Being Human
Festival of the Humanities 2016
Evaluation Full Report

For the School of Advanced Study
University of London

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Key stats

- Estimated total audience of 33,000 (57% increase on 2015)
- 263 events in 45 towns and cities covering all 11 UK regions of the UK
- £261,000 leveraged in funding and in-kind support
- 7 regional hubs: Dundee, Exeter, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Nottingham and Swansea

Press and digital

- 95 national and regional press mentions
- 41,506,063 total media impressions
- Partnership with BBC Radio 3’s Free Thinking resulting in 3 broadcasts on the festival and a total reach of 5.7 million
- 285,754 Being Human web page views
- 6,214 twitter followers (59% increase on 2015)

Organiser experience

- Central support rated positively by 89% of organisers
- Participants’ experiences rated positively by 95%
- 86% of participants would take part again in Being Human

“Being part of a national festival, and the publicity and promotional support it provided, gave a feeling of being part of a celebration of the humanities”

Audience experience

- 95% rated events good or excellent
- 60% aged under 40 and 23% aged under 24
- 81% would recommend Being Human
- 51% did not have a humanities degree
- 85% increased their understanding of the humanities
- 84% wanted to find out more about the humanities
- 24% were made more aware of the festival’s sponsors
- 85% were made more aware of the festival’s sponsors

Satisfaction

Demographics

Learning
Being Human Festival of the Humanities
2016 Evaluation Summary

In the space of three years, the Being Human Festival has established itself as the leading exemplar of best-practice humanities engagement in the UK. The festival is rapidly becoming the pre-eminent event for universities looking to showcase their humanities research, while helping to support the national profile and reach of the School and University.

In that time we have nearly doubled our number of events and our number of cultural partners, while establishing an annual footfall of over 30,000 participants from all over the country. In 2016 the festival featured activities in 45 towns and cities across the UK and leveraged over £260,000 in local funding and in-kind support.

We are clearly achieving the primary aim of humanities public engagement, which is reaching a diverse audience that does not already have a relationship with the humanities, and increasing their understanding of the subject area. Furthermore, academics and others across the country, particularly early-career researchers, are benefitting from the national platform offered by Being Human, which is offering a vital piece of public engagement infrastructure in the humanities in the UK and beyond. To further enhance that platform, we are looking to expand our digital provision, so that we also provide a national, centralized archive of Being Human events that can be accessed around the world.

Following our first international event in 2016 (in Paris) in 2016-17 we have consolidated plans to expand internationally starting in the autumn of 2017, with planned events in Singapore and Melbourne, Australia, as well as in Paris, and have plans to extend these offerings to further countries in 2018.

Media Impact

Our media impact is growing exponentially. We had almost 100 press mentions across the country, in both national and regional press. A partnership with BBC Radio 3 significantly raised our media profile, giving us a reach of over 1,000,000. This partnership will be continued in 2017. Our Twitter following increased by 59% in 2015-2016 and the website had nearly 300,000 views.

Audience Impacts

The response to our events remains outstanding. 95% of our survey respondents rated events positively, while 81% would recommend Being Human to others. 60% of attendees were aged under 45, and less than half (49%) have a humanities degree. More women (60%) than men (40%) attended events.

85% increased their understanding of the humanities generally and their understanding of the relevance of the humanities to everyday life. 84% were encouraged to find out more about the humanities, and 74% were made more aware of the festival’s main partners and sponsors.

Organiser Impacts

We also improved impacts for academics, helping create engagement of mutual benefit. Nearly 700 UK academics, students and HEI staff were involved in organising Being Human events in 2016. It was the first public engagement experience for 46% of participants, and 86% would take part again. Organisers established collaborations, reached new audiences, and increased the visibility of their own research, with one noting that, ‘Being part of a national festival, and the publicity and promotional support it provided, also gave a feeling of being part of a celebration of the humanities and lifted the significance of what would otherwise be local-interest events and activities.’
Evaluation of Being Human festival 2016

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1. Introduction

The third Being Human festival of the humanities took place under the theme ‘Hope and Fear’ across nine days from 17th to 25th November 2016. It was led by the School of Advanced Study, University of London in partnership with the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the British Academy. As the only national festival of the humanities in the UK, it brings together universities, Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and partner organisations to stage events that celebrate the humanities and aim to engage non-academic audiences with humanities research.

A small team manages the festival from its base at the School of Advanced Study and is overseen by a steering committee which includes representatives of the main partners. Being Human funds events through a competitive bidding process, which is open to researchers from any career stage, background, disciplinary expertise or experience of delivering public engagement. A regional hubs model helps to ensure a geographical spread in the programme, with a collaborative agreement between each hub and Being Human stating that these hubs could ‘effectively become ‘mini-festivals’ in their own right’.

