



Mobility First! Results (1st cycle)

28 February 2019
Singapore

Culture is of the [Asia-Europe Foundation \(ASEF\)](#)'s priority areas and **Mobility First!** – our travel grant for artists and cultural professionals - is one of our flagship projects. As the main project in our Culture portfolio that supports the mutual cultural practice of artists and cultural professionals, we invite eligible arts practitioners from Asia and Europe to apply to our periodic competitive open calls either through an individual application or an organisation application. International travel support is then granted to selected applications for participation in a wide range of cultural activities including residencies, festivals, workshops, research trips, conferences, networking and partnership meetings.

2019 marks the third year of **Mobility First!** For this first cycle, we have received 250 applications comprised of 153 individual applications and 32 organisation applications on behalf of 97 arts practitioners. From this pool, we have selected to support a total of 24 artists and cultural professionals whose applications more closely fulfil **Mobility First!'s** focus areas of knowledge exchange/skills transfer, local development, innovation (including the intersection of art with other sectors), and the role of art in society.

We have put together some general observations from this pool of applications which hopefully highlight some trends in the cultural sector that might be of interest:

- There is a high level of interest for cultural cooperation and knowledge exchange among artists and cultural professionals from 'periphery' cities to other 'periphery' cities. It is important to support both practitioners from 'centres' or big cities and organisations and individuals operating in rural areas to go out to collaborate internationally as they contribute to forging strong global international links as well;
- We are also happy to see applications both from and about social minority groups – this shows that art is both an avenue for self-determination and for creating awareness about global and collective issues that go beyond that of individual concerns;
- There are also applications that have a strong local development component to the proposal which also shows how cultural mobility, and indeed arts and culture in general,



benefits not only the individuals travelling but also the public good by engaging the community;

- There are also a handful of applications that show a strong and complementary intersection between art and other areas e.g. technology, education, the environment – this shows how artists and cultural professionals can be active members of society, raising awareness about local and global issues, and finding shared solutions - thereby contributing to the pursuit of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#).
- Of the wide variety of activity types we support, we received the most applications for artists residencies in this cycle. This shows that residencies are indeed a strong platform for cultural exchange, artistic creation, and for forging strong regional and inter-regional links;
- We have also received applications from under-represented and under-funded fields of art, as well as applications that address the sustainability of less visible or dying forms of art; and,
- We have also noticed that there are multiple individual applications to go to the same activity. In these cases, we have made an objective assessment of the activity and made a decision on an application that best fulfils our criteria. In one case, we even supported 2 individuals for the same activity because of different skill sets and different benefits gained.

Overall, **Mobility First!** supports applications where there is high potential for a sustained multiplier effect: immediately when the artist visits his destination, and in the long-term when he or she brings back the knowledge and experience he has gained from travel back home and shares this with his community.

Selected applications from individuals

	NAME	NATIONALITY	ACTIVITY	MOBILITY ROUTE
1	Agung Gunawan	Indonesia	Arts residency, workshop, and performance	Yogyakarta, Indonesia to Schirgiswalde-Kirschau, Germany
2	Ikbal Lubys	Indonesia	Dao Xuan Chin International Arts Festival	Yogyakarta, Indonesia to Gamtroi Valley, Hoa Binh, Viet Nam
3	Adam Sutherland	United Kingdom	Practice-led research: Kutsuwai arts	Manchester, UK to Kikugawa, Japan



