

# Caabu's education programme



Teaching young  
people about the Arab World



The Council for Arab-British Understanding

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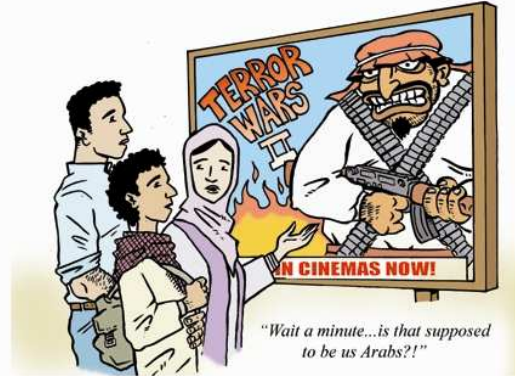
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# Caabu's Education Work

For more than forty years we have taken a lead in informing young people about the Arab world, its peoples, its history and its culture. We have pioneered new and exciting techniques for educating both in the classroom and beyond. With your help we can continue this vital work.

Given that most people in Britain have a very limited understanding of the Arab world, its people, culture and history, working with schools is one of the most valuable contributions we can make. For this reason Caabu is seeking funds to develop a vibrant programme of activities to encourage constructive engagement with the Arab world and Arab-British communities in British schools.



## Aims and Objectives

- To counter negative and misleading images of the Arab world and people that pervade Western media (films, TV, the press and new media such as video games)
- To equip young people with a more engaged and open-minded approach
- To motivate and enable teachers to deal confidently with cultural issues
- To deliver high quality presentations and workshops across the country on a variety of topics the education system does not currently address sufficiently
- To present alternative images and stories to those put out by the media and explore the role of art in challenging stereotypes and injustice.

## Why our education work is essential

Caabu currently works with around 10,000 school children a year. For many students, a session with Caabu is their only opportunity to hear about the Arab world from a different perspective to what's usually on offer in the mainstream media and elsewhere, while our teaching resources are fast becoming a mainstay for teaching about Islam or the Middle East. Building on our current work, this new programme will encourage students to think beyond prevalent stereotypes and misconceptions and motivate them to ask important critical questions via an exciting range of activities. Through the development of an accessible programme of engagement it will enable teachers to get the maximum benefit from working with us.

## About Caabu

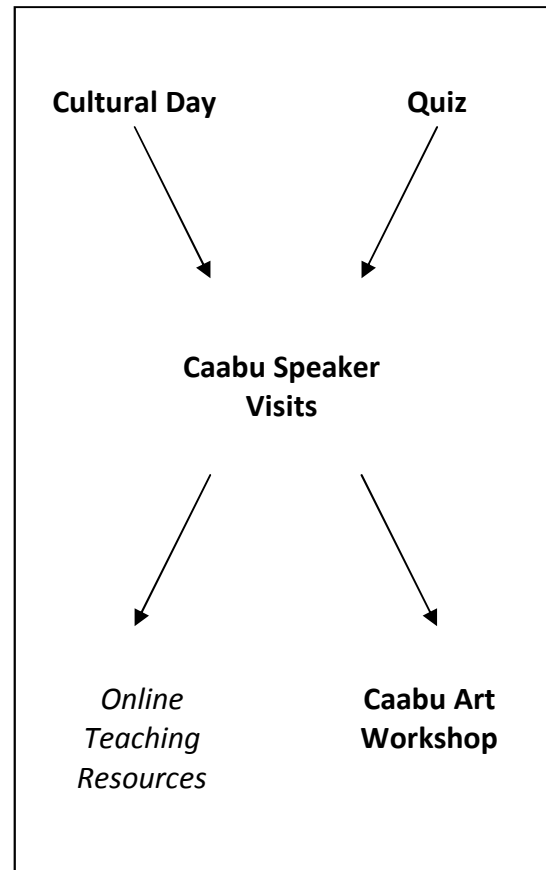
*Since its establishment in 1967, Caabu has taken on a strong political, educational and media role.*

*A cross-party organisation, with Chairs from the main political parties, Caabu works to advance Arab-British relations through its support for international law, human rights and democracy.*

# How the Project Will Work

## A New Standard for Learning about the Arab World

With a more systemic approach to education, we can set up a simple and accessible pathway for teachers looking to use our education services. Initially, we can direct teachers to our online quizzes or our cultural days as an introductory or taster exercise on the topics they'd like us to cover. For the second stage, they can bring in a Caabu speaker to explore issues face-to-face with their students in one of our workshops or discussion sessions. Finally, teachers can continue to work through these topics using our wide-range of teaching materials, while students or classes with a particular interest can attend one of our art workshops or cultural days, which will be held at regular intervals through the year. In this way, Caabu can support learning from start to finish and ensure the best possible outcome for students.



