National Audit Office

Report
by the Comptroller
and Auditor General

Foreign & Commonwealth Office,
UK Trade & Investment, VisitBritain,
British Council and Cabinet Office

Exploiting the UK brand overseas

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Exploiting the UK brand overseas

Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General

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Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office

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This report examines whether the GREAT campaign, which is the government's key branding campaign to promote the UK as a destination for tourists, trade and investment and overseas students, is meeting its objective of securing economic growth.

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Contents

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Key facts

£113.5m
GREAT funding 2012–2015

£1.2bn
return on investment to date, 2012–March 2015

£1.7–1.9bn
target return on investment by 2019-20

17	UK government and related organisations using the GREAT brand
96%	global use by Foreign & Commonwealth Office overseas offices
£68 million	value of private sector sponsorship for the GREAT campaign
3rd	UK place in the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index™ 2014

Summary

Background

1 The GREAT Britain campaign (the GREAT campaign) is the government's major branding initiative to promote the UK as a destination for tourists, trade and investment and students in order to secure economic growth. The overall vision for the GREAT campaign is: "to inspire the world to think and feel differently about the UK now and in the future, demonstrating that it is the best nation to visit, invest in, trade with and study in".

2 The campaign was formally launched in February 2012. Its aim is to exploit the attention generated by the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics to secure long-term improvement in how people overseas perceive the UK. The campaign has allocated £113.5 million funding to five organisations for the 2012–2015 period. Alongside the GREAT campaign, other parts of government use different brands and marketing activity to meet their objectives, such as Department for International Development's 'UK Aid' logo.

3 Organisations use brands to help consumers identify their products and services and to differentiate them from competitors. Organisations need to ensure their brand has a clear strategy and is used consistently, giving the right message and experience to the consumer across time and points of contact.

4 Nation brands are based on perceptions of a country's strengths and weaknesses, including its reputation as a place to visit, study in, invest in or trade with. Personal history, individual bias or a lack of knowledge may mean that deeply-entrenched opinions are held about a particular nation that can be difficult to change, requiring a complex and long-term process.

5 The GREAT campaign aims to generate economic returns by exploiting the UK's nation brand through commercial branding and marketing techniques to differentiate the UK as a destination for tourism, education, inward investment and to support British companies exporting overseas. This involves creating a logo, design, guidelines and images and developing the overall strategy and allocating funding. GREAT delivery partners use the materials developed as the basis for marketing campaigns overseas and online to reach target audiences to try to change their perceptions.

Scope of the report

6 We have assessed how the Cabinet Office manages the overarching GREAT campaign. We have also compared the overseas activities of UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), British Council and VisitBritain, who are the main partners in the GREAT campaign and receive GREAT campaign funding. VisitEngland also receives GREAT funding but we have excluded it from the scope of the report as its activities are based in the UK. This report:

a examines how effectively the Cabinet Office runs the GREAT campaign (Part One);

b compares the effectiveness of partners' GREAT activities overseas and assesses whether these activities are in line with good practice (Part Two); and

c compares performance measurement and impact to date (Part Three).

7 To achieve value for money, we would expect government's management of the GREAT campaign to follow accepted good practice in taking a consistent and sustained approach over time, to targeted, prioritised markets and audiences, using disciplined and consistent marketing materials. The impact of marketing should also be measured systematically with robust return on investment measures in place. To maximise impact, we would expect to see that departments have prioritised their markets and audience based on thorough research, determining the potential volume and value of those target audiences and markets. Our methods are outlined in Appendix One and Two.

Key findings

On the GREAT campaign

8 Before the GREAT campaign began in 2012, there was no consistent approach to country branding or promoting the UK overseas. Instead, UK government organisations promoted the UK using their own brands, logos and names. There was also little coordination between tourism, trade and investment and educational organisations when promoting the UK overseas (paragraph 1.8).

9 The GREAT campaign has clear objectives to help it promote economic growth. It aims to improve global perceptions of the UK and to increase trade, investment, tourism and numbers of high-quality students, with a planned economic impact of £1.7 to £1.9 billion by 2019-20 (paragraphs 1.9–1.13).

10 **A GREAT campaign board, supported by a team in the Cabinet Office, provides effective governance for the GREAT campaign.** The board, which is chaired by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport, brings together all the required partners across government to decide on the strategic priorities and funding allocations. The senior responsible owner for the GREAT campaign sits in No 10 and is therefore well placed to exert overall control over the campaign and can use the convening power of No 10, and the pull of additional funding, to influence partners (paragraphs 1.16–1.18, Figure 4).

11 **The Cabinet Office team manages the GREAT campaign well and has created strong marketing and communication tools and materials. This provides an important element of consistency in the use of these materials which helps to embed the brand by creating familiarity among target audiences and markets**. Partners and other organisations who do not receive GREAT campaign funding can access high quality GREAT campaign materials, including standard images, creating efficiencies. There are also clear guidelines for using them. Users are largely positive about the GREAT images, in particular their flexibility (paragraphs 1.20–1.23).

12 **The board and the Cabinet Office agree levels of GREAT campaign funding with the partners but the Cabinet Office does not adequately assess the partners' capacity to spend this funding.** While the Cabinet Office considers potential return on investment for different funding scenarios, not adequately considering the capacity of partners to spend risks not maximising the impact of funding (paragraph 1.13, Figure 2).

13 **The process for prioritising countries and determining the level of funding to them has become increasingly evidence-driven.** Initially, the board based its allocations on obvious growth markets such as India and China. The process is now informed by partners' knowledge of the markets and selection criteria include markets that can deliver return on investment where the GREAT campaign can do more than business as usual (paragraph 1.14, Figure 3).

14 **Changes in GREAT campaign funding risk not maximising the benefits of investment in the campaign.** We would expect to see that funding allocations match the long-term and consistent building of the branding campaign, as there are benefits from running sustained campaigns over successive years. However, to date, there have been changes in the levels of funding given to priority countries, particularly via British Council allocations. Some of these changes have been in response to changes in its allocation of GREAT campaign funding overall. However, we are concerned that the use of short-term allocations may not be consistent with a sustained, long-term approach (paragraph 2.23, Figure 9).

15 **The GREAT campaign has successfully attracted endorsement and sponsorship from the private sector.** As of March 2015, the GREAT campaign had 202 private sector partners and 164 high-profile individuals endorsing the brand. It had attracted £68 million in sponsorship including both cash and benefits in kind (paragraph 1.11).

Partners' use of the GREAT campaign

16 **The GREAT campaign gives partners an extra funding stream which enables them to undertake more activity overseas.** All overseas teams who receive GREAT campaign funding noted that this money enables them to do more and different types of activity, particularly to raise awareness and change perceptions. The UKTI and FCO teams we spoke to overseas were unanimous that they would not be able to sustain current levels of promotional activity without GREAT funding. The British Council team in New York told us that GREAT funding was essential to their work promoting UK education (paragraphs 2.13 and 2.25).

17 **GREAT has also given partners strong marketing tools but they do not use them consistently.** Using a brand consistently helps an audience become familiar with that brand. If an organisation's logo is not always used, the audience may become confused about the message. UKTI and FCO teams use the GREAT campaign tools consistently even in non priority countries, with 96% of FCO offices overseas now using them even though they do not necessarily receive GREAT campaign funding. VisitBritain uses the marketing tools across all of its activities, even those not funded by the GREAT campaign. British Council is selective about when it uses the GREAT campaign logo and will often use its own logo instead. While there are rules about the use of sponsor logos alongside GREAT materials, the Cabinet Office has not issued formal guidance about when it is appropriate to use partners' logos with or instead of GREAT materials. Instead, it decides this on a case-by-case basis (paragraphs 1.23 and 2.5, Figure 5).

18 **Partners' delivery of the GREAT campaign varies and is improving as the campaign matures.** British Council and VisitBritain follow good practice in terms of branding and marketing by taking a sustained long-term approach over time. However, UKTI and FCO have tended to focus on one-off events rather than sustained marketing campaigns, particularly in the first two years of the GREAT campaign. In 2014-15, overseas teams moved towards a campaign approach, often linking individual events to a unifying theme, or sector priorities, an approach which will take some time to embed. All partners are clear about the audience they are targeting, which is in line with good practice (paragraph 2.5, Figure 5).

19 **UKTI and FCO could push priority country teams further to demonstrate value for money on their GREAT campaign activities before allocating funding.** Partners have priority markets for GREAT campaign activity, which are a mix of emerging and developed markets which are allocated funding. In UKTI and FCO, overseas teams are given an indication of their funding and, in conjunction with sector specialist teams in London, develop costed bids outlining their activities for the year to be scrutinised and approved by teams in London before the final funding is allocated. In addition, UKTI and FCO have created an additional, small 'challenge fund' for teams in non-priority countries to bid for GREAT campaign funds. This bidding process for the challenge fund is useful as it puts greater emphasis on teams to demonstrate value for money than priority countries that receive indicative funding at the outset (paragraphs 2.8–2.11, Figure 6).

