



GCDN
**Global Cultural
Districts Network**
An Initiative of AEA Consulting

GCDN Alserkal Avenue, Dubai 2018

Program Draft
As of 21 March 2018

New Directions: Culture in its Changing Urban Context

Sunday April 8

3:00-5:00PM Optional Tour: Observation Deck at Burj Khalifa, 1 Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Blvd.

6:00-7:30PM Reception: The Yard at Alserkal Avenue, 4 17th St.

Monday April 9

Location: Alserkal Avenue, multiple areas

9:00-9:30AM Coffee and Meet and Greet

9:30-9:45AM Welcome Remarks

- Abdelmonem Bin Eisa Alserkal, Founder and Patron, Alserkal Avenue
- Adrian Ellis, Chair of GCDN, Director, AEA Consulting
- Beatrice Pembroke, Director, GCDN

9:45-10:15AM The Alserkal Avenue Story

- Abdelmonem Bin Eisa Alserkal, Founder and Patron, Alserkal Avenue
- Vilma Jurkute, Director, Alserkal Avenue

10:15-12:00PM In Conversation: Cultural Hubs in The Gulf

There has been significant investment in high profile cultural infrastructure in the Gulf over the past decade – in the UAE, but also Bahrain, Muscat and Qatar and more recently in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Many of us hear about the headlines only. This session gives colleagues an opportunity to better understand the character and motivation behind some of these projects and to form a picture of the collective impact of this investment on social and economic development in the Gulf.

Introductory Keynote: H.E. Dr. Zaki Anwar Nusseibeh, Minister of State, United Arab Emirates

Moderator: Sultan Sooud Al-Qassemi, Director's Fellow at MIT Media Lab, UAE-based columnist and Founder of Barjeel Art Foundation

Speakers:

- Manal Ataya, Director General, Sharjah Museums Authority
- Vilma Jurkute, Director, Alserkal Avenue, Dubai
- Manuel Rabaté, Director, Louvre Abu Dhabi

Noon-1:30PM Lunch

1:30-3:00PM Breakout Session A

***Are We Building What We Want? Are We Building What We Need?
Trends in Cultural Infrastructure Investment***

AEA Consulting has been tracking money spent on arts building for many years. In 2016, this was formalized into the annual Cultural Infrastructure Index. The 2017 survey is now completed. This session looks at some of the trends and asks some questions about whether we are getting it all right. Are we creating the spaces audiences and artists want or need? What are the drivers behind investment? Should the future look like the past?

Moderator: Fiammetta Rocco, Arts Editor, The Economist

Speakers:

- Ole Bouman, Director, Design Society, Shenzhen
- Stephen Jolly, Head of Cultural Sector, BuroHappold
- Dr. Dong Yeun Lee, Managing Director of Platform Chang-dong61
- Daniel Payne, Principal, AEA Consulting
- Claire Spencer, Chief Executive, Arts Centre, Melbourne

1:30-3:00PM Breakout Session B

Beyond Buildings: New Adventures in Augmented and Virtual Reality

Cultural organisations everywhere are grappling with the possibilities that new technologies provide, to go beyond traditional boundaries. Speakers will discuss some of the latest developments in virtual and augmented reality in public space and explore the potential of new technologies to broaden access and to create new forms of civic engagement.

Moderator: Beatrice Pembroke, Director, GCDN

Speakers:

- Dr. BC Biermann, Founder of Heavy Projects, Associate Professor at CAVAD-CBU, Senior Civic Media Fellow at USC Annenberg
- Joel Kremer, Kremer Museum of Golden Age of Dutch Art
- Annette Mees, Head of Audience Labs, Royal Opera House, London

3:00-3:30PM Report Out from Breakout Sessions

3:30-5:00PM Tour and Site Visit of [Alserkal Avenue](#)

5:00-6:00PM Public Session

Artwashing: The Great Debate

The story is often the same: artists are attracted to affordable areas in cities and a sense of community among creatives flourishes. Galleries, small shops, restaurants and cafés start cropping up and quickly others take notice: young professionals flock to the scene, developers see opportunities, leading to rapid influx in population, new developments, and soon, higher rents and less available space. Local community members, including the local artists, get displaced and the cycle repeats itself.

Paradoxically, as a Miami Herald article noted, “Artists find themselves in the uncomfortable and confusing position of feeling as if they have become inadvertently complicit in driving gentrification, even as they are also being victimized by the trend.” Artists and arts organizations now are increasingly being attacked for their perceived role in gentrification.

Is this inevitable? Can cities maintain a balance between artists, developers, and local communities? What strategies are available and what works? What can we do to mitigate the powerful logic of development in a way that forces cultural production and consumption apart? Can we ensure affordable live/work spaces so that artists and long- time residents can continue to be integral parts of these neighborhoods?

