Notes for Applicants

Host Bookshop Profiles

Chinese Bookshops

做書 (ZUOSHU/Beijing Book Friends Bookstore) in Beijing

JIC Books in Shanghai

UK Bookshops

Mr B's in Bath

House of Books & Friends in Manchester

Resources

For UK applicants

We have compiled the following resources on the Chinese cultural and creative industries, which we hope will be useful. This includes two recently published reports and British Council's China Now:

1. A Guide to Arts and Culture Opportunities in Mainland China
2. China Now (*British Council resource for UK arts organisations and artists with an interest in working in mainland China.*)

For Chinese applicants

We have compiled the following resources on the UK cultural and creative industries, which we hope will be useful:

1. British Council's work in arts and culture
2. UK Now (WeChat official account 艺述英国, *news and opportunities for Chinese arts organisations and artists with an interest in working with UK counterparts.*)

** Please note that residencies will be conducted primarily in English. Applicants should consider whether they have sufficient English-language skills to participate fully in professional meetings, events and networking opportunities, as translation and interpretation support are not available through this programme.*

Budget

As part of the application, you will be asked to submit a budget for your residency. Creating a well-researched residency budget for your application will enable you to identify what is achievable within the timeframe and resources you have available. It will also enable you to identify risks and prepare for changes as they arise.

Costs you may wish to consider include:

Travel and transportation	Flight / train / rail / fuel for participants, or shipping costs for materials/items	Either Per Diem cost, or total cost per trip per person – often an estimate *The participant shall ensure that no travel funded under this programme involves overflying the airspace of the Russian Federation, in compliance with FCDO safety advisories and the British Council's Duty of Care; any failure to verify and avoid such flight paths shall be deemed a material breach, and the British Council shall not be liable for any resulting risks, including forced diversions or detention.*
Visa costs (Notice on China's Visa Waiver Policy for the UK 2027 status tbc)	Standard visitor visa (Chinese applicant) F type visa (UK applicant)	Cost per application – including visa fee and travel to visa centre if required
Subsistence / per diems	Daily allowance for food and drink when travelling to a different country	Cost per person per day (usually 2-3 meals a day)
Accommodation	Hotel room	Cost per night (check any additional taxes) - often an estimate
Travel insurance	Worldwide cover	If not provided by organisational policy
Tickets	Cost of attending literary events	Either actual cost or estimate of ticket budget
Contingency	A sum of money to cover unexpected costs associated with the effective delivery of the residency	This grant has a limit of 10% contingency

Please note, you can request an additional access budget to enable you to make this trip e.g. sign language interpreters, costs associated with making hotels/travel more accessible, providing transport for disabled participants or costs for a support worker.

Access costs	For example, costs relating to making the trip accessible to d/Deaf, hard of hearing, or blind applicants (e.g., relevant sign language interpreters), or costs associated with making venues more accessible, or providing transport for disabled participants/partners. It may also be costs for a support worker to support an applicant who requires this	Can be a day rate for sign language interpreters or an accessibility expert. Or it could be costs associated with material items/alterations to make a venue more accessible for your residency or ensuring transport which is suitable for disabled participants

Sometimes, we don't know how much certain budget lines will cost when we write our budgets. It's still important that we estimate and anticipate these costs and ensure there is contingency planning in place for unforeseen expenses. This is particularly important for international projects where global-socioeconomic changes, and natural disasters, can have a big impact on budgets. If you don't know what your costs will be on writing your budget:

- Use historical/market data you can always ask vendors for rates and ask experienced people around you.
- Round out figures to the nearest 00s for budget lines where prices can fluctuate, for example air tickets for international travel.
- Contingency can be one of the headings. Most projects keep around 5-10% of the total budget to cover any contingency costs. This grant has a limit of 10% for contingency.

Participant Responsibilities and Conduct

Participants are expected to comply with all applicable local laws and regulations, as well as the policies and requirements of their host organisation. The residency is intended solely for the purposes outlined in the programme, and participants should not undertake unrelated commercial or political activities during the residency period.

