During COVID-19 new digital initiatives regarding international cultural exchange have seen the light of day. DutchCulture presents a global inventory of good practices in the report *Turn and Face the Strange: Good Practices International Cultural Exchange 2020*

The COVID-19 pandemic has eaten away at the cornerstones of the practice of international cultural cooperation; both travel bans and the various measures that make cultural exchange impossible have caused great damage to cultural sectors. Artists and institutions consequently find themselves in a financially vulnerable position without the multitude of festivals, concerts and performances that make their daily bread.

_Basically, all projects involving mobility and artists’ presence had to be cancelled or postponed. Most of them were postponed and replaced online with alternative plans._ – Hajin Lee, Cultural Officer at the Netherlands Embassy in Seoul

Last September, DutchCulture organised the Embassy Culture Days in a virtual way for the first time. Some of the main goals of the Embassy Culture Days are to meet each other, interact and exchange ideas and inspiration. Although we could not meet in person, that goal was met, albeit in a different form. Due to the digital nature of the conference, it was our first joint ‘New good practice’; a digital alternative. During these days, we recognised the need at the missions to be able to share good practices with each other.

_We’re all in the same boat as we’re working round the clock to continue to involve our professional contacts and our audience._ – Friso Wijnen, Cultural Officer at the Netherlands Embassy in Paris

To this end, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have asked DutchCulture to make a first inventory. While plans and projects had to be adapted to the current circumstances, including postponing or moving them online, missions have not stopped investing in and working out new ideas. This publication builds upon the desire to continue sharing.

The DutchCulture survey, sent out to the cultural officers at missions in the 23 focus countries of the Dutch International Cultural Policy framework 2021-2024, aimed to capture a snapshot of the state of play at the various embassies and consulates, resulting in this
overview. After a year in which the world turned upside down, we present a global overview of practices, zigzagging along the sun’s trajectory from East to West, starting in Canberra and Tokyo and ending in Paramaribo and New York City.

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