Moderator: Laura Zucker, Senior Fellow with the Masters in Arts Management Program at Claremont Graduate University, former Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Arts Commission

Speakers:

- Kevin McMahon, President and CEO, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust
- Sunny Rahbar, Co-founder of The Third Line gallery, Al Quoz (Alserkal Avenue)
- eL Seed, artist
- Mariana Duarte Silva, Co-founder & Director at Village Underground Lisboa

6:00-7:30PM Break

7:30PM Cocktails and Dinner: The Oberoi, Dubai - Al A'amal Street

Tuesday April 10

8:45-9:15AM Coffee and “GCDN Hive Mind”

An opportunity for networking sessions are designed as spaces for members and participants to meet and exchange, sharing the latest in their own cultural district's innovations or challenges, coming up with solutions, or even beginning conversations around collaborations or co-commissions.

8:45-9:15AM What Next for GCDN?

How did we get here? Where are we going? How can GCDN best serve you and your organization?

A discussion of how the network can and should develop over the next few years to best serve its members: convenings (content and form); research (content and form again); facilitation of collaborative projects; co-commissioning; thematic news aggregation; podcasts...and what technologies and media should we employ in the process. What can we learn from other successful networks members participate in? Oh, and Singapore August 2019...

- Angelita Teo, Director, National Museum of Singapore and GCDN Advisory Board member
- Beatrice Pembroke, incoming GCDN Director
- Adrian Ellis, GCDN founding Director

9:30-10:45AM Plenary Panel

Anchor Cultural Institutions and Their Surroundings

Anchor cultural institutions have a definitional role within cultural districts, but they interpret that in different ways. This session will explore the notion of "anchor purpose" and probe different interpretations of responsibilities to surrounding communities and beyond. We will investigate strategies for

community revitalization and enhanced destination status that the anchor role confers as well as the challenges and obstacles organizations face when they embrace this interpretation of their mission.

Moderator: Angelita Teo, Director, National Museum of Singapore and GCDN Advisory Board member

Speakers:

- Karen Brooks Hopkins, President Emerita, Brooklyn Academy of Music/Senior Advisor, the Onassis Foundation USA
- Zelfira Tregulova, Director, State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow
- Bill Bragin, Executive Artistic Director, The Arts Center at New York University Abu Dhabi

11:00 AM-12:15PM Breakout Session C

Anchor Cultural Institutions: A Deeper Dive

- Karen Brooks Hopkins, President Emerita, Brooklyn Academy of Music / Senior Advisor, Onassis Foundation USA
- Sir Nicholas Kenyon, Chief Executive, Barbican Centre

11:00 AM-12:15PM Breakout Session D

Case Study: Measuring the Impact of your Cultural Districts: Economic, Social, Cultural

It is a lot easier – and cheaper – to talk about measuring impact than to do it: so there is a tendency to talk about it instead of doing it. But evaluating the social, economic and cultural impact of investment in cultural districts is critical, both to inform future decision-making and to demonstrate value to stakeholders. This session considers current best practice and practical strategies for performance measurement for cultural district managers.

- Maxime Jaffré and Elena Raevskikh, Researchers, LUMA Arles impact

12:15-12:45PM Report Out from Breakout Sessions

12:45-2:00PM Lunch

2:00-3:00PM Governance of Cultural Districts: Presentation of GCDN's Research

Governance of cultural districts – ultimate responsibility for strategic oversight, integrity and vision – can often be diffuse, and governance models range from the plural to the monolithic, and from the highly informal to the highly formalized, where governance and revenue streams are often linked. Everyone seems to look at everyone else longingly! GCDN commissioned a substantive research exercise to explore different models and their pros and cons. This session lays out the research and discusses its implications.

Moderator: Douglas Gautier, CEO & Artistic Director, Adelaide Festival Centre

Speakers:

- James Doeser, Lead Researcher
- Anna Jobson, Director, Change Management at University of the Arts London
- Duncan Pescod, Director, West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
- Joachim Pflieger, Director General, Fondation FIMINCO, Paris tbc

3:00-3:15PM Break

3:15-4:30PM Public Discussion

Cultured and Smart: Cultural districts as catalysts for urban innovation and sustainability?

How do the discussions of the past two days – the role of anchor institutions, augmented reality/virtual reality in public space, measuring impact, development, flexible cultural infrastructure – provide tools for implementing the current agenda for sustainable urban environments? How can Smart Cities strategies be optimized through cultural districts? Speakers will explore the pivotal role of

culture and the creative industries in the new urban agendas for equity, innovation, sustainability and competitiveness, as cities embark on the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Moderator: Nadine Bitar, Thought Leader, Place-led 4.0© and Executive Director, Placemaking.me

Speakers:

- Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, Co-Founder, SUPERFLEX
- Donald Hyslop, Head of Regeneration and Community Partnerships at Tate Modern, London
- Clorinda Romo, Director of Planning and Creative Projects, Laboratorio para la Ciudad, Mexico City
- Nato Thompson, Chief Curator, Philadelphia Contemporary

4:30-4:45PM Closing Remarks

Wednesday April 11

- 11:00-3:00PM Site Visit of Sharjah Cultural Hub
- 5:00-6:30PM Site Visit of Dubai Opera House and District

Thursday April 12

- 10:30AM Site Visit of Louvre Abu Dhabi