Assessment

Assessment criteria 1: Quality (25%)

The organisation sending a representative is of high literary/creative quality and has the capacity to develop international connections.

The assessors will look for:

- Evidence of a **track record of literary quality** in the programme.
- Evidence that the organisation has the **capacity and/or track record in developing international projects**.
- **Suitability of the individual who will participate**, ensuring that they have the ability to instigate and manage international collaborative projects.

Assessment criteria 2: Suitability (25%)

The proposed residency is relevant and will provide opportunities for the participant to increase their understanding of the UK/Chinese cultural sector as well as develop networks with peers in the UK/mainland China.

The assessors will look for:

- Evidence that the bookshop preferred is **an appropriate match**.
- Evidence that the applicant has identified potential outcomes from the residency.

Assessment criteria 3: Management (25%)

The proposed residency is well planned and resourced.

The assessors will look for:

- Evidence that **the proposed residency has been well planned** and that it has considered reasonable risks and mitigations.
- **A realistic budget** which has been well researched.
- **A realistic timing and duration** to carry out the trip.

Assessment criteria 4: Inclusivity (25%)

The application increases the visibility, recognition and influence of women, disabled and other underrepresented literary professionals.

The assessors will look for:

- Applicants from **organisations who have not engaged with the British Council before**.
- Applicants that can demonstrate that they will otherwise not be able to make this trip.
- Evidence that the applicant has plans to share their learning with the cultural sector.

Diversity and Inclusion

As an international cultural relations organisation, British Council works towards mainstreaming of our EDI principles and practices across all our work strands. This includes in how we engage with stakeholders, participants and partners.

We ask our grantees to align with the British Council's inclusive approach. For more information, please read the following document

Equality, diversity and inclusion | British Council

We will assess your application on how it demonstrates a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and how it creates opportunities for underrepresented groups or communities.

Applications can include a short description of what diversity and/or inclusion means in the context of your project and countries and share more information on the underrepresented communities you intend to work with. You will need to share what EDI means for your context, partners and locations and tell us how that has informed the projects design and delivery.

We acknowledge that it is not always possible to have provision of accessible venues in different country contexts, but you can describe what access means in your country context, and what a good standard of access might mean in your country if this is the case.

Access Support for Completing Your Application

You are welcome to submit your answers to certain questions (where marked in the text) via a video format. For video submissions, please submit a different video for each answer and share a private YouTube link within the response box. Videos will not be assessed on quality, but we ask that we can clearly see and hear the speaker. Submissions can be in British Sign Language. Please note videos should all be within the maximum time indicated after each question.

You can request funds for access costs that you have incurred in completing this application form. Access costs might include support workers, sign language interpreters, technical tools or mental health support. They are defined as costs that you incur due to a disability that others would not incur. This support is available to all disabled applicants, whether they are successful or not.

The support is available on two conditions:

1: You fully complete all sections of the application form and upload all required supporting documents.

2: Your application is submitted by the deadline.

