



Being Human Festival: 7–16 November 2024

Application Guidelines

About the Festival

Being Human Festival is the UK's national festival of the humanities and returns in November 2024 for our 10th anniversary, delivering a celebration of the humanities that inspires people and showcases the creativity, resilience, and curiosity in communities across the UK.

Being Human is a place-based festival that emphasises interaction, collaboration and engaging with communities outside higher education. We will support innovative, participatory, and creative activities that foster genuine, two-way connections with communities. Events are expected to take place off-campus (exceptions will only rarely be permitted) and should be designed to facilitate mutual learning between researchers and publics.

We welcome applications that show evidence of collaboration with internal colleagues or external partners, or of building on successes of past collaborations.

More information about the festival's priorities and audiences can be found on our [website](#).

Being Human Festival is led by the School of Advanced Study, University of London, with generous support from Research England, in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy.

2024 Festival Theme: 'Landmarks'

Our festival theme in 2024 is 'Landmarks'. Our 10th anniversary is a landmark year, and we will be looking back on landmark events in our history, while imagining landmarks we might yet create. We invite researchers to join us in thinking about physical or metaphorical landmarks and how they shape our world. More information and guidance on the theme can be found on our [website](#).

How to take part in Being Human Festival

There are three different pathways to apply to take part in the festival:

1. Institutional grant – run a Festival Hub

Institutional grants are the largest funding awards made by Being Human. These awards are institutionally focused, supporting locally relevant programmes of activity involving

multiple researchers from different disciplines. Festival Hubs must engage with carefully chosen cultural or community partners (e.g. a school, a charity, an arts organisation).

Institutional grants are intended to support the development of institutional capacity for public engagement activity in the humanities (e.g. by offering opportunities for public engagement teams to do something humanities-focused, to try something new or to work with new communities).

Festival Hubs offer highly visible concentrations of best practice public engagement activities within the festival programme. They provide coherent, imaginative and eye-catching programmes of events that raise the festival's profile nationally as well as regionally. Festival Hub programmes should be made up of 4-8 separate events in a range of formats.

A key condition of Institutional grants is that they are match-funded (to match the total amount of your application, or £5,000, whichever is higher) by the institution awarded them, providing scope for more ambitious programming. **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) or [AHRC-recognised Independent Research Organisations \(IROs\)](#) can apply for Institutional grants of £4,000 - £8,000.**

More information about Institutional grants and how to apply is available on our [website](#).

2. Festival Event grant – run single or multiple festival events

Festival Event grants are designed to support ambitious, 'best practice' activities that would not run without financial support from the festival. These projects are usually led by individual researchers, unlike Festival Hubs. Grants can be used to fund projects culminating in either a single event or a small series of activities. Activities should be ambitious and creative while still carefully thought through and achievable.

Festival events funded through this pathway must engage with carefully chosen cultural or community partners (e.g. a school, a charity, an arts organisation etc.), engage with our priority audiences (find out more on our [website](#)) and support excellent two-way public engagement with humanities research.

Whilst the main activity should take place within the festival dates, funded projects can incorporate elements of activity outside the festival dates, working directly with communities. For example, workshops or crowd-sourcing activities might run in the lead-up to the festival, gathering material to feed into a festival performance, or further collaborative activity might happen after the festival. We are keen to support projects which integrate aspects of community collaboration and co-production and help embed and sustain civic engagement activities. We welcome projects which may leave a legacy beyond the duration of the festival.

Funding of up to £4,000 is available to researchers at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and [AHRC-recognised Independent Research Organisations \(IROs\)](#).

More information about Festival Event grants and how to apply is available on our [website](#).

3. Festival Event pathway – run an event without festival funding

The Festival Event pathway offers a great way to get involved in the festival for anyone who is not seeking festival funding, and has a connection to humanities research, including universities, museums, archives, galleries, publishers, subject associations, societies, libraries and more.

Events should be carefully thought-through activities that are easy to organise and fun for all involved. Activities in this category can make use of existing resources, formats and platforms, while giving them a 'Being Human Festival' twist. They run without a financial contribution from the festival (perhaps using institutional funding, resources from research grants, etc.) but benefit from the development, training, support and publicity that Being Human can offer.

Activities of this kind form an important part of the festival programme. By submitting an event to the national festival of the humanities, you are helping to make sure access to research continues to thrive and grow, as well as raising awareness about why the humanities are so important to our everyday lives. We also hope taking part in the festival will be fun and rewarding, offering the opportunity to engage with new audiences.

More information about the Festival Event pathway and how to apply is available on our [website](#).

What support is available?

Different levels of financial support are available through the Institutional grant and Festival Event grant pathways. For specific support relating to each pathway, please visit our [website](#). In addition to this specific support, all festival organisers will have access to the following support and resources:

- a training programme run throughout the festival year for practical advice with designing, planning, promotion and delivery of your project;
- public engagement toolkits, resources and helpful advice from the festival team;
- guides to promoting your event that contain hints and tips about marketing and press;
- copies of Being Human print and digital materials geared towards promoting the national festival and access to other marketing materials (e.g. banners and badges) to promote your activity;
- templates you can use to produce your own marketing materials (posters, banners, digital and PowerPoint templates);
- support from the central Being Human social media accounts.

You may also be invited to take part in centrally organised festival activities such as the festival launch.

Application process

Application forms for all activities must be submitted online using Survey Monkey Apply. Application guidance for all pathways can be found on our website, including links to the application forms.

Word versions of the application forms are available on our website, which can be used for reference when preparing your application. However, please note that applications will only be accepted through Survey Monkey Apply.

Where applicable, please upload a completed activities grid (as provided), budget template (as provided), letters of support from community and cultural partners, and from PhD supervisors, when submitting your application.

If you have any questions about the application process, please email apply.beinghuman@sas.ac.uk.

Application deadlines:

Activity type	Application deadline
Institutional grant	5pm, Friday 12 April
Festival Event grant	5pm, Friday 12 April
Festival Event (unfunded)	5pm, Friday 7 June

If you have any questions or would like to contact the Being Human team, please email beinghuman@sas.ac.uk.