Performance measurement and impact on growth

20 **To date, the Cabinet Office has confirmed a return of £1.2 billion against a target to bring £1.7 to £1.9 billion to the UK economy by 2019-20.** The return comprises different categories of economic benefit: it is derived from money already spent and benefitting the UK economy, forecasts of intention to spend in the next one-to-two years, and intention to spend in the next five years. Performance to date indicates that the target of £1.7–£1.9 billion is realistic within a five year timescale. However, these lengthy timescales will require partners, particularly UKTI and FCO to be vigilant in their reporting and monitoring (paragraph 3.2, Figure 10).

21 **Good branding campaigns should show a clear impact on objectives.** For the GREAT campaign its key objective is to generate economic growth. Therefore, the return on investment calculation is a central measure of the impact of the campaign. Some of the newly developed metrics can demonstrate a direct link to growth, while others are less effective, as they are derived or extrapolated from other data (paragraphs 3.6–3.7, Figure 11).

22 **The GREAT campaign's focus on return on investment has led to culture change and greater focus on measuring outcomes of activity rather than volume of activity.** This has required UKTI, FCO and British Council to take new approaches. In future, the GREAT campaign will need to continue evolving to measure outcomes from digital activity (paragraphs 3.5 and 3.12).

23 **All the metrics have their strengths and weaknesses.** VisitBritain has a strong methodology for measuring the impact of the GREAT campaign, although its key measure of economic output reports potential rather than actual spend based on 'intention to visit', which is its limiting factor. The newly implemented British Council measure calculates spend by students in the UK and attributes the influence of the GREAT campaign. However, it is based on forecast numbers of students in the UK as official education data are not available until 18 months after students have arrived. UKTI and FCO's metric is measured and verified using a standard UKTI methodology based on the numbers of businesses its teams have helped and the added profit they have generated as a result of that help (its Performance Impact Monitoring System). These metrics measure actual and anticipated additional sales, and do not capture economic results for individual companies supported or take into account growth over the longer term. The metric fails to capture all relevant activity, such as the indirect impact of FCO commercial diplomatic work. The Cabinet Office has started to calculate the additionality and attribution of the GREAT campaign based on UKTI's and FCO's existing metric of 'business wins' but does not report this in its return on investment of £1.2 billion (paragraphs 3.8, Figure 11).

24 **The Cabinet Office measures the impact of the GREAT campaign over five years which risks diminishing or unclear attribution as time goes on.** UKTI and FCO have a five-year target for return on investment for several of its metrics recognising the longer-term nature of their work. As the deals progress towards finalisation, the link to the GREAT funded activity may diminish as other influencing factors play a role in the success of the deal or corporate memory of UKTI's role fades. Therefore, UKTI and FCO will need to ensure that their pipeline of potential returns continues to grow each year in order to achieve their target (paragraph 3.9).

Conclusion on value for money

25 A good branding campaign needs consistent effort, sustained over time, with strong brand discipline, to maximise the impact of its investment. The GREAT campaign has provided the strategic coherence and practical support necessary to support the adoption of consistent and effective brand management by partners across government. Its approach meets accepted good practice from a brand communication perspective. The GREAT campaign team has produced high quality communication materials and teams overseas are, for the most part, making good use of them and adhering to brand discipline, although they do not always use those materials exclusively or consistently.

26 The Cabinet Office has reported a return on investment of £1.2 billion against expenditure of £113.5 million. The campaign metrics are focusing increasingly on measuring tangible economic benefits rather than intention to spend. The projected £1.2 billion return includes both actual and anticipated expenditure in response to the campaign, projected over a number of years. Achieving the full return is therefore contingent on intent being realised as actual spend. The pipeline of returns is growing and there are signs that the GREAT campaign will demonstrate increasing value for money as those returns are realised. There may be other benefits arising from the GREAT campaign which we have not audited. These include possible savings made by departments using campaign materials rather than creating their own, and endorsement of the GREAT campaign by high-profile individuals and sponsorship from the private sector. However, the Cabinet Office and campaign partners need to be vigilant if they are to accurately capture the impact of the campaign over the five year reporting period.

27 To optimise value for money in future, the campaign needs to allocate resources based on a clear analysis of which partners are likely to generate economic activity of proven benefit to the UK economy.

Recommendations

28 Our recommendations cover the GREAT campaign, which will need collective action from the Cabinet Office and its partners, as well as areas of performance relevant only to specific partners:

a **To avoid waste and maximise returns, the Cabinet Office should allocate funding to partners based on an explicit analysis of the partners' capacity to spend.** The Cabinet Office assesses potential return on investment on funding options, but does not adequately consider partners' capacity to spend.

b **UKTI and FCO need to improve the mechanism for funding allocation to push priority country teams to demonstrate that their GREAT campaign activities are value for money, will deliver impact and are feasible.** Currently, teams in priority countries are informed of their indicative amounts of funding based on UKTI's strategy and sector priorities. Countries then must produce a costed bid outlining their proposed activities before funding is finally allocated. The challenge fund places greater emphasis on the need for teams to demonstrate value for money, yet is for significantly less funding than that given to priority countries.

c **The Cabinet Office should disseminate guidance for GREAT partners which sets out clearly when partners and other users across public and private sectors should and should not use their own logos alongside the GREAT campaign logo.** All partners use their logos alongside or instead of the GREAT brand to varying degrees. Currently there is a lack of clarity and consistency in this area.

d **The Cabinet Office, FCO and UKTI should work together to enhance the existing business wins metric to calculate additionality and attribution so it can be included in the formal reporting of the GREAT campaign. This would capture economic growth more directly.** Calculating return on investment from the numbers of businesses helped is a less effective metric for the GREAT campaign and does not capture the wider promotional activity of other partners such as FCO.

e **The Cabinet Office needs to maintain vigilance in reporting the impact of the GREAT campaign.** The five year period for return on investment to be realised risks diminishing the causality of the influence of the GREAT campaign on returns secured.

f **In future, the Cabinet Office must ensure that its GREAT campaign partners integrate digital activities in line with best practice and maximises opportunities to make efficiencies by doing so.** Increasing its digital activity is a key focus for the next stage of the GREAT campaign.

Part One

The GREAT campaign

1.1 In this part we examine how effectively the Cabinet Office manages the GREAT Britain campaign (the GREAT campaign) and whether it follows good practice in terms of branding campaigns.

Principles of branding

> "The brand is the most important and sustainable asset any organisation has."
> Rita Clifton, BrandCap

1.2 A brand is a set of associations that a person makes with a company, product, service, individual or organisation. Organisations use brands to help consumers identify their products and services and to differentiate them from competitors. Organisations need to ensure their brand has a clear strategy and is used consistently, giving the right message and experience to the consumer across time and points of contact. A brand is typically defined as a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's goods or services as distinct from other sellers.

1.3 Before developing a brand the organisation will research the needs, habits and desires of current and prospective customers (the target audience). The organisation uses this research to define the brand and the brand message that will appeal most to these consumers. The organisation uses research to develop the 'creative brand expression' such as logo, typeface, images and story for communications to give a clear message about the brand and its qualities.

1.4 Organisations need to ensure that their brands are used consistently in media such as TV, radio advertising or the internet so the target audience receives a consistent message. This helps the target audience become familiar with the brand. If the message is inconsistent, or if the organisation's logo is not always used, the target audience may become confused about the message and move to a brand that is managed more consistently.

1.5 For consistency, organisations develop guidelines about how to use the brand. This includes the types of images and typefaces to be used, the location of the logo on a page, and what other brands it can and cannot be associated with. The organisation may have a 'brand guardian' who ensures that the brand is used correctly. The brand supports marketing, sales and other commercial activity which create tangible benefit for the organisation.

Nation brands

1.6 Nation brands are based on perceptions of a country's strengths and weaknesses, including its reputation as a place to visit, study in, invest in or trade with. Personal history, individual bias or a lack of knowledge may mean that deeply-entrenched opinions are held about a particular nation that can be difficult to change, requiring a complex and long-term process. There are numerous nation branding indices, three of which are detailed in **Figure 1**. These show that the UK has had a strong brand since 2012 with little changes in the rankings.

