

International Science Partnerships Fund

This form aims to obtain information about the delivery and outcomes of projects, funded by Goldsmiths' International Science Partnerships Fund.

Award-holder name and Department: Dr Miranda Matthews

Research project title: Theatre for Climate Justice Education in Bangladesh

Questions to be addressed

Please respond to each question/sub-question within 300 words.

1. Aims and objectives

- a) Please provide details on whether and how the aims and objectives of the research project have been met, including any specific deliverables and targets.

This project set out to address ODAF strategic initiatives of supporting increased cultural and educational equality of opportunities, socio-economic development, and climate justice in Bangladesh. The workshops were co-created in communications from Dr Miranda Matthews, Dr Aminul Hoque and project partner Dr Sudip Chakroborthy, TheatrEX Bangladesh. They made exciting opportunities for inclusive expression of embodied voice. We find that these beginnings need further input to significantly realise our strategic initiatives, and have been applying for external grants.

The research investigated how performing arts practice and learning can assist more sustainable local and global environments, through three educational workshops in three districts of Bangladesh. Funding was successfully delivered, for workshops to happen in January and February 2025: in Nabiganj (17.01.25), Sylhet (18.01.25) and Dhaka (8.02.25). Hoque successfully planned a visit to be present for the Sylhet workshop, and gathered field notes for upscaled research in Dhaka and Sylhet. Matthews gave day-to-day support and was present online for the TheatrEX Dhaka workshop gathering.

Participant consent for 75 participants was secured. Matthews requested further information on gender and social demographics: TheatrEX noted representation from indigenous communities, the Physically Challenged Development Foundation, performers with disabilities, 'social activist' identification, and manual workers. Matthews supported TheatrEX in developing workshop research questions, refining the questions between workshops, and generating themes from data gathered to inform practice research. Outcome performances were filmed and edited to produce 15 films that have already been shared internationally. Chakroborthy says that these films, 'are the reflection of our workshop discussions/ story telling sessions' and therefore meet the project's intentions of enabling equality of representation of voices on climate justice. ODAF funding supported Chakroborthy's successful visit to the UK and the films were

screened at a Centre for Arts and Learning event in March 2025, to an audience including UK Bangladeshi community members.

2. Project sustainability

Are you planning to apply, or have you already applied for/secured external funding to ensure the project's sustainability beyond the ISPF funding? If yes, please provide further details on the amount of funding sought, funder and call.

Chakroborthy and Matthews successfully applied for additional funding from British Council Bangladesh for two further TheatrEX practitioners to visit the UK for a Centre for Arts and Learning Goldsmiths event in March 2025. This meant that three TheatrEX practice researchers could make UK connections in-person.

Following this, Matthews applied for a [BC Connections through Culture Grant](#) (£10,000), to increase the impact of our practice research for climate justice with workshops that reach street children in Dhaka and rural Sylhet. In this development: 'Voicing Climate Justice: Youth Theatre for Sustainable Futures in Bangladesh', we plan to work with Friends of Street Children Bangladesh and LEEDO Peace Home in Dhaka, and with Haji Mohammed Somshul Hoque Ideal School in Sylhet.

Matthews is applying for a [British Council Transnational Education Grant](#) (£25,000), to support exchange between Goldsmiths Centre for Arts and Learning (CAL) in Educational Studies and Dhaka University (DU). We will apply practice research methods developed in 2024-25 in new undergraduate and postgraduate curricula, assisting development of interdisciplinary climate justice related curricula at DU. This funding bid is titled: Climate Justice Education through Interdisciplinary Performing Arts in the UK and Bangladesh. If successful, this funding will enable a visiting fellowship to CAL in 2025-26 for Chakroborthy.

For further reach, Matthews is linking the Goldsmiths-DU partnership with upscaled international initiatives. Fieldwork by Hoque in Bangladesh identified the effects of rising sea levels on livelihoods in the Sundarbans area, that rely on freshwater fishing supported by the sea-barrier of mangrove forests that are becoming depleted. These findings correlate with those of potential research partners at University of Luxembourg, developing practice research with communities in Senegal who also rely on mangrove forests. Matthews intends to apply for the [AHRC grant for collaboration with researchers in Luxembourg](#), with grants from £300,000 to £1.5 million.