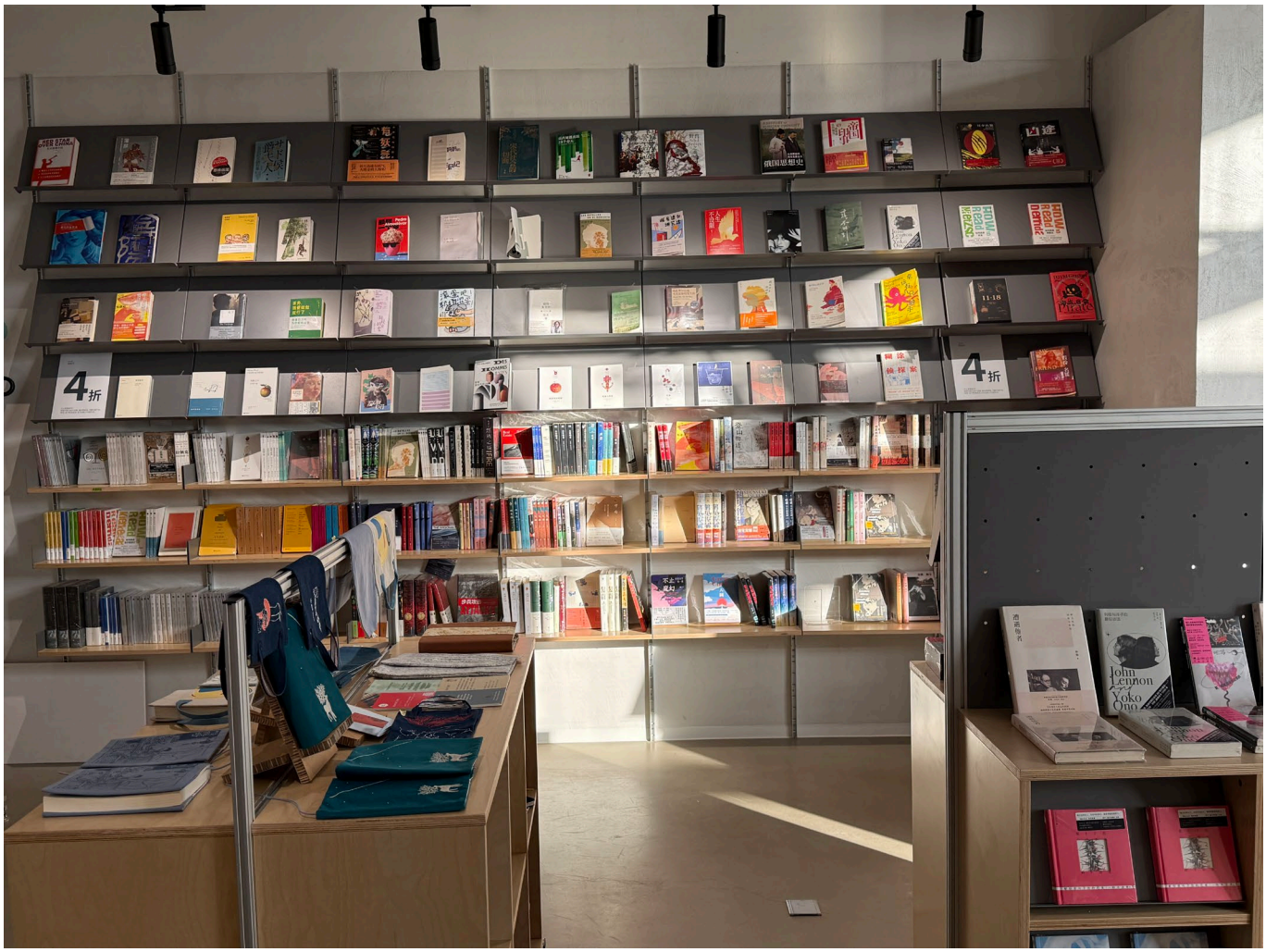
You can request this support through Application Form - Section C. Access costs for completing the application form.

Please note that applications will not be assessed on the quality of written English.

Contact

If you have further questions, please contact Arts@britishcouncil.org.cn

做書 (ZUOSHU/Beijing Book Friends Bookstore) in Beijing



ZUOSHU is a content platform focused on the publishing industry and editorial work, and it also runs an independent bookstore in Beijing. Located in Beijing's historic Longfu Temple district, in the heart of the city's old centre and within sight of the Forbidden City's iconic corner towers, ZUOSHU offers a distinctive environment where contemporary publishing culture meets one of China's most historically significant urban landscapes. From an editorial perspective, we host exhibitions, salons, book fair, and other events, also produce some merchandise. At its core, we do all this for a simple reason: we hope more people can get a sense of how a book is edited and produced, and that through events, people will find their way back to books—and make reading part of everyday life.

We've held a lot of literary salons at ZUOSHU, and we're close with young Chinese writers. Our bookshop has also been called "the living room of publishers," and we had spent plenty of chill, enjoyable evenings there with writers and editors.

In addition to organising our own regular ZUOSHU Book Fairs, we collaborated with the Beijing International Book Fair (BIBF) and Paper Republic to organise the Beijing Publishing

Fellowship. We also delivered BIBF's World Reading Season programme in 2024 and its Author Focus programme in 2025.