1.7 The GREAT campaign aims to generate economic returns by exploiting the UK's nation brand through commercial branding and marketing techniques to differentiate the UK as a destination for tourism, education, inward investment and to support British companies exporting overseas. This involves creating a logo, design, guidelines and images and developing the overall strategy and allocating funding. GREAT delivery partners use these materials as the basis for marketing campaigns overseas and online to reach target audiences to try to change their perceptions.

Figure 1

Place of the UK in nation branding indices

Name of Index	UK's rank			Main elements of index
	2012	2013	2014	
Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index™	3	3	3	Measures the image of 50 countries, with respect to exports, governance, culture, people, education, tourism and investment.
Brand Finance nation brand index	5	4	4	Measures the strength and value of 100 nation brands using a method based on a royalty relief mechanism that Brand Finance uses to value the world's largest companies.
Futurebrand Country brand index[1]	13	11	12	Measures perceptions in 118 countries. The strength of the country brand is determined by the perception of the country's value system, quality of life, business potential, heritage and culture, tourism and the quality of products made in that country.

Note

1 The Futurebrand Country brand index covers the years 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2014-15. The Index was not published in 2013-14.

Source: National Audit Office analysis

1.8 Before the GREAT campaign began in 2012, there was no consistent approach to promoting the UK overseas. Instead, UK government organisations promoted the UK individually using their own name, logo and message. There was little coordination between tourism, trade and investment and educational organisations when promoting the UK overseas. Regional bodies in England promoted their regions using different brands, effectively competing against each other in the same overseas markets. The Cabinet Office believes that the GREAT campaign is the first time that a country has tried to integrate the promotional efforts of government departments overseas that deal with tourism, education, trade and investment.

Managing the GREAT campaign

Campaign objectives

1.9 The GREAT campaign is the government's key branding campaign to promote the UK as a destination for tourists, trade and investment and students in order to secure economic growth. The overall vision for the GREAT campaign is: "to inspire the world to think and feel differently about the UK now and in the future, demonstrating that it is the best nation to visit, invest in, trade with and study in". Alongside the GREAT campaign, other parts of government use different brands and marketing activity to meet their objectives, such as Department for International Development's 'UK Aid' logo.

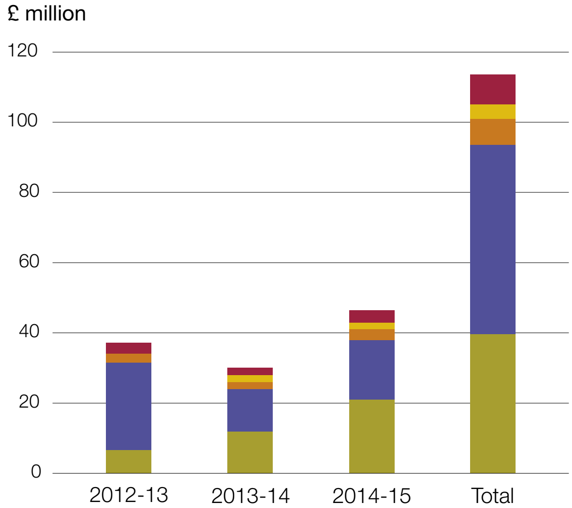
1.10 The GREAT campaign seeks to promote key aspects of the UK, its 'unique selling points' including: innovation, creativity, technology, entrepreneurs, heritage, culture, countryside, shopping, luxury, food, music and knowledge. Most of its activity is overseas although there has been a small UK element focusing on tourism and export promotion.

1.11 The Prime Minister formally launched the campaign in February 2012. Its initial focus was on increasing investment, tourism and students from overseas. It included trade from 2013-14. As of March 2015, there are 17 UK government and related organisations using the brand, it has attracted £68 million of sponsorship from the private sector with 202 private sector partners, and 164 high-profile individuals endorsing the brand.

1.12 The campaign is funded with contributions from each of the main organisations involved, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), Cabinet Office, British Council, and the Departments for Business, Innovation & Skills and Culture, Media & Sport. HM Treasury gives extra funds to meet the campaign's objectives. Taking this coordinated approach to sharing the funding burden should help to embed a unified approach to the campaign.

1.13 The GREAT campaign has a £113.5 million budget for 2012–2015, as approved by HM Treasury, and its target return on investment is £1.7 to £1.9 billion to be realised by 2019-20. There are five partner organisations that receive GREAT campaign money: UKTI and FCO, VisitBritain, British Council, VisitEngland and the Cabinet Office.[1] The allocation of the GREAT campaign budget is shown in **Figure 2**. The board and the Cabinet Office agree levels of GREAT campaign funding with the partners but the Cabinet Office does not adequately assess the partners' capacity to spend this funding. While the Cabinet Office considers potential return on investment for different funding scenarios, not adequately considering the capacity of partners to spend risks not maximising the impact of funding.

Figure 2
Allocation of the GREAT campaign budget



	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total
No 10	3	2	3.5	8.5
VisitEngland		2	2	4
British Council	2.5	2	3	7.5
VisitBritain	25	12	17	54
UKTI/FCO	6.6	12	21	39.6

Notes

1 VisitEngland did not receive GREAT funds in 2012-13.

2 British Council received £0.45 million from UKTI and others in 2013-14. This is included in the UKTI and FCO budget allocation in this Figure and in the British Council expenditure table in Figure 9.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Cabinet Office documents

1 VisitEngland is not included in the scope of this report as we focus on promotional efforts overseas.

1.14 Good practice dictates that the selection of target audiences and markets should be based on robust research on potential impact. The GREAT campaign has priority countries that reflect partners' existing priority markets. The choice of priority countries has evolved, and can be affected by external circumstances. Priority countries are decided by the board in consultation with partners. Initially, the choice of priority countries was based on wider assumptions rather than on a systematic assessment of the potential impact of the GREAT campaign in these markets, choosing obvious growth markets such as India and China, as well as the partners' existing priorities, a process only partly directed by formal evidence. The process has become more evidence driven as the campaign has progressed, and is now informed by partners' knowledge of the markets. Criteria for selection include markets where the GREAT campaign can do more than business as usual to deliver return on investment. **Figure 3** shows the GREAT priority markets in 2014.

1.15 All partners have strategic objectives linked to growth and quantify the amount of growth their GREAT campaign activities will generate.

Governance

1.16 There is a GREAT campaign board which includes ministers and senior civil servants from key government organisations involved in the GREAT campaign, and is chaired by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport. Ministerial attendance at the board is limited, with only the Chair attending all meetings in 2014, so the board does not regularly benefit from full ministerial insight. There is a ministerial strategy group that meets occasionally to check progress but has no formal governance role. Below ministerial level, attendance at the formal GREAT campaign board is good. See **Figure 4** on page 18 for the governance structure.

1.17 Our review of the board's activities suggests that it is effective in providing direction and oversight of the GREAT campaign. It approves the partners' budget allocation, sets strategic priorities and decides priority countries. The board discusses the progress of partners' activities and reviews forthcoming events. The budget, spend to date and return on investment is reported.