### Education programme overview

Over the course of a year we will:

- Produce two free-to-use versatile, innovative and accessible quizzes that can be used by students, nationally and internationally, on a variety of platforms, from desktop PCs to tablets.
- Organise two cultural days for interested schools, bringing together a variety of tutors and speakers to inform students about Arabic culture.
- Deliver 60 talks and workshops, tailored to student needs, on subjects ranging from Arab stereotypes and images of the Middle East to Israel/Palestine, transformation in the Arab world and perceptions of Muslims in the UK .
- Run a series of three art workshops to generate interest in Arab culture, give budding young artists an insight into the creative process and an opportunity to work with professional artists.

# Our Methodology

## Challenging through Questioning

Part of the difficulty in dealing with negative images, particularly racial or cultural stereotypes, is that they tend to be held unconsciously and are rarely acknowledged.

### *The well-chosen question:*

In our experience, one of the most effective strategies to tackle this is that of the well-chosen question. Rather than telling students they are wrong, or that their opinion is founded on falsehoods, we encourage them to confront ideas openly, giving them the opportunity to formulate new thinking in the light of fresh information.

### *A reflexive process:*

Education is more than a matter of absorbing facts from books and tutors. Active learning requires a dynamic and reflexive process that challenges a student's prejudices or preconceptions. A learner can be told that a certain opinion or stereotype is factually false or morally reprehensible but unless they are encouraged to honestly acknowledge the limiting and damaging nature of certain assumptions they will lack the desire to move beyond them.

### *A multi-faceted approach:*

One-off interventions can also be limiting or even self defeating, leaving an unstable mix of informed and unfounded impressions. It can be counter-productive to deal with controversial or difficult subjects in a token way, yet few schools are equipped to do anything more. With our new programme of work, teachers will be able to ensure a thorough and robust coverage of the relevant issues while minimising conflicts with the national curriculum's demands on their time.



## Making Learning a Process

Part of what makes our education programme so exciting is the opportunity it gives for teachers and students to pursue our method of working across topics and disciplines for the enrichment and continuation of learning.

By making our materials and activities as accessible as possible, we can guide interested educators through a series of steps to assist them when talking about the Arab world with their students, engaging directly with our personnel's expertise where appropriate and ultimately creating a far deeper and longer lasting impression while addressing topics not covered fully by the standard curriculum.

Through its range of activities, our programme of activities will not only appeal to students with different interests but also allow them to build on their knowledge and develop their skills in different areas.

# Challenging through questioning

## Educational Quizzes

One of the major problems teachers face when addressing Arab history, culture and politics is the lack of easily accessible material suitable for a younger audience. To fill this gap, we will produce two high-quality interactive pieces of education software to serve as a first step into these important topics, suitable for use either in a class environment or at home.

The two quizzes, on 'Stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims' and 'Current Events in the Arab World', will provide an ideal precursor to a Caabu talk or workshop. Quizzes are an excellent way to motivate students and measure their knowledge, abilities and skills by encouraging active engagement with challenging topics in a manner that also helps to promote self-study and independent learning.


Basing the program on a simple quiz-style structure, we will create a resource that is straightforward, interactive and fun to use. The final piece will be 20-25 questions long and will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Suitable for any audience over the age of 11, it will be written with accessibility and clarity and will include information of interest to both young and old. Our previous project using this format, the Gaza Strip Quiz (pictured below), has proved extremely popular and is now used widely in classrooms across the country.

The program will ask a question and the student must then select the right answer from a choice of a series of options (typically 3-4). If they choose the correct answer, they will be directed to a page of explanatory and contextual notes. If they get the wrong answer, they will be directed to a similar page explaining where their misconception might have sprung from and giving them a chance to try again.

The flexibility of the Flash format used to create the quizzes, will enable us to distribute them through our website or via simple DVDs that we can disseminate to interested schools.

Click the correct answer

Which of these is the outline of the Gaza Strip?




A B C

Next Question

1 / 20

Well Done!



Well done! You correctly identified the Gaza Strip! The other two were Monaco (A) and Gibraltar (B).


The Gaza Strip is the name given to an area of land on the coast of the Mediterranean. The border with Egypt and Rafah crossing point is to the south west. To the east is modern day Israel and the Negev desert. The largest cities in the Gaza Strip are Gaza City, Khan Younis and Rafah.