3. Collaborations

- a) Please provide details on whether and how this project has initiated strategic collaborations with external partners.

The external partners in our ODAF project team are highly motivated towards international strategic action for theatre and climate justice education. Chakroborthy consulted experts in Geology, Botany, Pharmacy, Architecture and climate change to additionally inform the project, and these connections lend themselves to future

international interdisciplinary grant applications. TheatrEX also worked with visual artists in developing their workshops, and this opens further interdisciplinary possibilities to bring in Matthews' international connections and expertise in arts education practice research and Hoque's social justice research.

We have acted swiftly to utilise the potential of the practice research methods and outputs created in this ODAF project to connect with further external partnerships. The timely film outputs have provided media for international connectivity. Our research partner Chakroborthy, at TheatrEX Bangladesh is very proactive in making new collaborative connections in Bangladesh and the UK (that are detailed further in the impact section of the report) in addition to our connections with British Council Bangladesh, that have encouraged further British Council Funding applications.

Matthews started developing strategic contact with University of Luxembourg climate justice researcher Gabi Budach, in connection with the UKRI funded Ecologies in Practice research of 2022-23. Matthews visited University of Luxembourg in 2024 to present the findings of Centre for Arts and Learning and Climate Museum UK Ecologies in Practice Research. This connection has enabled ongoing communication and the identification of a shared focal area for collaborative practice research in our meaningful climate justice connections with two LDA countries: Bangladesh and Senegal.

There are potentially more international connections to make, as the 2024-25 TheatrEX films become widely known, being shown in various international contexts by TheatrEX Bangladesh, and as the Ecologies in Learning and Practice book edited by Matthews (forthcoming 2025) – that Hoque, Chakroborthy and Budach have contributed to, will create extensive international possibilities.

- b) Please provide more details on how this relationship will be sustained, including any planned next steps and actions.

The partnership supported by the ODAF grant is central and vital to Ecologies in Practice climate justice research. Matthews, Hoque and Chakroborthy have committed to external funding applications that will support new developments in the arts education practice research. In addition to the film outputs, rich data was generated in the form of artworks, translated post-it note themes, photographic images, and also field note podcasts by Hoque that create international empathy and evoke the conditions that are being experienced in Bangladesh for international audiences. The project partners are in regular conversation about potential opportunities for research developments. Among our next steps, in addition to those identified in the external grant applications, is a co-authored article, that analyses the findings and presents additional performing and visual arts data, for academic audiences in a peer reviewed journal. We also aim to publish in a Bangla speaking forum that is open access to reach non-academic audiences in Bangladeshi and UK-Bangladeshi communities.

4. Supporting career development

We are keen to see how the ISPF can support other academic colleagues to develop their potential and capabilities. Please provide details on any plans to involve academic colleagues and/or PGR students into the forthcoming stages of the research project.

In progressing this research we have already included other academic colleagues – as for example in the Centre for Arts and Learning event on 26 March 2025, [CAL Known and Unknown: Theatre for Embodied Critical Consciousness](#), that included a presentation from Early Career Researcher Dr Amanda Kipling, in addition to the presentation of Theatre for Climate Justice Education in Bangladesh film outputs.

Chakroborthy has noted the recent developments at TheatrEX of women in leadership, focusing on Ummey Haneer who is now Global Collaboration Director of TheatrEX Bangladesh, and there is a hope that this will encourage leadership among female academics in Theatre and Performance Studies at Dhaka University (DU) and more widely.

In the forthcoming developments of climate justice education at DU, there will also hopefully be opportunities to develop connectivity with more academic colleagues – to deliver the learning content in development.

Matthews connects widely with practice researchers across Goldsmiths in the Practice Research Group, and there are also additional potential interdisciplinary connections for this research in the Goldsmiths Climate Crisis RKE Collaboration Network.

Matthews' Ecologies in Practice research, that started in 2021, has already drawn interest from potential PhD students, researching climate justice with arts methods. These studentships have been subject to funding. There is accordingly an additional incentive to apply for future climate related UKRI focal doctoral award funding.

5. Outputs

Please provide details of the outputs that have been generated by the research project. If these are forthcoming, please provide details on the delivery timelines.