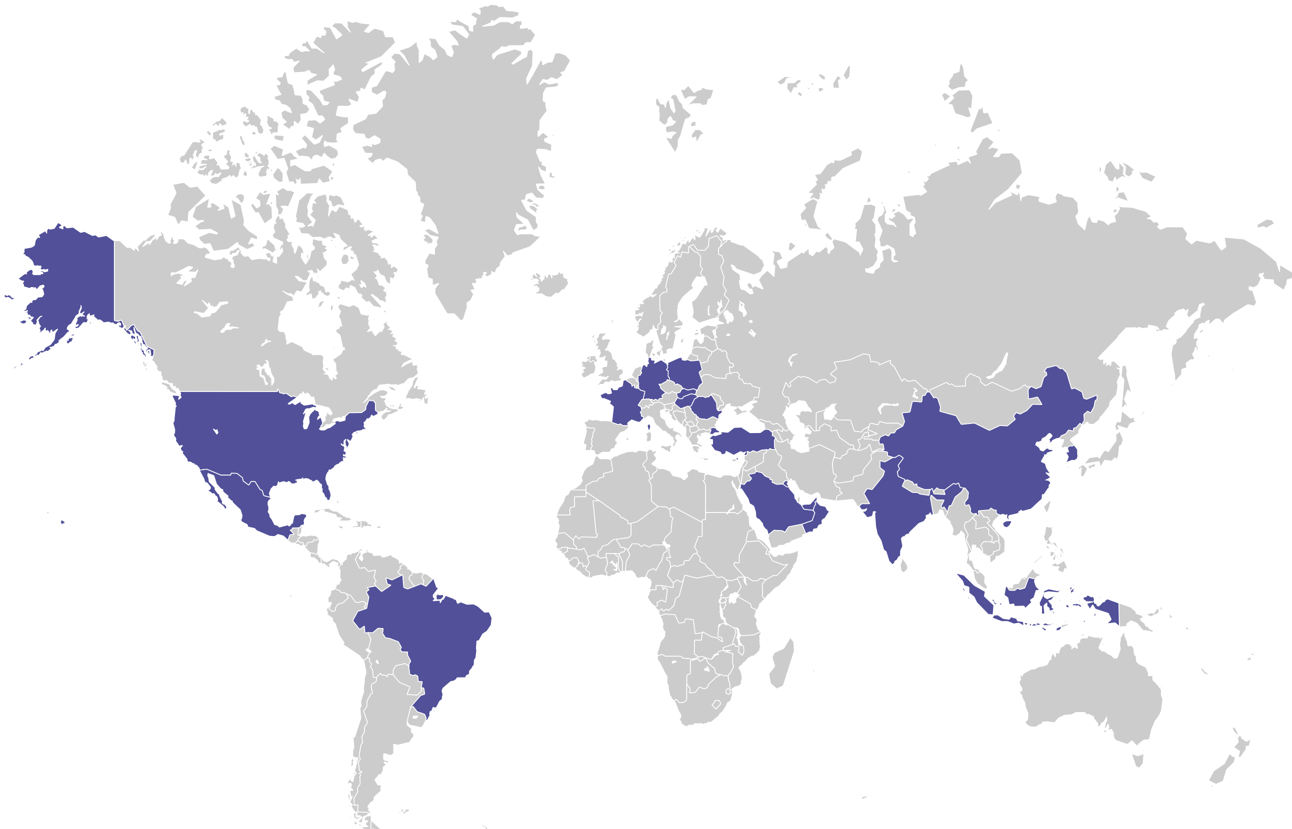
Managing the GREAT campaign

1.18 The Cabinet Office plays a vital role in the GREAT campaign and runs the overall campaign under which each department operates their individual campaigns. The senior responsible owner (SRO) for the GREAT campaign sits in No 10 and is supported by a small team. Therefore, the SRO is well placed to coordinate the campaign and can use No 10's centralised position and the pull of extra funding to influence partners.

Figure 3

The GREAT campaign 2014 priority markets

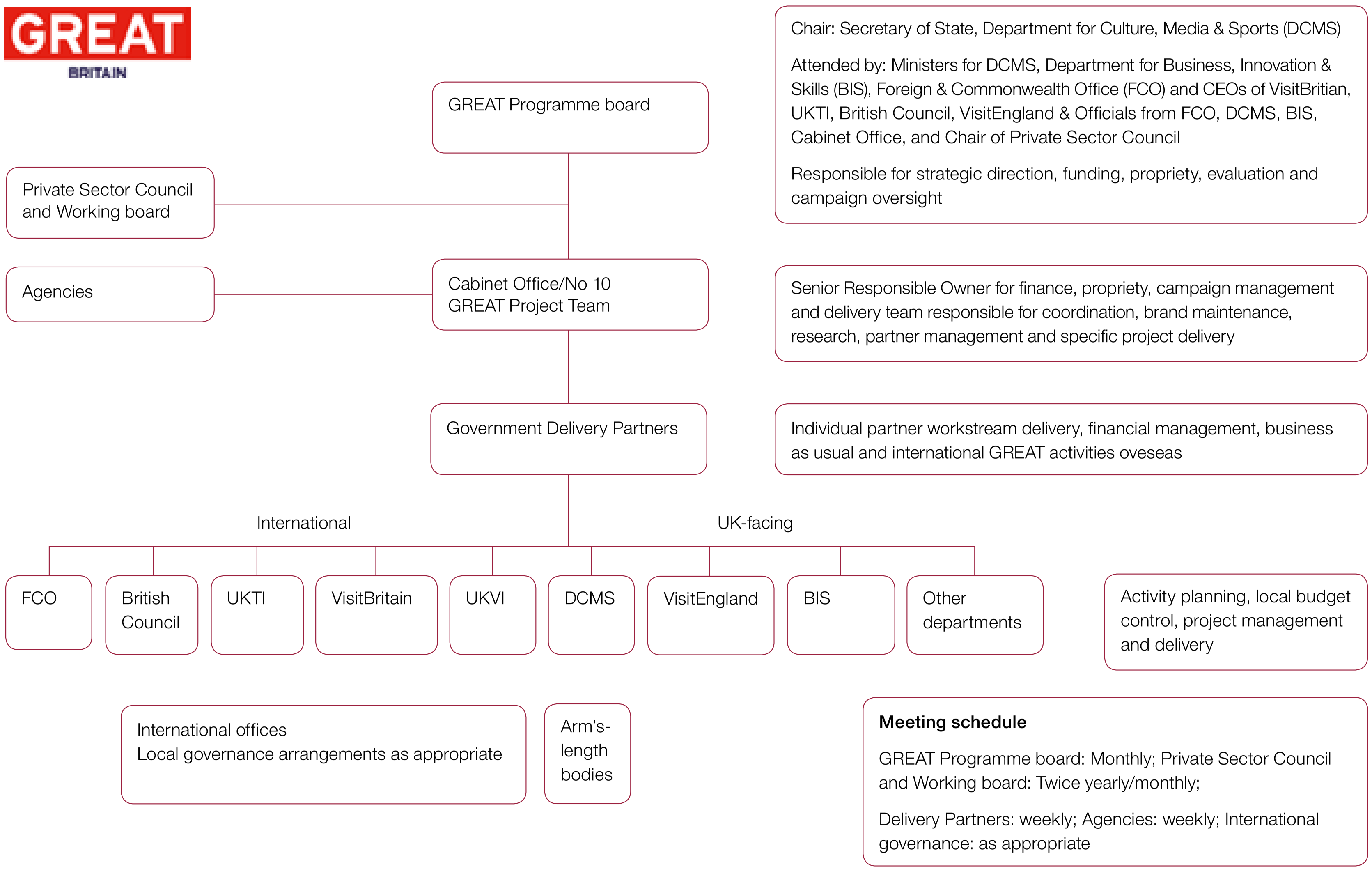
■ GREAT priority countries – Brazil, China, 'Emerging Europe', France, Germany, the Gulf Countries, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Mexico, South Korea, Turkey and the USA



Source: Cabinet Office documents

Figure 4

The GREAT campaign board structure



Source: Cabinet Office documents

Managing the GREAT campaign materials

1.19 Good practice in managing a brand is to define the brand and develop the brand message; develop brand campaign material such as the logo, and guidance for their use. The brand must be used consistently, with a 'brand guardian' who ensures that partners use the brand correctly. The GREAT campaign has a series of materials, including logo, colours, images and messaging that need to be managed in the same way to present a consistent image of the UK.

1.20 The Cabinet Office manages the GREAT campaign well and has created strong marketing and communication tools and materials. This helps provide an important element of consistency in using these materials which also helps embed the brand by creating familiarity among target audiences and markets. The Cabinet Office has clearly defined the campaign logo, imagery and messages.

1.21 There are clear assets for 'creative brand expression' in terms of the logos and images used in GREAT campaign material. Partners as well as a number of organisations who do not receive GREAT campaign funding can access high-quality standard images from databases enabling them to print posters and other promotional material easily. This creates efficiencies as the standardised images and logos mean there are no additional design costs for users. Partners were largely positive about these images, and appreciated the flexibility of the images, and that they were regularly refreshed. Typical comments to us included:

- Guidance is clear but flexible and they can create images for any event.
- It gives a consistent image of the UK overseas and brings together all partners.
- It is easily recognisable and allows them to compete with other nations on the image front.
- The addition of text has allowed them to give clearer messages.

1.22 However, some overseas teams felt that its broad focus could dilute the unique selling point of the UK. In addition, several of the VisitBritain overseas teams noted that the absence of people in the images lacked warmth, particularly in terms of tourism. VisitBritain would like to evolve the brand to have more depth, emotion and relevance to the traveller.

1.23 The Cabinet Office acts as a brand guardian. It has developed guidelines and controls the images and access to the images closely. Partners noted that this control is necessary and is not a barrier. However, the Cabinet Office should do more to ensure partners use the GREAT logo and campaign materials for their GREAT campaign activity overseas. All partners use their own logos alongside the GREAT campaign logo in varying degrees. British Council in particular, is selective about when it uses the GREAT campaign logo and it will often use its own logo instead. While there are rules about the use of sponsor logos alongside GREAT materials, the Cabinet Office has not issued formal guidance about when it is appropriate to use partners' logos with or instead of GREAT materials. Instead, it decides this on a case-by-case basis. Where partners wish to use their own logo, there should be a clear rationale as to why this is being done.