1.1. Objectives and aims of Being Human 2016

As stated in the festival strategy, Being Human 2016 had the following core objectives:

1. To demonstrate, to a non-academic audience, the value of humanities research to society in the UK and globally.
2. To enhance public visibility and understanding of the humanities, demonstrating relevance to everyday life.
3. To encourage, support and create opportunities for humanities researchers to engage with non-academic audiences.
4. To initiate culture change in attitudes towards public engagement within the humanities – embedding public engagement across the HE sector.

The 2016 festival also had the following specific aims, which recognise previous years’ evaluation findings:

1. To ensure a stronger and more visible connection to humanities research at more festival events, building this into application process.
2. To focus on quality rather than quantity of events.
3. To ensure clarity of messaging and clear focus on humanities.

1.2. Evaluation of Being Human 2016

Jenesys Associates Ltd were appointed as external evaluators in September 2016. We collected data and feedback via a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods.

Data collection

By the end of February 2017 the following data sources were available:

- A total of 2,249 valid survey responses from attendees of all ages, representing an overall response rate of 6.8% (based on an estimated total audience of 33,000). These responses covered 138 separate events which took place across 35 town or cities and in every UK region.
  - 2,227 responses to hardcopy (n=1,767) and online (n=460) versions of a survey for attendees age 12 and over
  - 22 responses to a hardcopy survey for attendees age under 12

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1 Responses were deemed valid when 2 or more questions were answered
- 74² valid responses to an online survey for event lead organisers (includes 6 responses from regional hub coordinators)
- 78 valid responses to an online survey for event participants – speakers, panellists, partners etc.
- 108 vox-pop interviews with attendees, undertaken by event organisers (n=30) and the external evaluators (n=28)
- 22 telephone interviews undertaken by the external evaluators with 15 lead organisers and 7 hub coordinators
- Structured observations by the evaluators of 7 events chosen to represent the geographic spread and variety of programming of Being Human 2016

Data analysis and reporting

This report documents the evaluation findings. A separate technical annexe contains all evaluation materials and outlines respondent numbers for each quantitative question.

Survey respondents self-selected which questions to complete. Therefore sample sizes vary for different questions and the technical annexe shows the number of respondents (n=) for quantitative data in every case. Percentages have been rounded and thus when totalled may be slightly greater or less than 100. Qualitative data from surveys and interviews with event organisers and partners were analysed thematically.

Quotes have been used to illustrate findings and have been edited where necessary to ensure anonymity. They are shown in blue italics and attributed to attendees, lead organisers (includes hub coordinators) and participants (includes speakers, panellists, event partners, workshop facilitators).

² In cases where more than one organiser response was received for the same event/series of events, these were combined for statistics such as attendee numbers, levered support etc. to ensure there was no duplication in reporting and analysis.
2. Being Human 2016 – key facts and figures

2.1. Headline statistics

Table 1 compares headline statistics for the three Being Human festivals that have been held so far. The reductions in the numbers of lead organising institutions and events from 2015 to 2016 is indicative of this year’s aim to focus on quality not quantity of events.

Table 1. Being Human headline statistics 2014 to 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lead organising institutions</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(57 universities)</td>
<td>(58 universities)</td>
<td>(58 universities)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK towns &amp; cities</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional hubs outside London – new for 2015</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International event – new for 2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total estimated audience³</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>33,000⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/ cultural partners</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter followers</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>3,909</td>
<td>6,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentions in national and regional press</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>95³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival web page views</td>
<td>45,002</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>285,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central team fundraising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£32,000 (new for 2016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison of the statistics for each year also suggests that Being Human met or exceeded the following of specific targets for 2016:

- Maintain, not grow, number of lead organising institutions: target 75 max. - **achieved**
- Increase number of festival hubs: target 6-7 - **achieved**
- Increase attendees: target 25,000 – **exceeded by 12,000**
- Increase Twitter followers: target 6,000 - **achieved**
- Increase national and local media referencing Being Human: Target 135 – **not met**
- Central fundraising: target £26,000 – **exceeded by £6,000**

Although the target figure for media references was not met, it should be noted that festival promotion took place right in the middle of USA election activities. At least two journalists mentioned this as the reason they were unable to respond to Being Human press releases and messages.

³ Total audience figures provided by School of Advanced Study, based on numbers submitted by event organisers
⁴ As presented in section 2.5.1 the estimated total audience based on figures reported to the external evaluators is 31,270 for 2016
2.2. Being Human demographics

Age groups of attendees and lead organisers

The age of attendees was mixed. 23.0% were age under 24, compared to 18.2% in 2015. 36.5% were age 25 to 44 and 40.6% were age 45 or more, both slightly down on 2015 when the equivalent figures were 38.8% and 44.2%. Age 25 to 34 was the most common age range, at 21.9%. As in 2015, the youngest age groups had the lowest levels of attendance. However 6.8% were age under 16, which is an increase of over 4% on this age group compared to 2015.

