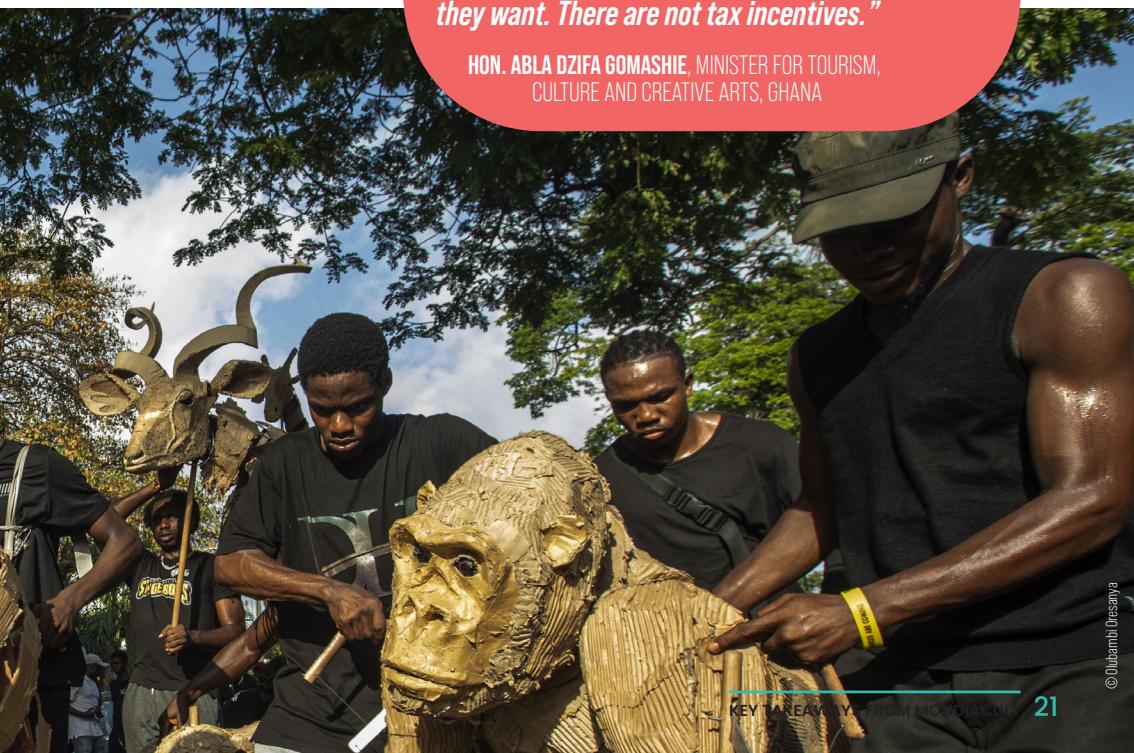


Recommendations

Some participants defended the idea that the public sector should act as an enabler—providing frameworks, incentives, and access—while the private sector contributes innovation, networks, and agility. Sometimes, what cultural actors from the private sector need is not financial support from public flows, but guidance, accessibility and incentives. Examples included facilitating permits, improving tax incentives, improving legal frameworks to facilitate philanthropic action, proposing training programs for professionalization, designing supportive governance frameworks.

“In Ghana [private sector involvement] is not effective. The private sector is not convinced that they can get the returns that they want. There are not tax incentives.”

**HON. ABLA DZIFA GOMASHIE, MINISTER FOR TOURISM,
CULTURE AND CREATIVE ARTS, GHANA**



VI. CONCLUSION

The discussions at Mondiacult showed that while financially bridging public and private finance to better support Arts and Culture is not always necessary, stronger connections and exchanges between actors are essential. Collaboration is particularly valuable where both sectors face common challenges, allowing them to complement each other's strengths and address gaps to generate broader benefits for economies, communities and individuals – benefits that only Arts and Culture can achieve.

On behalf of the FICS Arts and Culture Coalition, especially the British Council and the Metis Fund, we extend our gratitude to all participants in these conversations. This marks only the beginning of an ongoing dialogue. The Coalition's members look forward to deepening collaboration, learning together, and transforming these insights into concrete, inclusive, and sustainable actions that strengthen the future of Arts and Culture.

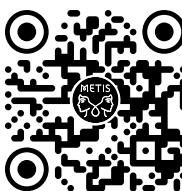
“Culture is a way of life, but war can destroy that. Even if the human part may not be restored, what is registered and preserved is important”

VOLODYMYR SHEIKO, DIRECTOR GENERAL, UKRAINIAN INSTITUTE





**The Metis Fund warmly thanks
all participants for their
contributions to this rich reflection,
which helps Metis nurture
its philosophy and actions.**



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