1.24 The Cabinet Office tracks the brand equity of the GREAT campaign. In 2014, the estimated GREAT brand value was £158 million, an increase of 58% on the previous year.[2] The valuation complies with a global standard for brand valuations.[3] This sets out the procedures and methods for measuring the value of a brand. The method requires three phases of work – intellectual property audit and review, behavioural analysis and valuation. Tracking brand equity is good practice in commercial branding, and is a good indicator of the effectiveness of a brand: a good brand will have increasing brand equity. It has limited monetary value for the public purse as the GREAT brand is unlikely to be sold. If there are plans to license the GREAT brand, then the value of the brand could be used in negotiations.

1.25 The GREAT campaign has been running since 2012, but it depends on funding from HM Treasury and approval from the Efficiency and Reform Group to undertake marketing activity. Therefore, there is no guarantee of continuing. Accepted good practice is that branding campaigns should be consistent, sustained and long-term to build the brand in the target markets, allowing organisations to maximise investment in the brand over time and to build familiarity in the target audience. The short-term nature of GREAT campaign funding could prevent the realisation of the maximum benefits from GREAT campaign funding in the medium to long-term.

2 Brand Finance produces the measure of brand equity.
3 The standard is ISO 10668: Brand Valuation.

Part Two

The three case studies – organisation and implementation

2.1 In this part we assess how well the partners manage their GREAT Britain campaign (the GREAT campaign) activities. We look at whether they have the necessary skills, and whether there is appropriate allocation of responsibility. We examine their GREAT campaign activities and whether they follow good practice in marketing.

2.2 In simple terms, the GREAT campaign provides promotional material designed to raise awareness, consideration and preference for the UK as a competitive country destination. The partners' activity is 'marketing' which uses promotional material to encourage exports and investment, education and tourist attractions within defined audiences.

2.3 For effective GREAT campaign activities, we would expect clear areas of accountability and responsibility, along with well defined governance arrangements. Teams should have good marketing skills, with strong financial and performance management.

2.4 In terms of good practice in marketing (which differs from branding which is Cabinet Office's remit), we would expect to see that teams have followed good practice, by taking a consistent and sustained approach over a defined time period, to targeted, prioritised markets and audiences, using disciplined marketing materials. We would also expect to see that teams have assessed whether the GREAT campaign has helped meet their objectives. In detail, as part of their marketing, we would anticipate that teams would have:

- Identified their target audience, assessed their potential value, and decided what behaviours they are going to change using the GREAT campaign.
- Defined the most relevant aspects of the GREAT campaign materials to appeal to their market and target audience.
- Measured the impact of marketing systematically, before and after the activity, and put in place return on investment measures.

2.5 We have assessed the partners' performance against these good practice criteria, as set out in **Figure 5**. This demonstrates that currently VisitBritain is the most mature in how it uses the GREAT campaign, although this is unsurprising given marketing is central to its activity. UKTI and FCO tended to focus on one-off events rather than sustained marketing campaigns, particularly in the first two years of the GREAT campaign. For 2014-15, overseas teams have moved towards a campaign approach. For example, teams have linked individual events such as conferences, trade events, webinars, press and digital activity to a unifying theme, for example creativity or innovation, or sector priorities such as health. This approach will take time to embed as it is a change in their usual activities which are frequently one-off events. The Cabinet Office considers that UKTI and FCO have made good progress since the start of the campaign. British Council uses GREAT funding to run campaigns in its target markets but does not use the GREAT campaign logo and materials consistently.

Figure 5

How the partners' GREAT campaign activities compare to good practice

Branding good practice criteria	UKTI/FCO	VisitBritain	British Council
Link a number of activities over a period of time to build customer awareness of a brand	Activity overseas has focused on one-off events but is moving towards a campaign approach, linking events to a theme or sector priority.	Conventional linked marketing activity overseas such as digital activity, poster campaigns and newspaper spreads.	Activities similar to regular education promotion activities. These include creating promotional videos and attending education fairs. These are part of sustained targeted campaigns rather than one-off activities.
Consistent use of brand materials such as logo, images and messages across all types of promotion activity, from advertising to PR, adhering to the quality stipulated in guidelines set out for their use	Teams overseas use GREAT campaign materials exclusively. GREAT campaign material used in 96% of FCO overseas offices even though they do not necessarily receive GREAT campaign funding. Teams told us GREAT campaign materials give professionalism and appeal to their events.	Uses GREAT campaign materials exclusively even in non-priority countries and in its activities which are not GREAT campaign funded. On its promotional website[1], the VisitBritain logo predominates and the GREAT brand is not strongly used. This risks creating confusion.	Uses its own logo and other education-related brands as well as the GREAT campaign logo and promotional material. The Cabinet Office and British Council consider this appropriate. However, there is a lack of clarity as to when the British Council or the GREAT logo are best used as the Cabinet Office has not produced formal guidance on this issue.
A full target customer segmentation should exist, with detailed profiles and an understanding of the potential value of the target audience in terms of spend for each market	Have defined their target audience at high level: senior business leaders and government officials. Have analysed the target audience's media habits and perceptions of doing business with the UK. Overseas teams do not always have sufficient details of their target audience for the activities they are planning and there is little or no quantification of their value, although they specify the numbers of companies they will help as a result of the event.	Has conducted a 'segmentation exercise' of several markets to identify its target audience for the GREAT campaign. This identified different types of traveller and the types of media and marketing which would resonate best with them. This enables VisitBritain to tailor its marketing activity and calculate the value of its target audience.	Uses market intelligence to identify its target audience. This includes data on geographic location and demography, and the categories of decision-makers and influencers that are involved in the decision made by a student to study overseas. It also includes intelligence on competitor activity within the market.

Figure 5 *continued*

How the partners' GREAT campaign activities compare to good practice

Branding good practice criteria	UKTI/FCO	VisitBritain	British Council
Research the target audience and what materials will appeal to that audience Choose the most appealing elements of campaign material for that target audience	Make full use of the GREAT campaign materials that they have defined as having the most relevant appeal to their market and target audience.	Makes full use of the images available to promote the UK's heritage, culture and countryside. VisitBritain teams said, however, that some of the GREAT campaign images are less suitable for promoting tourism. For example, they do not often feature people.	Makes full use of the Knowledge and Education aspects of GREAT campaign materials as these are the elements that will appeal to their target audience of overseas students wishing to study in the UK.
Analysis of the target market and the customer behaviours and an assessment of what behaviours are going to be changed and what they should be changed to, by using the GREAT campaign	Teams overseas understand the high-level behaviours they want to change.	VisitBritain understands the behaviours it wants to change. There are some more targeted behavioural changes, eg its 'countryside is GREAT' promotion, which aims to encourage tourists to visit the UK countryside as well as London.	British Council understands the behaviours in students and influencers that it wants to change. It has undertaken research to inform this.

Note

1 Available at: www.visitbritain.com/

Source: National Audit Office branding framework and analysis

Trade and investment

2.6 UKTI and FCO's role in the GREAT campaign is to promote the UK in terms of exports and investment. The GREAT campaign's priority countries reflect, in part, UKTI's focus on emerging, high growth markets such as Mexico which it set out in its five year strategy in 2011. The budget and expenditure for these activities is in **Figure 6** overleaf.

2.7 GREAT campaign funding has increased by 75% since 2013-14, and the increase is largely absorbed by the creation of more centrally controlled initiatives such as e-exporting. We examine these central initiatives in more detail in paragraph 2.14 and **Figure 7** on page 25.

Figure 6

UKTI and FCO GREAT campaign funding by country and activity

Country/strand	2013-14 expenditure (£m)	2014-15 budget (£m)
China	1.5	1.9
India	1.4	1.5
Brazil	1.7	1.6
USA	0.5	0.5
Russia	0.1	0.4
Turkey	0.9	0.6
South Korea	0.4	0.5
Indonesia	0.2	0.2
Mexico	0.4	0.5
Emerging Europe	0.8	0.8
Hong Kong	0.3	0.5
Priority country total	**8.2**	**9**
GREAT Challenge Fund	0.4	1.5
Events alliance	–	2
E-exporting	–	2
GREAT Festivals of Creativity	–	3
GREAT Investors Programme	–	1.5
Global Initiatives	3.4	2
Total	**12**	**21**

Source: National Audit Office analysis of UK Trade & Investment and Foreign & Commonwealth Office documents

Figure 7
The GREAT campaign initiatives

Initiative	Description
Great Festivals of Creativity	Three festivals in Istanbul (May 2014), Hong Kong (postponed indefinitely) and Shanghai (March 2015), three days each, highlighting UK creativity. Led by the Cabinet Office, UKTI and FCO with input from VisitBritain.
Events alliance	Partnering with trade exhibition organisers to support small to medium-sized businesses to exhibit their goods and services internationally. Piloted in September 2013.
E-exporting	Aims to enable UK companies to exploit opportunities in the digital marketplace and build the GREAT brand online. Launched in August 2014.
GREAT investors programme	Focuses on getting high-value investors to invest in UK business or donate to UK charities, research projects or scholarships. Two-year pilot, which started in 2014-15.

