Being Human festival: 10-19 November 2022

Small Awards – Further Information

Small Awards 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 more institutionally led Hub Awards. Awards can be used to fund projects culminating in either a single event, a small series of activities, or other interactive content that offer a very close fit with our ethos. Activities are typically built around a strong ‘hook’ - a simple but concrete idea that has potential for public appeal - and are ambitious and creative while still carefully thought through and achievable.

Above all, Small Awards are intended to reach priority audiences and support excellent two-way public engagement with humanities research.

Funded projects can often 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 particularly keen to support this type of project, which integrate aspects of community collaboration and co-production and help embed and sustain civic engagement activities.

More information about the festival, the different ways to take part, and the 2022 theme 'Breakthroughs' is available on our [website](#).

What support is available?

Funding of up to £2,000 is available to researchers at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and AHRC recognised [Independent Research Organisations (IROs)](#). Grants are competitive as Being Human has only a limited amount of funding to distribute each year. Please note that funding is not available to independent researchers unless in collaboration with researchers at HEIs or IROs.

In addition to funding, recipients of Small Award grants will have access to the support and resources offered to all participants in the festival. This includes:

- a training “Masterclass” series 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 etc.); and,
• 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.

What does a Small Award project look like?

Small Award projects can be a one-off activity or take a project-type approach that combines different types of activities. For example, workshops, postal packs or phone calls might take place in advance, feeding into a main activity during the festival. Projects might also extend post-festival, producing additional things like films, podcasts or online galleries. There’s no need to do just one thing, and different types of activity may achieve different outputs and reach different audiences. This can be particularly important given Covid-19 planning contingencies.

Examples of activities funded under this pathway over the past five years have spanned numerous formats and approaches. Some successful formats have been interactive online performances, pop-up museums, as well as activities run via postal or door-to-door delivery to local communities (e.g., activity packs sent through the post). You can find examples of such events in our case studies.

Whatever you choose, it’s important to remember that we are looking for ‘public engagement with research’ projects, not simply cultural activities or academic seminars/lectures. Activities should have an element of co-production, and audiences, communities and participants should have opportunities to contribute their own experiences and knowledge as part of the project. They should also come away having learnt something clear and understandable about humanities research.

Public talks and panel discussions are not fundable by Being Human. These tend to only appear in our programme if they feature a public engagement aspect (e.g. an innovative format or element of performance) and generally come via our unfunded, ‘Open Call’ pathway.

Please use our planning toolkits that give tips on how to create a successful public engagement activity.

We encourage applicants to be creative with their proposals while anchoring activities based around tried and tested formats.

What formats are suitable?
Some examples of suitable formats, which can work in person, online, or in hybrid formats, include (but are by no means limited to):

- performances (theatre, music, comedy, storytelling);
- food and drink (cookery lessons, cook-alongs, themed meals, tastings);
- screenings and ‘watch together’ (film screenings with introductions, listening parties, DJ sessions);
- walks and tours (walks, audio walks, treasure hunts, behind the scenes tours);
- ‘have a go’ events (learn a skill, try an instrument, make something);
- museum lates or museum takeovers (online or in-person);
- activities coordinated by post or other ways of connecting with people at home; and,
- exhibitions and installations (outdoor art, public art, crowd-sourced activity).

We are open to activities that feature interactive digital activities such as podcasts, a daily newspaper, films, radio stations and exhibitions. These activities would be supplements to a programme, rather than the heart of it. They would need to be interactive, feature aspects of co-production, and be firmly rooted in public engagement with research.

**What costs can a Small Award grant cover?**

Funding is intended to support activities that would not happen without it, rather than upscaling already planned activity. It is intended to cover expenditure that cannot be easily absorbed into existing institutional budgets. For example, eligible costs include:

- payments to performers/musicians/artists who are not salaried members of staff;
- production costs (filming, audio, streaming, web design if essential to the activity);
- props, costumes, and materials;
- production costs for things like exhibition panels, work packs, pamphlets;
- postage costs (e.g., for mailing packs to attendees);
- reasonable promotional costs that will help you to reach your intended participants/audiences (e.g., flyers, local paid advertising);
- venue hire or essential transport (e.g., hiring a coach for a bus tour);
- catering/consumables that are essential to the activity (e.g., for themed meals, tasting sessions);
- reasonable documentation costs (e.g., filming, photography); and,
- accessibility costs (e.g., captioning, transcribing, BSL interpreter).

Being Human cannot make any contribution to:

- existing staff members’ costs, whether academic or professional staff;
- catering unless it is essential to the format of the event (i.e., we may support food costs for a historic meal, but would not support a wine reception after an event, or tea and coffee to go with it);
- supporting academic conferences and symposia, or any event that has been designed primarily for the benefit of academics, students, stakeholders or others already engaged with the world of research; and,
- international travel or accommodation costs.
What are the eligibility criteria?