We would be happy to share what we know about running a bookshop, putting on events, building a community around the shop, running social media, programming residency activities, organising literary festivals, and our experience as a book fair exhibitor.

Ideal timing

25–31 March 2027 (Negotiable)

The residency will coincide with our Spring Book Fair, which is expected to bring together 100 publishers and bookshops across China. The book fair will also feature an intensive programme of literary salon events, primarily involving young Chinese writers.

Social handles/website

做書 on WeChat Official Account and Xiaohongshu (RED)

JIC Books in Shanghai



JIC Books · Shanghai Pujiang Bookstore is located on the North Bund waterfront, facing the Huangpu River and the Lujiazui skyline. Opened in 2014 as China's first biography-themed bookshop, it was expanded and upgraded in 2016 into a comprehensive cultural space integrating book retail, cultural exchange, art exhibitions, art appreciation, cultural-creative products and a café. Since 2016, it has organised over 1,000 cultural and intellectual events, bringing together hundreds of leading figures in the humanities, social sciences, business and technology, arts and aesthetics, and lifestyle creativity, reaching hundreds of thousands of readers.

JIC Books has well-established experience in delivering international cultural exchange programmes, having successfully curated themed cultural months such as "Discover Belgium" and "Norway Dream”, and has served five times as the main forum venue for the Shanghai International Literary Festival.

We are willing to share the areas of expertise with the resident including programming public cultural projects in a physical bookshop; book curation, literary displays and sales, China's literary ecosystem; marketing and brand building; community cultural engagement — how an urban bookshop participates in community cultural development and connects public cultural resources with commercial operations.

Ideal timing

March / April 2027; 6 nights.

Spring in Shanghai offers pleasant weather and a dense calendar of public literary events — the end of April coincides with the National Reading Week (a nationwide reading promotion initiative in China). Most local writers, publishers and literary organisations are based in Shanghai during this period, making it easy to arrange visits, introductions and in-person events. It also allows the resident ample time to observe the bookshop's day-to-day operations and to take part in our spring literary programme. Exact start and end dates can be further discussed and adjusted with the resident.

Social handles/website

www.jicbookstore.cn

Mr B's



Mr B's is a beautiful, energetic and innovative bookshop for every reader on John Street in the heart of Bath. It's a bright labyrinthine space where book-related chatter and advice seems ever-present and you never know what you might encounter next, from claw-foot bath book displays to a museum of authors' pens hanging from the ceiling. In 2026 we celebrated our 20th birthday, two decades that have seen us twice-named as the UK's best independent bookshop. In 2015 the Guardian named Mr B's one of the ten best bookshops in the world.

Social handles/website

https://mrbsemporium.com/

Ideal timing

One week in Feb-April but specifics can be discussed.

House of Books & Friends



House of Books & Friends is a purpose-led independent bookshop, cafe and events space with an important mission – to combat loneliness through bringing people together and to build and rebuild communities. All of our profits are reinvested into this mission. We are a Community Interest Company.

Our stunning bookshop, cafe, and event space is located at 81 King Street, Manchester and is home to our knowledgeable bookselling team (who eat, sleep and dream books) and we hope this will become a home away from home for our customers. Our events programme and the work we do with our not-for-profit partners is designed to inspire connection, collaboration and connectivity.

We are able to offer knowledge sharing on bookselling, events planning and delivery, and community partnerships. We have a range of over 7000 books, bought from a variety of publishers, as well as a small range of complimentary non-book products, some of which are designed by our in house team.

Our events programme varies from traditional author events, external event book sales for other partners, private hire of the bookshop for meetings or as a filming location, and community focused connection events to fulfil the social mission of the shop.

Our booksellers are also all cross trained as baristas to provide a seamless and meaningful customer service experience across all strands of our business.

Social handles/website

www.houseofbooksandfriends.com

https://houseofbooksandfriends.com/about-us/our-mission

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-interest-companies-how-to-form-a-cic/community-interest-companies-guidance-chapters

Ideal timing

One week in April would be ideal for our business. However, we may be able to negotiate on timing.