Source: Cabinet Office documents

Funding allocation

2.8 The process for allocating funding to overseas teams has evolved. In 2014-15, the budgets for priority countries were determined centrally and overseas teams were told of their indicative funding based on UKTI's strategy and sector priorities. They then developed costed bids outlining their activities for the year which were scrutinised by UKTI and FCO central teams. Overseas teams were allocated funding once their bids were approved. This approach was different to the previous year when teams had to submit plans for individual events for approval. The approach for 2014-15 is less bureaucratic but requires overseas teams to take responsibility for the value for money of all their activities given the reduction in central scrutiny. UKTI and FCO have changed the process slightly for 2015-16, with bids being developed in conjunction with sector specialist teams in London. This aims to bring greater strategic alignment. Some overseas teams said that being a priority GREAT campaign country put pressure on their capacity to spend the allocation although resources did not increase. We saw no indication that this kind of top-down allocation was based on an analysis of the capacity of teams to deliver.

2.9 Some of the bids for delivery we saw on our overseas visits were strong. However, the team in India, one of the largest recipients of GREAT funding, had put together a plan which failed to take into account the risk created by the elections. Halfway through 2014-15, FCO and UKTI central teams, along with the Cabinet Office recognised that India was unlikely to spend its funding that year. As a result, the team in India rewrote the plan and returned some funding.

2.10 FCO administers a 'challenge fund' which gives small amounts of money to non-priority countries. This has increased to £1.5 million in 2014-15, and, with agreement of the GREAT programme board, has increased to £4 million in 2015-16 as the Cabinet Office, UKTI and FCO consider that it has increased the dynamism and breadth of the GREAT campaign and stimulated innovation.

2.11 The 'bottom-up' approach to funding puts more emphasis on teams to demonstrate value for money. It also gives teams in non-priority countries the opportunity to hold GREAT campaign events, and increases exposure to the GREAT brand.

Overseas activity

2.12 GREAT campaign activity overseas often focuses on events such as trade fairs and conferences which are increasingly being run within a unifying theme or priority sector. Other activities include sector-specific promotional events that may last for several weeks or months.

2.13 The GREAT campaign provides UKTI and FCO teams with an important funding stream. Teams told us that the added benefit of using GREAT campaign materials is it gives professionalism and appeal to their events. Teams were unanimous that they would not be able to sustain current levels of promotional activity without GREAT funding.

Central initiatives

2.14 There are several central GREAT campaign initiatives, which are listed in Figure 7. These are new initiatives. Some are showing a validated return on investment, or an indicative return on investment, yet to be validated by the Cabinet Office. Others will take some years to realise the return on their investment. Given this, and the challenges of establishing the role of the GREAT campaign in some, it will take time to assess their effectiveness in full. However, the GREAT Festivals of Creativity have experienced challenges, as shown in the case example.

Case example

GREAT Festivals of Creativity

The GREAT Festivals of Creativity initiative is a public/private partnership that aims to promote British creativity and innovation internationally.

The GREAT Festivals of Creativity have required a £1.5 million increase in funding from the GREAT campaign, largely because of greater spending on the Istanbul festival. The Cabinet Office, UKTI and FCO have recognised that this was partly due to under-budgeting and poor management of subcontractors.

After Istanbul, UKTI and FCO conducted a lessons learned exercise and made changes to their project management and governance of these festivals, bringing them largely in-house with senior representatives of GREAT campaign partners on a Great Festivals of Creativity programme board.

To date, return on investment on the £4.5 million of GREAT campaign funding spent on the Festivals has been limited. However, it can take time for business to materialise after such events. Istanbul has generated 50 service deliveries (UKTI estimates the value to be £9.2 million). Hong Kong was postponed indefinitely because of civil unrest and therefore generated no service deliveries, and incurred £900,000 of irrecoverable costs. The target for Shanghai is 350 service deliveries and is expected to generate £150 million of additional business (known as 'business wins)' over three years.

Skills

2.15 A joint UKTI and FCO team manages the trade and investment part of the GREAT campaign. The UKTI element of the joint team is formed of its UK based central marketing team which oversees GREAT activity in priority markets and provides marketing expertise. In FCO in the UK, members of the joint team have recently moved to the FCO's communications team to give a stronger focus on marketing and communications. There has been significant staff turnover which has created uncertainty and problems with continuity. For example, three people in one year have held the key FCO lead role for the GREAT campaign.

2.16 Overseas, there are shortages of branding and marketing skills and awareness. FCO communication and media officers bring valuable communications skills to GREAT campaign activity but this does not fill the marketing skills gap in UKTI overseas teams. Teams have used specialist agencies to give additional skills.

2.17 Teams in priority countries have a GREAT campaign officer who collates and checks financial and performance reporting data. We saw during our visits that these officers play a useful role in ensuring consistency of reporting but they are not accountable for budgetary management.

2.18 We observed that leadership is vital to the successful implementation of the GREAT campaign overseas given the devolved nature of UKTI and FCO's work. The Ambassador is usually the senior responsible owner. UKTI carries out most GREAT campaign activity, with a senior member of UKTI or FCO responsible and accountable overall. We visited several priority countries and saw good but also poor examples of GREAT campaign activity:

- In Poland and the USA, the Heads of Mission have provided clear strong leadership for GREAT campaign activities.

- The team in India struggled to implement all of the GREAT campaign in 2014. The person responsible for delivery had to manage GREAT work alongside other responsibilities, the funding allocation had been significantly underspent and the team had to adjust the programme halfway through the year as it failed to recognise the risk presented by government elections to its planned GREAT activity.

Tourism

2.19 In contrast with UKTI and FCO and British Council, VisitBritain in London develops overseas GREAT campaign activity and is accountable and responsible for delivery. Small local teams help deliver activities and provide local knowledge. VisitBritain has received the largest share of GREAT funding over the duration of the campaign to date. It has allocated budgets based on priority countries (**Figure 8**) in which it implements sustained marketing campaigns. Allocations are based on the volume of potential visitors, and the value of spending they will incur. Central not local teams manage the finances although overseas teams can apply for small amounts of funding for individual events.

2.20 VisitBritain is staffed with marketing and communication specialists. They use media planners and buyers for specialist activities such as developing media briefs, spending £1.5 million on consultants in 2014-15. We saw no obvious skills gaps.

Activities

2.21 The GREAT campaign has not significantly changed VisitBritain's activities or strategic priorities. VisitBritain has been marketing the UK as a tourist destination for many years. Funding was reduced in the comprehensive spending review in 2010 and GREAT campaign funding has replaced this money. However, there are indications that the GREAT campaign is providing additional benefit. Since 2011-12, there has been an upward trend in return on investment from VisitBritain's wider activities (its tactical campaign) which uses the GREAT campaign logo, but not GREAT campaign funding.

Figure 8

VisitBritain GREAT campaign funding in priority countries 2014-15

Markets	**GREAT budget (£m)**
USA	5.0
China	2.7
France	2.6
Germany	2.6
Brazil	1.5
India	1.5
Gulf countries	1.3
Total	**17.2**

Source: VisitBritain documents

Education

2.22 Like UKTI and FCO, British Council's overseas teams have the autonomy to develop and implement campaigns. The Country Director of each British Council international office is the senior responsible owner for GREAT campaign activity in that country. A programme manager in the UK provides guidance and approves country plans and monitors delivery. The British Council gets the smallest share of GREAT campaign funding of all partners, £7.5 million over the period. The level of funding allocated to priority countries is approved by the GREAT programme board who take a view of GREAT funding as a whole. The majority of British Council GREAT campaign funding has gone to India, China and the USA, which represent the highest volume markets for student recruitment to the UK.

2.23 There have been changes to the allocation of British Council funding to its priority countries, in part due to changes in the British Council's overall allocation of GREAT campaign funding. Changes in GREAT campaign funding to priority countries risks not maximising the benefits of the investment in the campaign. We would expect to see that funding allocations match the long-term and consistent building of branding campaigns as there are benefits from running sustained campaigns in successive years. While some of these changes are responses to changes in funding overall and outside of the control of the British Council, we are concerned that some funding streams have ended, and may not be consistent with a sustained, long-term approach. To build brand awareness and deliver incremental benefits, it is important that partners maintain programmes where feasible and where they are delivering impact. The funding changes are set out in **Figure 9** overleaf.

