

## 4 projects selected for « U40 empowered, a UNESCO-Sabrina Ho initiative »

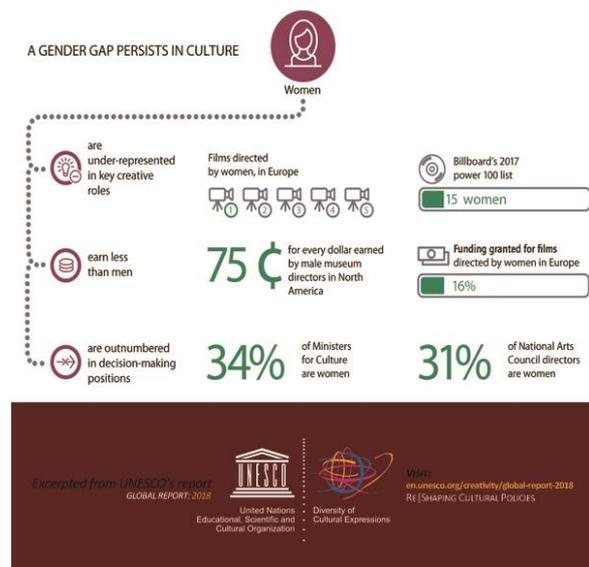
The U40 Empowered: a UNESCO-Sabrina Ho initiative expands the actions of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) and promotes young female cultural entrepreneurs in the digital creative industries by investing in their creative potential.

It is designed to increase opportunities for U40 women to access funding, infrastructure, equipment and co-production opportunities in the digital creative industries. It also supports national policy initiatives and strategies that address the different needs, aspirations, capacities of young women working in this field.

### Context

On 9 November 2017, UNESCO and Sabrina Ho, a rising young cultural entrepreneur and philanthropist based in Macau and Hong Kong, signed a strategic partnership agreement to empower young women and men by investing in their creative potential.

A 2018 UNESCO Global Report “Re/shaping Cultural Policies” shows that women are not only less connected, but have lower digital literacy skills and little access to training programs. Women are less likely to be hired by tech companies and are underrepresented in tech conferences or creative industry marketplaces. Women entrepreneurs remain invisible in the digital creative industries even though they represent half of those employed in these sectors worldwide. Women are also largely missing in senior management and leadership positions.



### Projects selected

UNESCO and Sabrina Ho are pleased to announce that four projects have been selected for funding.

### ***#BeYourVoice (Mexico)***

#BeYourVoice is a project developed by the Performing Arts company, “Teatro de Aire” at the interface of education and culture. It is designed to empower 100 young women, giving them the artistic, digital and entrepreneurship skills they need to succeed. #BeYourVoice will operate within a unique platform, using Virtual Reality technologies. Its experimental dimension can lead to new educational models, both in form and content that could be replicable in other sectors or countries. Through this new VR e-learning tool, #BeYourVoice aims to increase women’s confidence, their employment opportunities and create a network of future decision-makers in the digital creative industries.

### ***Digital Theatre: For women, By women (Palestine)***

Theatre Day Productions in Gaza has developed a new project intersecting digital animation, drama & storytelling and vocational training to build entrepreneurial, creative and technical skills among young women. They will learn to create short videos with their smartphones, work with communities and turn improvisation, character analysis and development into new digital creative expressions from Palestine that can be distributed through international festivals and regional markets. National and international trainers, using the latest digital technologies and software, will mentor these young women. In parallel, Theatre Day Productions will launch an advocacy campaign on culture, freedom of expression and women’s rights. It will use the results of the project to formulate a five year strategic plan towards the introduction of curriculum on digital audiovisual production at a Palestinian university or public institution.

### ***Waking Up: Digital. Women. Music. (Senegal)***

Gender equality, artistic creation and freedom of expression are priorities for Africulturban who are working to awaken women and girls in Dakar to take ownership of their creative environments and develop their full potential. Through this project, Africulturban will provide a new digital training programme for young female artists working in the music industry to strengthen their technical and artistic skills. With the collaboration of Positive Planet International, they will provide opportunities for cultural management training and for the production of new cultural expressions using digital tools. Through this partnership, they will introduce collaborative co-working methods and the Human-Centred Design approach that will help these young women establish micro-enterprises and contribute towards achieving their financial independence. In parallel, Africulturban will launch an awareness raising campaign to combat stereotypes and empower women to fight against discrimination in this sector.

### ***Digital Arts Academy (Tajikistan and Afghanistan)***

Much of Tajikistan and Afghanistan’s cultural and educational infrastructure was destroyed by conflict and war, impeding their social and economic development. As they move towards rebuilding their countries, they face fundamental challenges, including the exclusion of women from economic and public spheres, including the tech world. Bactria Cultural Centre will establish a new Digital Arts Academy in Dushanbe for female cultural entrepreneurs under 40 from Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The academy will offer courses on coding, digital creation and

entrepreneurship training to help them become competitive on the digital job market. The female graduates will be involved in developing new curriculum, teaching and mentoring future academy graduates. This will help break down barriers women face to spheres of influence. The Bactria Cultural Centre will launch a creative digital campaign designed by the graduates themselves, to help raise awareness of the role and creative capacities of women. Their digital artistic productions will be promoted, giving recognition to the contribution of women to the digital arts scene of Central Asia for the first time.

## **About Sabrina Ho**

Founder and the Managing Director of Chiu Yeng Culture (CYC), as well as the Director and Chief Executive Officer of Poly Auction Macau Limited, Sabrina Ho places her focus in the development of Art and Culture through actively organizing various types of social activities to promote and empower young artists from different sectors in Macau. Being a young visionary, her passion of elevating the worlds Art and Culture does not stop there and have spread widely on a global scale as she became the Co-Vice Chairlady of Bellissima Italia and the Honorary Ambassador Korean Culture of Hong Kong and Macau of Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Hong Kong. In 2015, she was ranked 17th on the 2015 Top 100 Global Chinese Art Market Man by Yi Dian China and Art Nova 2015 by Art Power 100.

## **About the International Funds for Cultural Diversity (IFCD)**

The IFCD is a unique multi-donor, voluntary fund established under UNESCO's Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Its goal is to support the emergence of dynamic cultural sectors in developing countries and to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction through investments in creativity.

With countries from the global North and global South working together, the IFCD has become a powerful example of international cooperation and its results show how an investment in the creative economy can stimulate not only job creation and increase income but also contributes to improving access to local and regional markets.

Since its creation, the IFCD has contributed to the development and implementation of cultural policies, to capacity building of cultural entrepreneurs, mapping of cultural industries and the creation of new cultural industry.

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