			residency and exchange programme	
4	Francesca Ulivi	Italy	Practice-led research: Kutsuwai arts residency and exchange programme	Paris, France to Kikugawa, Japan
5	Loo Zihan	Singapore	Queering Memory – ALMS Conference	Singapore to Berlin, Germany
6	Adrian Milang	Malaysia	Practice-led research trip: Takna' Belawan Project	Kuching, Malaysia to Padua, Mendalam; Kapaus Hulu; Putu Ssibau, Indonesia
7	Nicoletta Favari	Italy	Nakanojo arts residency and biennale	Milan, Italy to Nakanojo, Japan
8	Gregory Giannis	Australia	Made of Walking (V) Walking arts residency and conference	Melbourne, Australia to Prespes, Greece
9	Kent Chan	Singapore	Jan Van Eyck Academie arts residency	Singapore to Maastricht, Netherlands
10	Chloe Chotrani	Singapore	Luna Musikalawaig Festival	Singapore to Cagayan de Oro, Philippines
11	Yvan Karlsson	Sweden/Australia	Tape, Tape World Community Workshop Series	Perth, Australia to Singapore
12	Nontawat Numbenchapol	Thailand	Visions du Reel International Film Festival	Bangkok, Thailand to Nyon, Switzerland
13	Jay Koh	Germany	Workshop and partnership meeting	Seri Kembangan, Malaysia to Dalat, Viet Nam



Remarks from the selection committee:

1) Agung Gunawan (Indonesia)

Mobility route: Asia to Europe

Agung will be travelling from Yogyakarta, Indonesia to Schirgiswalde-Kirschau, Germany for an arts residency, to conduct a workshop using his contemporary Javanese dance methodology and philosophy, and to develop a performance to be showcased at a local gallery

This application will be beneficial both for the applicant as well as the participants in his workshop (who are members of the local community), and the new work he is hoping to develop. It is a good example for open exchange and sharing. The application fulfils **Mobility First!**'s objectives to support artistic creation, community involvement, in-depth cultural exchanges, and cultural diversity. The inviting organisation, TanzART, also embodies the same objectives. Rightly, Agung wrote that his application will have both an immediate positive effect during his visit, and will also contribute towards shaping the local artistic and cultural landscape. The **Mobility First!** selection committee believes that this multiplier effect can be achieved with this project.

2) Ikbal Lubys (Indonesia)

Mobility route: intra-Asia

Ikbal will be travelling to Gamtroi Valley, Hoa Binh, Viet Nam to perform at the Dao Xuan Chin International Arts Festival

The applicant is an Indonesian musician who frequently gets invitations to go to Europe but not so much in Asia. He is determined to strengthen his links in Asia and to work interculturally within the region. While the application highlights presenting a performance in a 24-Hour performance festival, it is worthy to support the application on two counts: Ikbal's experience at the festival will continue his engagement with fellow Asian practitioners, which also happened when he played with Cake Theatre in Singapore; and secondly, it will support Dao Anh Khanh's festival. Dao's determination to remain independent and work outside the system is very much worth the support.

In addition to strengthening cultural links between Asia and Europe, **Mobility First!** also aims to strengthen regional ties, particularly in Asia. Further, as the multidisciplinary festival heavily involves the local community, there will be much opportunity for exchange and setting up roots for further collaboration between Ikbal and other artists and audiences of the festival.



3) Adam Sutherland (UK)

4) Francesca Ulivi (Italy)

Mobility route: Europe to Asia

Adam and Francesca are both travelling to Kutsuwai Village in Kikugawa, Japan to partake in an exchange programme to create creative enterprises in rural villages, particularly developing a programme of residencies in the coming years

The applicants are clearly committed to the development of a platform (i.e an arts residency programme) for sharing knowledge and practices between practitioners working in the realm of rural culture and development. It aims to be a platform for international exchanges between several villages across the globe, which deals with issues of aging, migration, housing in rural communities. Additionally, the applicants have expanded the possibilities of the trip by participating in the crucial first stages of planning and strategising, i.e. focusing on preparing the ground for the programme of residencies being planned for the coming year.

Both applicants work for Grizedale Arts, an organisation based in Cumbria, UK, dedicated to enriching culture through artistic activities that involve the rural environment. The very core of its work is deeply rooted in the local community while also being dedicated to strengthening a global network. **Mobility First!** aims to support initiatives that provide an intersection between art and other sectors (in this case, local development and education), as well as community engagement. This application fulfils all. Both individual applications are selected because of different skill sets and their different roles at Grizedale Arts.