Skills

2.24 Activities funded by the GREAT campaign tend to be similar to its regular education promotion activities. These include creating promotional videos and attending education fairs. Given that GREAT campaign funded activities are similar to its other activities to promote UK education, British Council teams have not needed to develop new skills. Teams we spoke to overseas understand marketing and communication and we saw no obvious skills gaps.

Activities

2.25 Teams in the priority countries we spoke to told us that the GREAT campaign money was essential to continuing their promotional activity. The British Council team in New York told us that GREAT funding was essential to their work promoting UK education.

Figure 9

British Council GREAT campaign funding in priority countries

Markets	GREAT expenditure 2013-14 (£000)	GREAT budget 2014-15 (£000)
China	503	875
India	562[1]	875
USA	323	450
South Korea	161[2]	150
Brazil	174[3]	100
Indonesia	122	100
Mexico	54	
Russia	77	
Turkey	49	100
Hong Kong	50	50
Poland	28	
Other countries	67	35
UK education promotion website	166	
Central	207	315
Total	**£2.54m**	**£3.05m**

Notes

1 Includes £300,000 from UK Trade & Investment (UKTI).

2 Includes £51,000 from UKTI and others.

3 Includes £100,000 from UKTI.

Source: British Council documents

Case example

Mexico education campaign

In 2013-14, the British Council team in Mexico used £30,000 of GREAT campaign funding to produce a video showing a Mexican student in the UK. This was shown in cinemas and on Facebook and YouTube. The team found that the video helped to engage potential students. It also noted an increase in the quantity and quality of attendees to Mexican education fairs but we did not see any evidence to link this to the GREAT video.

Part Three

Performance measurement

3.1 In this section we examine how the Cabinet Office and the partners establish the accuracy and scale of the impact of the GREAT campaign. We also assess the return on investment of GREAT activities to date.

Performance against targets for return on investment

3.2 The GREAT campaign has a target to bring £1.7 to £1.9 billion to the UK economy over five years. To date, the Cabinet Office has confirmed a return of £1.2 billion (**Figure 10**). The return comprises different categories of economic benefit: it is derived from money already spent and benefitting the UK economy, forecasts of intention to spend in the next one-to-two years, and intention to spend in the next five years. Performance to date indicates that the target of £1.7–£1.9 billion is realistic within a five year timescale. Although we have not audited the returns from partners, we have validated the methodologies used.

Figure 10
GREAT campaign funding and targets for return on investment

Partner	Funding 2012–2015 (£m)	Return on investment target (£m)	Ratio of target return on investment to funding	Confirmed return on investment to date (£m)	Timescale for delivery
UKTI and FCO	39.6	966–1,144	24:1 to 29:1	251.6–318.8	5 years
VisitBritain	54.0	453	8:1	360.3	1 year
British Council	7.5	136	18:1	37.4	2 years
VisitEngland	4.0	160	40:1	516.9	1 year
Total	**105.1**	**1,715–1,893**	**16:1 to 18:1**	**1,166.2–1,233.4**	

Source: National Audit Office analysis of the Cabinet Office documents

3.3 The rationale for target setting considered the performance of the partners in delivering impact in their business as usual activities, except the British Council which at the time, did not calculate the return on investment of these activities. Partners have differing timescales for delivery depending on the type of activity. Taking this into account, the British Council has the least time to deliver its remaining return on investment.

Performance measures

3.4 The GREAT campaign has a number of performance measures which capture the various aspects of the campaign. These include:

a measures calculating return on investment;

b changes in perception;

c digital/social media metrics; and

d activity-specific measures, such as numbers of attendees at an event.

3.5 The GREAT campaign's focus on return on investment has led to culture change and keener focus on measuring outcomes of activity rather than volume of activity. This has required UKTI, FCO and the British Council to take new approaches.

3.6 Good branding campaigns should show a clear impact on objectives. For the GREAT campaign its key objective is to generate economic growth. Therefore, the return on investment calculation is a central measure of the impact of the campaign. Some of the newly developed metrics can demonstrate a direct link to growth, while others are less effective as they are derived or extrapolated from other data. Many are based on the partners' existing metrics which has helped avoid bureaucracy.

3.7 We would expect to see a performance measurement process in which output-focused measures capture the value of economic growth where feasible. There should be a mix of short-, medium- and long-term measures. Partners should have set their baselines at the outset, and consider other factors that may affect outcomes. The main return on investment metrics are detailed in **Figure 11** on pages 33 and 34.

3.8 All the metrics have their relative strengths and weaknesses. VisitBritain has a strong methodology for measuring the impact of the GREAT campaign and demonstrates several of the best practice characteristics of performance measurement. Its key measure of economic output reports potential rather than actual spend based on 'intention to visit', which is its limiting factor. The newly implemented British Council measure does calculate spend by students in the UK and attributes the influence of the GREAT campaign. However, it uses forecasts of student numbers as official education data are not available for 18 months after students arrive in the UK.

Figure 11

GREAT main return on investment metrics

Partner	Metric	Description	Comment	Progress to date
UKTI/FCO	Foreign direct investment	The value of foreign direct investment projects resulting from GREAT campaign activity.	Clear link to economic growth. Difficult to link directly to GREAT campaign particularly if UKTI has a long-standing relationship with that company and should exclude other influencing factors. Will require vigilant monitoring and reporting given its five year timescale for realisation.	**2013-14** Nine projects, the value is being validated by the Cabinet Office. **2014-15** £50 million – validated by the Cabinet Office and included in ROI figures. Ten projects, the value is being validated by the Cabinet Office.
	Numbers of companies helped and resulting additional profit	The number of companies UKTI has helped (using GREAT campaign funding), and the additional profit generated as a result of that help is derived using UKTI's Performance Impact and Monitoring Survey. This tries to assess the quality and impact of UKTI's services by interviewing a sample of businesses. UKTI's services can range from detailed help (such as a market research report) to an invitation to an event at the Ambassador's Residence.	Reports anticipated and actual profit and sales measured and verified by a standard UKTI methodology. The measure is extrapolated using activity metrics. Difficult to link directly to GREAT campaign particularly if UKTI has a long-standing relationship with that company. The interviews aim to capture the impact of the individual activity but it is difficult to capture businesses' experiences fully. Does not capture wider FCO commercial diplomacy or promotional activity. Will require vigilant monitoring and reporting given that a significant portion of the reported benefits are anticipated not actual benefits.	**2013-14** £201.6 million – £268.8 million validated by the Cabinet Office and included in ROI figures.
	Business wins (new)	Businesses confirm the amount of trade generated as a result of UKTI's help from GREAT funded activities. It is being introduced across all UKTI activity.	Clear link to economic growth. Difficult to link directly to GREAT campaign particularly if UKTI has a long-standing relationship with that company. Will require vigilant monitoring and reporting given its five year timescale for realisation. Cabinet Office will need to decide whether to use 'businesses helped' or business wins. It cannot use both as this risks double counting.	**2013-14** £563.2 million additionality and attribution being validated by the Cabinet Office and not part of ROI figures. **2014-15** £422.5 million additionality and attribution being validated by the Cabinet Office and not part of ROI figures. £113 million from the E-export initiative being validated by the Cabinet Office and not part of ROI figures.

Figure 11 *Continued*
GREAT main return on investment metrics

Partner	Metric	Description	Comment	Progress to date
British Council	Jubilee Fund	Based on cost of living estimates and numbers of recipients of Jubilee scholarships.	Clear link to economic growth, 60 scholarships awarded in 2013.	**2012-13** £4.5 million validated by the Cabinet Office, included in ROI figures.
	Student numbers and average spend	British Council forecasts.	Uses forecasts of student numbers as official education data not available for 18 months after students' arrival in UK.	See below.
	Surveys of students in the UK (new)	Gives a percentage of students studying in the UK who were influenced by the GREAT campaign. First survey conducted November 2014 to February 2015. ROI is calculated by applying this percentage to forecast student numbers and average spend data noted above.	Clear link to economic growth. Depends on the cooperation of universities.	**2013-14** £32.9 million validated by the Cabinet Office, and included in ROI figures.
VisitBritain	Recollection of GREAT campaign	A survey to assess how much travellers have been influenced by VisitBritain marketing materials and the length of their stay in the UK. This is used to calculate incremental visitor spend.	Direct link to growth. Conservative estimate of influence of the GREAT campaign.	Contributes to the ROI reported below.
	Intention to travel	Survey which measures people who indicate an intention to travel to the UK.	Reports potential rather than actual growth. The available data prevents VisitBritain from assessing whether intended visits became actual visits.	**2012–2014** £360.3 million validated by the Cabinet Office and included in ROI figures.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Cabinet Office documents

3.9 UKTI and FCO have a five year target for return on investment for several of its metrics. This recognises the longer-term nature of their work to attract foreign direct investment to the UK and to increase UK exports. Some business deals will take a number of years to be finalised and provide an economic return. As the deals progress towards finalisation, the link to the GREAT-funded activity may diminish as other influencing factors play a role in the success of the deal. Corporate memory of the role of the GREAT campaign may also fade as time goes on, and the vigilance of overseas teams to monitor the progress of the deal may also wane. Therefore there is a risk that if GREAT-funded activity played a role in securing a successful business deal in its early stages only a small percentage of the deal could be attributed to the GREAT campaign. UKTI and FCO will need to ensure that their pipeline of returns continues to grow each year in order to achieve their target of £966 million to £1,144 million by 2019-20.

