



MEDIA RELEASE

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Third World Summit on the Arts and Culture to be held in Newcastle Gateshead, England

Newcastle Gateshead, England, has been selected by the board of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) as the venue for the Third World Summit on the Arts and Culture.

The Summit, which will be held on 14-17 June 2006, will focus on the role of the arts and culture in regeneration.

The event will bring key people in cultural policy and in regional development from around the world to discuss the impact of various government and non-governmental agencies on cultural regeneration. The event will explore best practices and provide opportunities for delegates to create new connections and collaborations.

The first World Summit, hosted by the Canada Council for the Arts, was held in Ottawa, in December 2000. Delegates there voted unanimously to establish IFACCA – the first global network of national arts funding agencies. At the second Summit in Singapore in November 2003, co-hosted by the Singapore National Arts Council, IFACCA held its first general assembly, at which the Federation's constitution was ratified and its first board was elected.

At its meeting in Washington DC, in April 2004, the IFACCA board short-listed bids to host the third Summit. In May, IFACCA's Chair, Risto Ruohonen, and its Executive Director, Sarah Gardner, visited Newcastle Gateshead to discuss the bid from the Arts Council England. The visit provided an opportunity to meet local leaders, inspect proposed venues and review budgets and programming.

Impressed by the city and its cultural facilities, and the strength of the Arts Council's commitment to the event, the board agreed that Newcastle Gateshead should be the venue for the next World Summit.

'The way in which cultural and economic regeneration has occurred here – with the involvement of many parts of the community – will be of great international interest,' said Mr Ruohonen, whose primary role is as the Director of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Division, Ministry of Education, Finland.

'The Sage Gateshead and the BALTIC are impressive venues. The beauty and significance of the cultural precinct will provide a stimulating backdrop to the World Summit,' he said.

The board will discuss the Summit theme and program at its meeting in Hanoi, Viet Nam, in October with further announcements to be made thereafter.

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