

MEMORANDUM

1 May 2025

Centre for Art and Libraries
Operational Institutions,
International Tasks and the EU

Ref. no. 24/13822-1

The strategic framework for Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture Denmark on Denmark's international cultural collaboration 2025-2027

The cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Culture Denmark and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Denmark's international cultural collaboration requires the preparation of a strategic framework which, through defined priorities, must support the agreement's four main purposes regarding the promotion of:

- The government's foreign policy priorities
- Danish cultural export and intercultural dialogue
- Marketing Denmark as a country
- Renewal of Danish art and culture through international collaboration.

The purpose of the strategic framework is to support a coordinated, joint direction for Denmark's international cultural activities in line with current political priorities. The framework will be in effect for a two-year period, after which it is expected to be revised in connection with the expiry of the framework in 2027. The framework for 2025-2027 thus replaces the previous strategic framework for cooperation in 2022-2024.

Funds will be allocated on a yearly basis within the cooperation agreement's appropriation for supporting the strategic priorities.

Activities included in the strategic framework must attempt to fulfil a set of basic principles for international cultural collaboration. The principles will be included in an overall assessment of the activity:

- Activities must be of high professional quality
- Activities must be anchored in collaboration between Danish and international partners, which are built upon mutual and local interest
- Activities must ensure strong networks and partnerships within the cultural sector, which extend beyond the individual activity and preferably have a long-term perspective
- Activities must ensure positive recognition of Denmark

Strategic framework

The main purpose of the strategy for international cultural collaboration is to strengthen the interaction between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

Denmark's and the Ministry of Culture Denmark's areas and actors to benefit both art and culture, as well as Denmark's position in the world. International cultural collaboration plays an important role in creating and maintaining relations with other countries and spread narratives about Denmark's positions of strength and values. To a higher degree, cultural exchange and cooperation can also support the potential of Denmark's cultural export.

The strategy period for 2025-2027 continues the focus on culture's potential for supporting Denmark's current political agendas and reflects the last two years' global development with increasing unrest and global competition.

Strategic priorities

The strategic priorities for Denmark's international cultural collaboration during the period of 2025-2027 in cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture Denmark are **cultural diplomacy** and **Denmark's cultural export**. Both strategic priorities must be regarded as equally important priorities, both of which strengthen culture and Denmark's position in the world.

1. Cultural diplomacy

The world has become more troubled and unpredictable. Geopolitical shifts and increased global strategic competition intensify the need for dialogue and cooperation. Art and culture play a central role in this regard. Regardless of whether it is about making new relationships, strengthening old ones or having difficult discussions, art and culture can contribute to promoting mutual understanding and meeting at eye level. In a time with increasing polarisation and new possibilities for spreading misinformation and disinformation, the need for strengthening mutual understanding of culture and values increases.

The purpose of prioritising cultural diplomacy makes it possible to support the government's priorities on an ongoing basis, including changing regional and national focus areas and bilateral interests.

Specifically, cultural diplomacy may involve supporting major political initiatives abroad and special areas of endeavour, including, for example, the implementation of major government political strategies, as well as events and endeavours such as Danish chairmanships, Danish placement in international forums summit meetings, etc. Here, culture can support the narrative of Danish positions, solutions and values. Cultural or artistic projects may also be involved, which open doors for Danish interests and creates opportunities for reflection and dialogue regarding global societal changes, such as sustainable green transition, the strengthening of democratic dialogue on ways of life and values, which contribute to international understanding and community.

Thus, cultural diplomacy through projects and networking between artists, institutions and Danish areas of endeavour abroad can strengthen Denmark's strategic and long-term work to create and strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations.

2. Denmark's cultural export and economic diplomacy

Denmark has a rich and globally oriented professional cultural life, which is an asset for the Danish economy. At the same time, "nation branding" of Denmark in the cultural area contributes positively to the ongoing work with economic diplomacy. Trade and cultural and artistic exchange comprise an asset for strengthening bilateral relations and narratives on global green transition, for example in the area of architecture.

The second priority in the strategic framework will therefore be to support Denmark's cultural export. It must take place by supporting networks, marketing and visualisation of export potential of Danish art and culture and of the cultural professions.

Specifically, a prioritised effort for cultural export may take place by:

- Supporting the work of professional actors to create opportunities and position Danish art and culture as being world class.
- Creating opportunities for dialogue on improving coordination and integrating the initiatives of public and private actors. Collaborating with Danish actors abroad and increasing demand for Danish art and culture around the world.

The strategic framework's support of cultural export may also include supporting the testing of new formats or investigating the creation of (new) partnerships and networks.