Partners' baselines for measuring performance

3.10 UKTI and FCO have a limited baseline to measure changes in perceptions. In 2014, they surveyed businesses perceptions of the UK in their priority markets. The survey had a qualitative element, targeting senior government officials and high value individuals plus a quantitative element targeting key decision-makers in business. While based on a small sample of 1,178 survey respondents and 65 interviews, the survey is a useful assessment of perceptions. It would be a more useful baseline if it had been conducted earlier in the GREAT campaign, rather than in 2014, although this would have been difficult given the availability of funding. The British Council conducted one perception survey in March 2014 in seven countries, focusing on where the GREAT campaign is active. It surveyed 2,604 undergraduate and postgraduate students asking about their intentions to study, their perceptions of the UK education system and their engagement with the GREAT campaign. This is a useful assessment of perceptions, but like the UKTI and FCO perception survey, it would be a more useful baseline if it had been conducted earlier in the campaign.

3.11 Like UKTI and FCO, VisitBritain has tried to set a baseline by surveying travellers' perceptions. It is the most established perceptions survey of all the partners. It began its perception surveys in 2012 when it established a baseline. It has run five waves to date. It has a consistent core of 11 cities and has recently added more cities to the survey.

Digital and social media

3.12 All partners use digital media as part of their GREAT activities currently and increasing its digital activity is one of the GREAT campaign's key objectives for 2015-16. The GREAT campaign also measures digital media activity which assesses the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Overseas teams record and monitor a wide variety of digital and social media metrics. Centrally, the Cabinet Office tracks Facebook 'likes' for Love GREAT Britain (VisitBritain), Knowledge is GREAT (British Council) and Business is GREAT (UKTI and FCO), twitter followers and subscribers to the Love GREAT Britain YouTube channel. These are reported to the GREAT campaign board. While these metrics give an overall picture of activity, they do not report the split between overseas and UK visitors to these channels, nor do they report influencers which would be a more useful metric of the impact of the campaigns.

Appendix One

Our audit approach

1 This study examined whether the GREAT campaign, which is the government's key branding campaign to promote the UK as a destination for tourists, trade and investment and overseas students, is meeting its objective of securing economic growth. We reviewed:

- The strategies of each of the partner organisations for the GREAT campaign and the impact that it has had on UK economic growth.
- How the campaign has been implemented overseas by the partner organisations.
- Whether the campaign meets recognised good practice in marketing and branding.

2 Our audit approach is summarised in **Figure 12**. Our evidence base is described in Appendix Two.

Figure 12
Our audit approach

The departments' objectives

The objective of the GREAT campaign is to promote the UK as a destination for tourists, trade and investment and overseas students in order to secure economic growth. The campaign objective is to lead to a measurable impact of £1.7–£1.9 billion for the UK economy.

How this will be achieved

To deliver the objective, the partner organisations – UKTI and FCO, VisitBritain and the British Council have priority countries, developed strategies and allocated funding to teams overseas that can undertake activities to promote the UK to defined audiences. The Cabinet Office manages the campaign and controls the GREAT campaign, logo and materials.

Our study

We examined the implementation and management of the GREAT campaign and assessed if it had achieved its objective of contributing to growth.

Our evaluative criteria

What is the GREAT campaign and how is it achieving its objective of contributing to UK growth? How is this being measured?

Do the partner organisations have clear implementation plans and are they measuring their return on investment?

How is the GREAT campaign being run? Does it meet branding best practice?

Our evidence

(see Appendix Two for details)

We reviewed the overall GREAT campaign strategy and business plans and its analysis of return on investment using an evaluative framework to measure impact on growth.

We reviewed the partner organisation strategies and plans using an evaluative framework to measure impact on growth.

We reviewed GREAT campaign documentation and interviewed staff in London and overseas and measured activity against good practice in a marketing and branding framework.

We spoke to branding experts to design a best practice framework.

We used the following methods to inform all areas of the study, we:

- Conducted study visits to six countries in which UK government partners have received GREAT funding.
- Interviewed staff in the Cabinet Office and partner organisations both in the UK and overseas.

Our conclusions

A good branding campaign needs consistent effort, sustained over time, with strong brand discipline, to maximise the impact of its investment. The GREAT campaign has provided the strategic coherence and practical support necessary to support the adoption of consistent and effective brand management by partners across government. Its approach meets accepted good practice from a brand communication perspective. The GREAT campaign team has produced high-quality communication materials and teams overseas are, for the most part, making good use of them and adhering to brand discipline, although they do not always use those materials exclusively or consistently.

The Cabinet Office has reported a return on investment of £1.2 billion against expenditure of £113.5 million. The campaign metrics are focusing increasingly on measuring tangible economic benefits rather than intention to spend. The projected £1.2 billion return includes both actual and anticipated expenditure in response to the campaign, projected over a number of years. Achieving the full return is therefore contingent on intent being realised as actual spend. The pipeline of returns is growing and there are signs that the GREAT campaign will demonstrate increasing value for money as those returns are realised. There may be other benefits arising from the GREAT campaign which we have not audited. These include possible savings made by departments using campaign materials rather than creating their own, and endorsement of the GREAT campaign by high-profile individuals and sponsorship from the private sector. However, the Cabinet Office and campaign partners need to be vigilant if they are to accurately capture the impact of the campaign over the 5-year reporting period. To optimise value for money in future, the campaign needs to allocate resources based on a clear analysis of which partners are likely to generate economic activity of proven benefit to the UK economy.

Appendix Two

Our evidence base

1 We reached our conclusions on whether the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), VisitBritain and the British Council are securing value for money in their efforts to promote the UK overseas in order to increase exports and foreign direct investment, attract more overseas tourists and students by the use GREAT funding. This is based on our analysis of evidence collected between June 2014 and March 2015.

2 We applied an analytical framework with evaluative criteria to compare the activities of the different organisations involved in the GREAT campaign. This covered the key activities that we expected that the FCO, UKTI, VisitBritain and the British Council would need to undertake to achieve the objective of the GREAT campaign – which is to have an impact on UK growth and to create jobs. VisitEngland also receives GREAT funding but we have excluded it from the study as it does not engage in GREAT activity overseas.

3 We also applied an analytical framework to assess how well these organisations have used the GREAT brand. This evaluated their use of the brand against marketing and branding best practice.

4 Our audit approach is outlined in Appendix One. Our main evidence sources were:

Research in the UK

Semi-structured interviews with:

- The SRO of the GREAT campaign and the team responsible for managing the GREAT campaign.
- The senior staff and their teams in the FCO, UKTI, VisitBritain and British Council responsible for the GREAT campaign in their organisation.
- Staff and consultants responsible for performance measurement.
- Review of documents from each of the partner organisations involved in GREAT. This includes Efficiency and Reform Group exemption requests for marketing and communications spend, individual partner strategies for GREAT, campaign evaluation documents and an HM Treasury business case submission.
- Analysis of return on investment for each partner organisation.

Overseas research

Visits to six countries in which UK government partners received GREAT funding:

- India and USA – priority countries that have received GREAT funding from all partners since its launch in 2012.
- Emerging Europe (Poland and the Czech Republic) and Mexico – priority countries for UKTI and FCO. Received GREAT funding for one year from the British Council.
- Germany – A priority market for VisitBritain since the launch of the GREAT campaign. Received GREAT funding for one year from UKTI and FCO.
- We interviewed UKTI and FCO, VisitBritain and British Council staff in each country in which they were represented.
- We reviewed documents from each overseas country, including strategies, bid and evaluation forms, market intelligence and campaign material.
- We attended GREAT-funded events in Mexico.
- Telephone conference with overseas staff in Bahrain and the Philippines, who had received GREAT Challenge Fund money to get a view of the activities that other overseas teams had organised using GREAT Challenge Fund money.

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