Let's see what else you know about The Gaza Strip...

Next Question

Click the correct answer

In 1914, on the eve of the First World War, the combined population of Gaza City and Khan Younis was




1000 People  
40,000 People  
200,000 People  
3,500,000 People

Next Question

5 / 20

Well done!




Around 75% of the population of the Gaza Strip are registered as refugees - people who have been forced to leave their original homes. Many have spent the last sixty years living in dwellings in the Gaza Strip that were only ever designed to be temporary. How did this happen? Where did all these refugees come from?

Palestinian refugees fleeing in 1948

Next Question

Source: United Nations Works and Relief Agency (<http://www.unrwa.org/template.php?id=64>)

Well done!



During the First World War, Britain and its allies fought in the Middle East against the Ottoman Empire. In 1917, a British army invaded Gaza from Egypt. After weeks crossing the barren Sinai desert, the rich environment of Gaza was a very welcome change for the soldiers, and even the generals took time to admire the local wildlife!

To gain Arab support in the war against the Ottomans, Britain had made promises to the people that they would have their own independent state once the war was over, and many understood that to include Palestine. At the same time, the British government promised Zionist leaders in London its support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine after the war.


In fact, Britain kept direct control of Palestine at the end of the war and would lose them for thirty years under what was later called the "British Mandate".

Ottoman Troops from the First World War defending Gaza

Next Question

Source: Lord Allenby, letter to the Daily Chronicle, 10/09/1917

Well done!



Since 1914 the population in Gaza increased massively, from 40,000 to over one and a half million people. How did this happen?

There are many possible factors that could cause such a big increase. For example, high birth rates, mass immigration of people and big improvements in public health.

However, the Gaza Strip's population today is over 30 times what it was in 1900. So something pretty dramatic must have happened to cause such a big increase...

Children in Gaza

Next Question

Source: CIA World Factbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/03main.html>)

# Experiencing Another Culture



## Cultural Days

Schools can opt to host one of our exciting new cultural days as another way to introduce their students to learning about the Arab world. With these events we can give larger groups of students a taste of Arabic culture. Caabu is the ideal organization to coordinate and run these events as teaching staff can work hand in hand with us to select the activities and workshops which work best for them and their students. We will coordinate with professionals working in each field and help design overall themes for the day. In addition to helping coordinate the overall running of the day, a Caabu staff member will provide an introductory session to help set the tone for the day's workshops and will circulate between groups to assist and supplement the students' learning.

These activity days have been piloted and have been very warmly received indeed, with schools anxious for them to be repeated on an annual basis. After running a number of day events, we are now ready to roll them out into a wider programme of cultural days and make them a core aspect of our education work. In addition to their general interest, these days would also provide a great way to begin looking at broader issues relating to the Arab world before zeroing in on the more in depth topics that will be addressed in a personalised workshop with a Caabu speaker at a later date.

# Face to Face Discussion

## School Talks/Workshops

Some things cannot be learned from books or online. A full understanding of the debates and ideas our work engages with requires a face-to-face meeting between learners and our expert speakers.

Since its founding, Caabu has worked to bring our experience and expertise into classrooms around the UK and we now regularly speak to over 10,000 students a year. We run visits and events ranging from lectures to debates and activity sessions with audiences from the age of 11-18. These sessions represent the best way to get a group thinking and talking about complex issues and they are an ideal follow-up to an Arab culture day or sessions on our quiz software. We are happy to speak on any topic the school might require and always tailor our sessions to specific audiences, but our most popular requests are for talks on Arab/Muslim identity, Israel-Palestine and current events in the Arab world.

Our speaking programme has an excellent reputation and many schools invite us back year on year. Whether in a 25 minute assembly or a full day of workshops with smaller groups, our speakers can help develop and shape young people's awareness about the Arab region and communities.

We plan to run 60 school visits in the upcoming year as part of our education programme.





