

**History of
Council**

British

British Council



Founded	1934; 83 years ago
Founder	United Kingdom Government
Type	Cultural Institution
Headquarters	London, United Kingdom
Area served	Worldwide
Product	British cultural and language education
Key people	Christopher Rodrigues CBE (Chair) Sir Ciarán Devane (Chief Executive)
Revenue	£973 million (2014/5)
Website	www.britishcouncil.org



British Council London



British Council Hong Kong



British Council Bangladesh



| British Council Sri Lanka



British Council in Madrid (Spain).

The **British Council** is a British organization specializing in international cultural and educational opportunities. It works in over *100* countries: promoting a wider knowledge of the UK and the English language; encouraging cultural, scientific, technological and educational co-operation with the UK; and changing people's lives through access to UK education, skills, qualifications, culture and society.

The British Council is a charity registered in England and Wales and Scotland and is governed by Royal Charter. It is also a public corporation and an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB), sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Its headquarters are off Trafalgar Square, London. Its Chair is Christopher Rodrigues, its CEO is Sir Ciarán Devane and chief operating officer Adrian Greer.

History

- 1934: British Foreign Office officials created the "British Committee for Relations with Other Countries" to support English education abroad, promote British culture and fight the rise of fascism. The name quickly became British Council for Relations with Other Countries.
- 1936: The organization's name was officially shortened to the British Council.
- 1938: The British Council opens its first four offices in Bucharest (Romania), Cairo (Egypt), Lisbon (Portugal) and Warsaw (Poland), the offices in Portugal are currently the oldest in continuous operation in the world.

- 1940: King George VI granted the British Council a Royal Charter for promoting: ‘a wider knowledge of [the United Kingdom] and the English language abroad and developing closer cultural relations between [the UK] and other countries”.
- 1942: The British Council undertook a promotion of British culture overseas. The music section of the project was a recording of significant recent compositions by British composers: E.J. Moeran's Symphony in G minor was the first work to be recorded under this initiative, followed by recordings of Walton's *Belshazzar’s Feast*, Bliss's Piano Concerto, Bax's Third Symphony, and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*.
- 1944: In August, after the liberation of Paris, Austin Gill was sent by the council to reestablish the Paris office, which soon had tours by the Old Vic Company, Julian Huxley and T. S. Eliot.
- 2007: The Russian Foreign Ministry ordered the British Council to close its offices outside Moscow. The Ministry alleged that it had violated Russian tax regulations, a move that British officials claimed was a retaliation over the British expulsion of Russian diplomats allegedly involved with the poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko. This caused the British Council to cease carrying out all English-language examinations in Russia from January
- 2008. In early 2009, a Russian arbitration court ruled that the majority of the tax claims, valued at \$6.6 million, were unjustified.
- 2011: On 19 August, a group of armed men attacked the British Council office in the Afghanistan capital, Kabul, killing at least 12 people – none of them British – and

temporarily took over the compound. All the attackers were killed in counter-attacks by forces guarding the compound. The British Council office was relocated to the British Embassy compound, as the British Council compound was destroyed in the suicide attack.

- 2013: The British Council in Tripoli, Libya was targeted by a car bomb on the morning of 23 April. Diplomatic sources were reported as saying that "the bombers were foiled as they were preparing to park a rigged vehicle in front of the compound gate". The attempted attack was simultaneous with the attack on the French Embassy in Tripoli on the same day that injured two French security guards, one severely, and wounded several residents in neighboring houses. A jihadist group calling itself the Mujahedeen Brigade was suspected possibly linked to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.