Practice research outputs generated so far by this project include 15 filmed performances, developed during the three workshops in Nabiganj, Sylhet and Dhaka in January and February 2025. These are collaborative outputs, including critical pedagogy problem-posing practice methods co-developed by Matthews, Hoque and Chakroborthy and the theatre directorship of Chakroborthy. Theatre for Climate Justice Education in Bangladesh short films (duration between 2 minutes 11 seconds and 4 minutes 11 seconds) are uploaded on GRO:-

This is a film output from the ODAF project, Theatre for Climate Justice Education Bangladesh, 2025. PI Dr Miranda Matthews, Co-Researcher Dr Aminul Hoque, Theatre Director Dr Sudip Chakroborthy, TheatrEX Bangladesh.

- 1) Save Trees, 17 January 2025
- 2) River Pollution, 17 January 2025
- 3) Mother Earth, 17 January 2025
- 4) Smoke, 17 January 2025
- 5) Plastic Doom, 17 January 2025
- 6) Mother Water, 18 January 2025
- 7) The Cage, 18 January 2025
- 8) Earth Surface, 18 January 2025
- 9) Air Pollution, 8 February 2025
- 10) Deforestation, 8 February 2025
- 11) Urbanisation, 8 February 2025
- 12) Bin Your Waste, 8 February 2025
- 13) Global Warming: Sea Level Rising, 8 February 2025
- 14) Sound Pollution, 8 February 2025
- 15) We Act, We Pray, We Hope, 8 February 2025

These films have been screened in the UK and Bangladesh in 2025. Further outputs including a co-authored article are forthcoming.

6. Impact

Please describe if and how the research has generated impact, including specific beneficiaries/stakeholders that have been affected.

Theatre for Climate Justice Education in Bangladesh has generated impact by including a wide range of underserved constituencies in participatory practice research. TheatrEX connected with organisations that support people with disabilities such as [The Physically Challenged Development Foundation](#), as well as bringing in manual workers, students and climate social activists. Continued connections with these communities will enable us to evaluate the impact of their participation in 2025-26.

The film outputs have reached international academic and non-academic audiences in the UK, Bangladesh and Luxembourg. As noted, Centre for Arts and Learning hosted an international hybrid event on 26 March 2025 with 35 attendees. An attendee directs [Soul City Arts](#), and they invited Chakroborthy to present the films in Birmingham on 10 June 2025, with a non-academic audience in arts and film making of 25.

In Bangladesh, the films were screened at the UNESCO Dhaka office, to reach policy makers who are addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (8 in-person viewers). British Council Bangladesh viewed the films, and in addition to funding TheatrEX practitioners to attend the CAL event, BC encouraged our applications for 'Connections Through Culture' and 'Transnational Education' grants. The films were screened at Dhaka University (22 viewers) to make interdisciplinary connections there,

and have reached Friends of Street Children Bangladesh and the LEEDO Peace Home - that rehabilitate and educate street children.

To generate further impact, we have reached out to the [Bangladesh Bondhu Foundation](#) to explore ways of connecting our practice research and its outputs to their climate initiatives. Films relating to deforestation and trees have been shared with University of Luxembourg and their project partners [Graine de Vie](#), who plant trees in Africa to offset carbon footprints, with a view to generating practice research connectivity with deforestation in Bangladesh.

7. Further support

Please indicate if you would like further support in any of the following areas:

- a) Identifying suitable external funders and/or preparing a research funding bid

Support with locating external funding partners for further research would be much appreciated. We have located some recent small grants from the British Council. We would like to upscale the research to include further interdisciplinary and international project partners, and have located the AHRC funding for collaboration with researchers in Luxembourg. We may need to explore different options. Assistance with preparation of funding bids will be really helpful

- b) Amplifying the impact of the research and/or identifying relevant stakeholders

Discussions about how to amplify the impact of Ecologies in Practice research, as a body of research that began in 2021, have been really informative in 2025, and the research team looks forward to future conversations, as the research environment for climate related studies changes.

- c) Any training and/or support related to the research process and/or applying for external research funding

Online training in July 2025 by RKE on how to apply for research funding was really supportive, and helped to situate PI and collaborative approach to funding applications. Support relating to specific grant applications will hopefully enable Ecologies in Practice research to stand out in competitive application processes.

Signature: Dr Miranda Matthews

Date: 7 August 2025