# Exploring ideas creatively



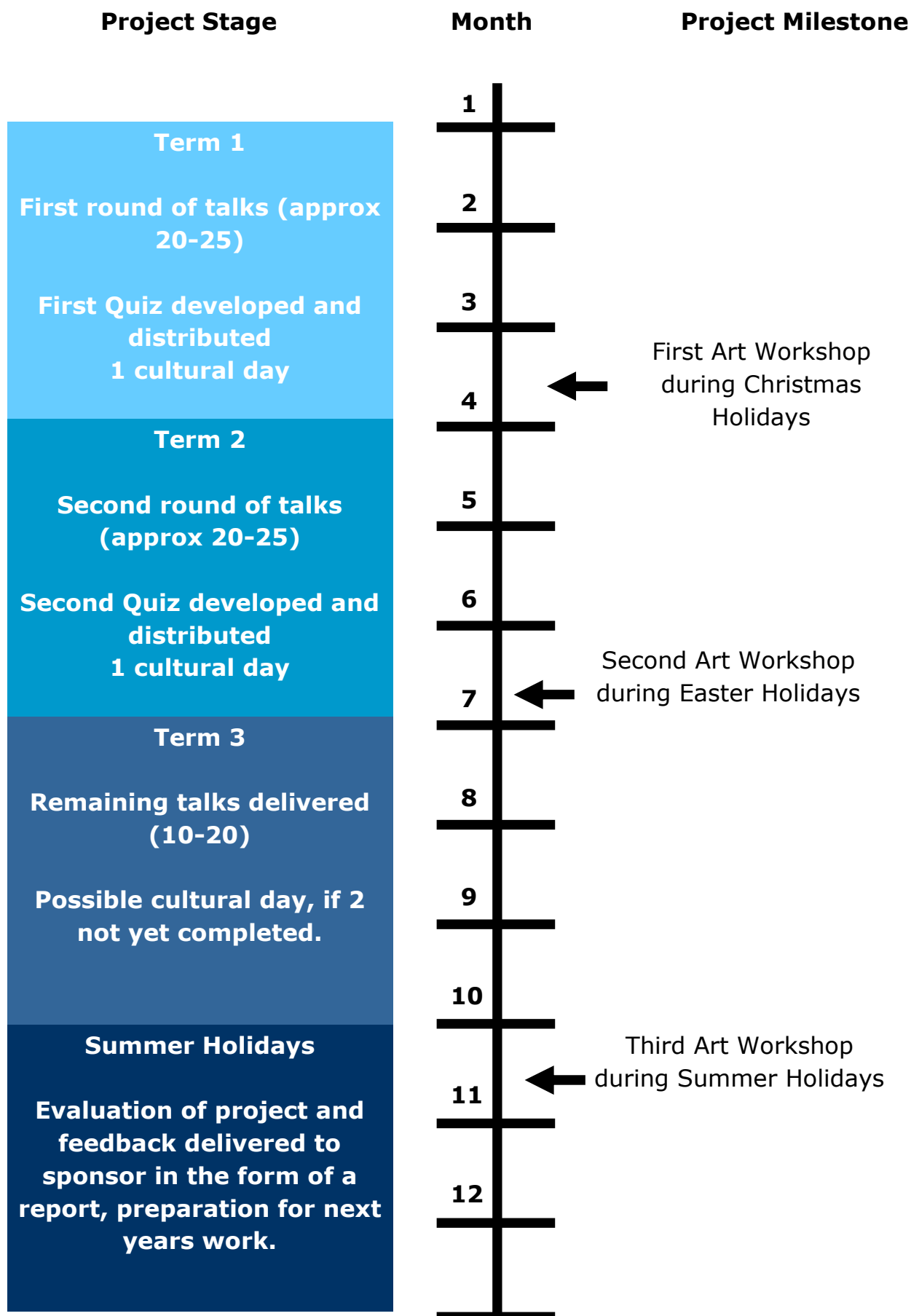
## Art Workshops

How do we develop our educational message beyond the classroom? Or ensure that a new awareness of the Arab world and its culture endures well beyond the end of our visit or the close of a programme of work? Schools, unfortunately, often struggle to include any extra-curricular activities at all, let alone provide the sort of in depth follow up that can really complement our classroom and computer based workshops.

Instead of demanding more time and resources from overstretched teachers and schools, we propose to run art workshops during school holiday periods instead. These workshops will allow interested students to learn more about an often neglected but fascinating aspect of Arabic culture and to interact with professional artists from the region in a relaxed atmosphere at a specialist gallery. By bringing an interest in the Arab world out of the classroom and into creative spaces that allow students to pursue their interest more independently, we can help create a lasting commitment to knowing more about the region and its culture.

We plan to run three art workshops, each during the major UK school holidays of the year—Christmas, Easter and Summer. Each workshop will be themed in accordance with our most popular topics, on Images of Arabs/Muslims, Israel-Palestine and current events in the Arab world.

# Project Time Line



# Development and Execution

The overall project is intended to run over the course of approximately one academic year, starting in September/October and finishing in August/September of the subsequent year. During this time, we will run school talks in term-time and art workshops during each major holiday period.