All activities featured in the festival programme must:

- demonstrate aspects of humanities research in ways that are inspiring, accessible and relevant for non-specialist audiences;
- have direct involvement from a humanities researcher in delivering (not just planning) the event, to ensure that research expertise informs the activity that audiences encounter;
- be held during the festival dates (10-19 November 2022, with the option to have lead-in and post-activity aspects to the project);
- be free to attend (all associated activities need to be free, not just those funded by Being Human - this includes free access to venues where events are being held, such as heritage sites or museums that normally charge an entrance fee);
- be representative and inclusive, giving consideration to the diversity of speakers and researchers represented within their programmes and,
- give serious consideration to accessibility in choice of venue, platform and format, with all activities taking place in accessible venues.

To apply for Small Award funding, activities must:

1. be led by a UK Higher Education Institution (HEI), an AHRC recognised Independent Research Organisation (IRO), or cultural organisation in partnership with an HEI or IRO;
2. have direct involvement from a humanities researcher in delivering the event (see our FAQs for our definition of a professional researcher);
3. be held off-campus wherever possible (on-campus, public focused university venues such as public theatres and arts centres are suitable);
4. respond to the interests and needs of a clearly defined non-specialist audience; and,
5. engage with a carefully chosen, named cultural or community partner (for example a school, a charity, an arts organisation etc.).

If your proposal includes subject matter that is highly sensitive or emotionally triggering, appropriate handling of these topics must be considered and evidenced in your application. Please note the review panel reserve the right not to accept such topics in the festival programme.

Are there any priorities for funding?

We seek innovative, exciting programming that has been designed with the needs of audiences firmly in mind.

We actively welcome festival content which celebrates inclusivity, equality and diversity. We are particularly keen to receive applications which engage with underrepresented groups in your community, and/or groups who share a particular protected characteristic (defined under the Equality Act 2010). Please be specific about your intended audiences in your application. We will not knowingly accept applications for events which include
speaker line-ups that lack appropriate diversity, including all-male or ‘about us, without us’ activities – where a subject is explored without representation from those affected by it.

We endeavour to keep learning and improving our processes, so please contact us at beinghuman@sas.ac.uk if you have any feedback or would like to discuss this with us.

We are also particularly keen to receive Small Award applications which demonstrate capacity to do one or more of the following things:

- explore innovative and realistic approaches to public engagement;
- engage with communities who are under-represented within universities or within AHRC recognised Independent Research Organisations (IROs), or people who have never engaged with a university or IRO;
- engage with under-served communities (See the ‘Young participation by area’ information on the Office for Students website);
- engage with communities in areas without a university;
- provide programming for families and young people (16-25 year olds);
- are relevant to local communities (for example, place-based activity highlighting unexpected aspects of local history and/ or contemporary culture, addressing topical debates with local communities);
- feature an element of co-production;
- have potential to make a small change happen locally and/ or leave a legacy beyond the duration of the grant; and,
- respond in a topical way to our 2022 theme of ‘Breakthroughs’.

All funded activities must show evidence in the application that diversity, inclusion and accessibility have been considered across programming, speakers/researchers, venues and platforms.

What don’t we want?

You will significantly reduce your chance of being funded if proposed activities:

- have only a tenuous link to humanities research (see our FAQs for our definition);
- feature ‘about us without us’ type content – where a subject is explored without representation from communities and individuals affected by it;
- are not designed to appeal to a clearly defined non-specialist audience;
- make use of platforms, venues or formats that have not been carefully chosen, are inaccessible, or are unlikely to appeal to a public audience;
- are not deemed by the review committee to be good value for money, or comprise standard activity that is being topped up with Being Human funding;
- are over-ambitious and at high risk of not meeting the festival’s objectives; and,
- are deemed to be unlikely to succeed in the context of ongoing uncertainty/potential restrictions around Covid-19.

Should I apply?

We only have a small amount of funding to give out, so awards are competitive. Before applying, it is worth exploring other possible funding avenues within your own institution.
which might enable your project to move forward. If funding is not necessarily needed, your activity might be better suited to our ‘Open Call’ pathway.

Please note that if an application for funding is made, and is unsuccessful, the festival team may ask whether it is possible for the activity to run in a less ambitious format on an unfunded basis as part of the ‘Open Call’ pathway.

**Application process**

The Small Award application form and activities grid is available on our [website](#). Letters of support should be provided from any cultural and community partners named on your application. Applications should be made on the correct form and returned via email to: [apply.beinghuman@sas.ac.uk](mailto:apply.beinghuman@sas.ac.uk).

- **Deadline for applications for funding – 5pm, Friday 29 April**
- **Notification of outcome of applications – by Wednesday 8 June**

Further information about the festival and the level of support available when organising your activity can be found on the [FAQs section of our website](#). If you have any questions, please email [beinghuman@sas.ac.uk](mailto:beinghuman@sas.ac.uk).