5) Loo Zihan

Mobility route: Asia to Europe

Zihan will be travelling from Singapore to Berlin, Germany to attend a conference titled 'Queering Memory – ALMS'. Known as Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections (ALMS), it is a series of international conferences focused on collecting and preserving materials from LGBTIQ+ communities and the 2019 edition of ALMS will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the world's first queer archive.

This applicant will be presenting a paper about his performance lecture, 'Catamite', which was presented at the M1 Singapore Fringe Festival in 2016. Given the fact that the applicant is a leading artist in Singapore, it would be significant for the applicant to have his voice represented on a credible international platform. Knowledge exchange is hence very strongly present in this application, considering the LGBTIQ theme, which is a highly sensitive topic in Singapore's context.



6) Adrian Milang (Malaysia)

Mobility route: intra-Asia

Adrian will be travelling from Kuching, Malaysia to Padua, Mendalam; Kapuas Hulu; Putu Ssibau, Indonesia for a Practice-led research trip: Takna' Belawan Project. The aim of this project is to document the dying Borneo oral art form, known as the parap and takna, as well as to further develop his skills in the art form.

This application stood out as the choice of documenting a soon to be extinct oral art form is seen as a preservation and protection of the Kayan's culture and tradition. In addition, it is an application that would develop the applicant's artistic growth and practice, demonstrating skills and capability development, considering that the applicant comes from a lineage of cultural practitioners.

7) Nicoletta Favari

Mobility route: Europe to Asia

Nicoletta will be travelling from Milan, Italy to Nakanojo, Japan for the Nakanojo Biennale/Residency. 2019 will mark the 7th edition of the Nakanojo Biennale and every year, more than 130 innovative international artists from multiple artistic disciplines will work alongside local residents to create an international art festival in Nakanojo, Gunma prefecture.

This applicant is proposing to create a rather original and unique work, featuring an audio postcard, travelling from Finland to Japan through many receivers and senders. Of which, being a strong symbol of artistic mobility and collaborative creation. Additionally, the applicant is intending to combine art and technology, which is underlined with a social act of sharing music in an innovative way and engaging the local community in an innovative way.

8) Gregory Giannis

Mobility route: Asia to Europe

Gregory will be travelling from Melbourne, Australia to Prespes, Greece to participate in the Made of Walking (V) Walking arts residency and conference, organised by the Department of Fine and Applied Arts of the University of Western Macedonia in Greece. The residency and conference will take place jointly with the International Encounters/Conference "WALKING PRACTICES/WALKING ART/WALKING BODIES", which explores the nomadic process, migration, the concept of home as well as the concept of walking together and groups on the move.



The application is a combination of collaborative and collective art production, where the applicant would share his personal artistic practice and methodology with artists on the island of Lesos, Greece, being aligned with **Mobility First's** objective of knowledge and skills transfer. This art initiative also addresses the theme of migration, refugees and their movement, showcasing how art is a conduit in drawing attention to such global issues.

9) Kent Chan

Mobility route: Asia to Europe

Kent will be travelling from Singapore to Maastricht, Netherlands for an artist residency at Jan Van Eyck Academie. The Jan Van Eyck Academie is an international post-academic art institute that offers space to ambitions, plans and works of artists, designers, writers, curators and thinkers. The Academie has been recognised by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences as a centre of excellence in the cultural field in the Netherlands.

The host organisation, Jan Van Eyck Academie based in the Netherlands, is highly credible, highly selective, and has been consistently accepting applications from cultural professionals from a wide range of artistic disciplines. Hence, being an important testament of that the applicant is of outstanding dimension. Furthermore, participating in this residency would enable the applicant to gain further insights on his curatorial and artistic practice and would be a determining step in his career.