From prior experience, we know that that the majority of school visits will take place during the first two terms of the years (Christmas and Easter terms). Most British schools spend the majority of their third terms running exams for their 14-18 year old students, although there is some demand for addressing earlier years and for providing post-exam activities. Similarly, while it is more likely that demand for larger events such as cultural days will be in the first two terms of the year, post-exam timetables in the summer term are often flexible, so there is a possibility that there may still be interest in cultural days later in the year.

Production of the two quizzes will be completed during the first and second terms respectively, ready for immediate use in schools. Over the course of each term we will develop, test and begin distribution of the relevant quiz.

While the main body of talks are likely to fall in the first two terms, the third term is likely to include a few remaining talks. During the final period, in the summer holidays after term three, we will conclude the final art workshop and begin our evaluation report, ready for delivery to our sponsor in the final month. This will include feedback on the programme from teachers and students, an overview of the work and recommendations for where improvements might be made in future.

## Key outcomes:

- The production and widespread dissemination of two educational quizzes providing an accessible introduction to Arab history, culture and politics that can be used by students and teachers not only in the UK and but also internationally
- The delivery of a programme of 60 school talks/workshops, two cultural days and three art workshops, **equipping approximately 10,000 students** with a more engaged and open-minded approach towards the Arab world
- A significant increase in the 'know-how' of teachers when dealing with confusion or hostility towards the Arab and Islamic worlds

# Staff

**This programme of activities will be delivered by Caabu's experienced team of staff and associate speakers.**

**Head of Education**—Aimee Shalan. The programme will be led by Aimee who joined Caabu in August 2008. Previously, she was Director of the Olive Tree Programme at City University in London and taught at Queen Mary, University of London. She has also worked for the Centre for the Study of Global Governance at the London School of Economics and the Sussex European Institute. She has a doctorate in the politics of Palestinian literature and is Vice-Chair of Friends of Birzeit University. She is also a regular contributor to the Guardian newspaper's non-fiction round-up.

**Education Consultant**—Edward Parsons. Edward has worked as Caabu's Education Officer for the past two years, visiting schools and colleges to give talks and workshops on the Middle East and producing innovative teaching materials. He is embarking on a PhD at the University of Edinburgh but will continue to work for Caabu on a freelance basis.

## **Associate Speakers:**

Naira Antoun. Naira was Education Officer for Caabu for two years, from 2007-09, and has continued as an associate speaker since then. After leaving Caabu she became a youth worker, working with young refugees and LGBT young people, amongst others, on a range of projects. She has a Masters from Goldsmiths College and is also Reviews Editor for the Arab Studies Journal.

Suha Al-Dabbagh. Suha holds an LLB in Law from the University of Stirling and a Masters in International Relations from King's College London. She wrote her undergraduate dissertation on anti-terrorism legislation in the UK and its conflicts with Article 5 and 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights, and her MA dissertation was on the legal status of the Iraq war in 2003.

Abubakr Al-Shamahi. Abubakr completed his undergraduate degree in Politics at SOAS, University of London, where he is now studying for an MA in Near and Middle Eastern Studies. He is also a freelance journalist and the editor of CommentMidEast.com, a platform for young people to write about the region. His undergraduate dissertation was on the effect of the Arab media on democracy and free speech in the region.

# Costs

Project	Item	Unit	Cost per Unit	Quantity	Total
Quiz	Website hosting, development and maintenance	quiz	250	2	500
Quiz	Licensing/Royalties for Video, Images and Audio	quiz	1000	2	2000
Quiz	Licensing Software for flash development	quiz	250	2	500
Quiz	Marketing of Software	quiz	600	2	1200
Quiz	Printing of DVD for distribution	disc	1.355	1000	1355
Cultural days	Tutors (5 each day)	day	300	10	3000
Art workshops	Senior trainer	0.5 day	500	3	1500
Art workshops	Artists (2 per workshop)	0.5 day	300	3	900
Art workshops	Junior assistant	day	400	3	1200
Art workshops	venue	day	1200	3	3600
Art workshops	materials				350
Full programme	Staff costs*				45000
Full programme	Advertising/printing				3000
Full programme	Office costs				4333
<b>Total</b>	(travel costs not included)				68438

- Total staff costs cover the time of the Head of Education, an Education Consultant and 3 Associate Speakers (a more in depth breakdown is available on request)

Please note travel costs are not included in the cultural days—which are currently based on the cost of running the events in London. If the cultural days were to take place outside of London further costs would be incurred. The costs of travel for the school talks/workshops will be covered by the schools.