10) Chloe Chotrani

Mobility route: Intra-Asia

Chloe will be travelling from Singapore to Cagayan de Oro, Philippines for the Luna Musikalawaig Festival. The festival is a platform for local and indigenous people of the Bukidnon region to share their music and art with a wider audience whilst raising awareness of the reforestation site, the jungle of Bukidnon in Mindanao that practices permaculture.

This application is interesting as it enables an intersection between art and the environment – the applicant would be immersed in a reforestation site that practices permaculture while being exposed to and learning about the creative practices of indigenous and local music/art. Participating in this festival would greatly help the applicant in her future work in developing the local arts scene in Singapore.



11) Yvan Karlsson

Mobility route: Intra-Asia

Yvan will be travelling from Perth, Australia to Singapore for the 'Tape, Tape World' Community Workshop Series, to work with young people aged 7-12 from vulnerable family backgrounds. 'Tape, Tape World' is a puppetry performance that explores a child's inexplicable urge to fix things.

This application is important as it encourages skills transfer and collaboration between the applicant, who is a Swedish/Australian, and Singaporean practitioners, who require such international injection of strategies in order to continuously create work for young people. Additionally, the applicant would benefit from being exposed to working in a different environment, whilst building on his knowledge in the field of puppetry. The workshop series also touches on an interesting societal issue, since it looks at the impact of familial estrangement on children and youth.

12) Nontawat Numbenchapol

Mobility route: Asia to Europe

Nontawat will be travelling from Bangkok, Thailand to Nyon, Switzerland for the Visions du Reel International Film Festival, where his feature documentary film 'Soil Without Land' will be premiered at the International Feature Film Competition section of the Festival. The Festival is known for presenting a broad range of documentary and experimental films from all over the world and is a key networking platform for film directors and film makers.

By participating in the festival, Nontawat would benefit from being exposed to one of the most renowned documentary film festivals in Switzerland. It will capacity build his knowledge and expose him to documentaries of various subject matters. In addition, the documentary presents the struggles of Shan people. Having a documentary film being premiered at a prestigious festival would highlight the presence of the minority group as well as the perpetual state of conflict Myanmar is embedded in.

13) Jay Koh

Mobility route: Intra-Asia

Jay will be travelling from Seri Kembangan, Malaysia to Dalat, Viet Nam to conduct a workshop series on how to develop independent arts and culture spaces and participate in partnership meetings with local artists, researchers and stakeholders, to explore the possibility of establishing an international artist residency programme that aims to



nurture public participative and contemporary art in reciprocal to the local context.

The applicant has a strong background in supporting independent art spaces and ground up initiatives. As such, being able to travel to Dalat will promote intra-Asia knowledge sharing and the applicant's many years of experience would be valuable in providing good counsel and advice to the Dalat collaborators. In addition, the application concerns mentoring members of the public, artists and researchers, which further encourages sustainability for the local cultural and artistic development. In this context, this application fits well into Mobility First's rationale for supporting knowledge exchange and local development.

Selected applications from organisations

	NAME OF ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY	COUNTRY WHERE ACTIVITY IS HELD	SUPPORTED ARTISTS OR CULTURAL PROFESSIONALS
14-17	Biennale Jogja Foundation	Arisan Tenggara Workshop	Yogyakarta, Indonesia	Henry Tan (Thailand); Alyana Cabral (Philippines); Accacio Pinto (Australia); Penwadee Manont (Thailand)
18-19	Rai.D Collective	Altered-in-Between Exhibition at the Ulaanbaatar International Media Art Festival	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	Pius Sigit Kuncoro (Indonesia); Pathompon Tesprateep (Thailand)
20-23	Indonesian Visual Art Archive (IVAA)	Redefinition from the Bottom: Archiving and Decolonising	Yangon, Myanmar	Lisistrata Lusandiana (Indonesia); Irfanuddin Ghozali (Indonesia); Hardiwan Prayoga (Indonesia); Krisnawan Wisnu Adi (Indonesia)



24	iMPACT DOC	Exhibition, talk and workshop	Amsterdam, Netherlands	Protick Sarker (Bangladesh)
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Remarks from the selection committee:

1) Arisan Tenggara Workshop

Arisan Tenggara is a cooperation platform for artist collectives in Southeast Asia to discuss best practices amongst collectives in the region. Arisan Tenggara was initiated by Ace House Collective, that later on collaboratively worked with Lifepatch, Ruang Gulma, Krack Studio, Ruang Mes 56 and Survive!Garage. This year, the workshop is organised by the Jogja Biennale.

This is an interesting initiative that fosters independent cultural development in the region that highlights the collective as a format and creates a support system for the sustainability of collectives. By providing a platform for networking and exchange between similar organisations throughout Asia, it promotes much needed linkages in a region where networks are not very prevalent and where sustainability is a big challenge. The artists and curators invited are good and strong representatives of their practices and this project is expected to have impactful conversations and good outcomes which impact collaborations in the future.

2) 'Altered-in-Between' Exhibition at the Ulaanbaatar International Media Art Festival

'Altered-in-Between' is a research and art exhibition project based on the precarious situation of Patani or the Deep South region in Thailand

This application is conceptually strong and involves two credible contemporary visual artists. The Pattani issue is seldom delved into by artists despite it being an ongoing contentious issue. Supporting this project enables the exhibition to be shown abroad at the Ulaanbaatar International Media Festival, and shows **Mobility First!**'s commitment to support artistic projects that go beyond the artists themselves and delve in other issues such as social issues. These kinds of projects deserve to be presented on an international stage.



3) **Redefinition from the Bottom: Archiving and Decolonising**

This is a research trip to Yangon, Myanmar to widen the supported cultural professionals' perspectives in archiving.

In order to widen and deepen the discussions on the politics of archiving and the possibilities of cultural decolonisation, the Indonesian Visual Art Archive (IVAA) initiated a program consisting of several activities including: research and assessment of diverse archiving methodology, knowledge and methodology exchange, and public presentations. IVAA is a credible organization and this mapping of Myanmar will be beneficial to them. The mapping will have further impact when the results of trip is shared. **Mobility First!** supports fields in art and culture that are oftentimes neglected, under-represented or under-funded e.g. archiving.

4) **iMPACT DOC**

iMPACT DOC is a platform and exhibition space in Amsterdam, Netherlands for documentary photography and film, with a focus on exhibiting art that addresses global and social issues.

Given the precarious situation of artists today in Bangladesh, a focus on this country through the beautiful work of the artist proposed in this application makes very good sense. In addition, the hosting organisation is a very engaged one, supporting a diversity of artists for many years. For this application, the artists will do 3 things: exhibit his series of photographs titled 'Of River and Lost Lands,' give an artist talk to share about his practice, and will lead a workshop that focuses on different possibilities to extend the common structure of the photographic series and narrative to create a uniform experience as a whole, and a meaningful, impactful visual story.



The Mobility First! Selection Committee is comprised of 2 independent experts from Asia and Europe and ASEF.

Mobility First! Selection Committee

Independent experts

TAY Tong (Singapore)
Enabler & Cultural Worker

Ferdinand RICHARD (France)
President, Roberto Cimetta Fund

ASEF

Anupama SEKHAR (India)
Director, Culture

Valentina RICCARDI (Italy)
Senior Project Manager, Culture

Fatima AVILA (Philippines)
Project Manager, Culture

For more information, please visit: <https://mobilityfirst.asef.org/>
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Contact for queries:

Mobility First! team at ASEF

Ms Fatima AVILA
fatima.avila@asef.org
Project Manager, Culture

Ms Kerrine GOH
kerrine.goh@asef.org
Project Officer, Culture