Most (70.3%) lead organisers were age 18 to 45, with 59.5% being in the 31 to 45 age group and 10.8% being age 18 to 30.

Genders of attendees, lead organisers and event participants

More females (61.3%) than males (36.3%) attended Being Human 2016, which are almost the same figures as in 2015. The corresponding 2011 census figures for England and Wales are 51% and 49%, which suggests that the festival reaches more females and fewer males than are found in the whole population. More females (66.2%) than males (30.9%) organised Being Human events. The gender of participants was slightly more balanced than that of organisers at 58.4% female and 37.7% male, which is similar to the gender profile for attendees.

Ethnicities

Most (81.5%) attendees described themselves as white, which is slightly lower than the corresponding 84.2% reported for 2015 and fell short of the 2016 target to reduce by 5% attendees who describe themselves as white. Most organisers (79.8%) and participants (88.2%) also described themselves as white. Table 2 compares reported ethnicity data with 2011 census results for England and Wales\(^6\) and shows that figures for Being Human are broadly representative of the whole population.

Table 2. Being Human 2016 ethnicities of attendees, organisers and event participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ONS 2011 census results</th>
<th>Being Human 2016 attendees</th>
<th>Being Human 2016 organisers</th>
<th>Being Human 2016 participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, African, Caribbean, Black British</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/Multiple</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Group</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported disabilities

8.4% of attendees age 12 and over described themselves as disabled, with a further 1.8% preferring not to say. This is around half of the corresponding figure of 17% in the 2011 England and Wales census and suggests that there is scope for Being Human to reach out to more people who have a disability. Lead organisers and participants were not asked if they described themselves as having a disability.

\(^6\) http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_290558.pdf
2.3. Backgrounds of attendees, lead organisers and event participants

**Attendees background understanding of the humanities**

To provide an insight of their understanding of ‘the humanities’, attendees age 12 and over were asked to report their familiarity with the term prior to attending Being Human 2016. Table 3 shows a breakdown of attendees’ responses, together with typical descriptions of the humanities given by respondents in each category. It indicates that Being Human 2016 attracted attendees with a range of prior familiarity with the term. Several respondents who identified themselves as having ‘a lot’ of knowledge criticised this question as meaningless and it should be considered for revision in future.

**Table 3. Being Human 2016 attendees’ familiarity with ‘the humanities’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiarity with term ‘the humanities’</th>
<th>Attendees’ typical descriptions of ‘the humanities’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.8% - never heard of ‘the humanities’</td>
<td>No descriptions were given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 13.0% - heard of ‘the humanities’ but didn’t really know what the term means | The study of people and the things that affect them (a guess!)
Some basic rights of every human being?
Should I imagine the word "humanities" covers a very large area?
I don’t really know what it means. I would guess that it refers to subjects that deal with human life. But that could be anything! |
| 46.4% - some knowledge about the meaning of ‘the humanities’ | Not certain of all subjects which come under humanities, but have understood it as non-science subjects dealing with the arts and literature and culture.
Subjects like English literature, history & philosophy
The study of those subjects that have a physical or emotional effect on our lives.
I think it refers to subjects referring to the human condition and experience such as art, literature, philosophy etc.
Don’t really know apart from thinking that it’s about human beings.
It represents all human cultural interaction in the broadest sense. |
| 26.8% - a lot of knowledge about the meaning of ‘the humanities’ | I’d describe humanities as academic disciplines concerning culture, history, thinking and logic that do not involve experimental method.
Any subject that is not ‘hard science’
Subjects that relate to the human experience
Humanities is about being human
What a ridiculous question! |

Further insight about attendees’ background knowledge came in the fact that 48.6% of attendees had a degree in the humanities and 76.0% had a degree in any subject. The equivalent figures in 2015 were 51.0% and 82.3%, which suggests that this year’s festival reached slightly more people who were not educated to degree level and that just over half of people who attended events in 2016 may not have had a high level of formal knowledge of the humanities. 18.1% were studying a humanities subject (includes school and degree level) and 16.4% considered themselves to be working in the humanities, suggesting that 34.5% had current experience working/studying in this field.
2.4. Backgrounds of lead organisers and event participants

Lead organisers’ roles and backgrounds in research and public engagement

88.9% of lead institutions or organisations were universities or other HEIs and hence most lead organisers were employed by these types of organisations. 60.8% of university-based lead organisers were academic staff, 16.2% had professional services roles, 9.5% were early-career researchers and one individual (1.3%) was a post-graduate student. This suggests 71.6% were involved in academic research or study. 12.1% categorised their role as ‘other’, which included museums and archives staff and two individuals who described their roles in universities as ‘hybrid academic and professional services’.

At the time of Being Human 2016, 25.7% of lead organisers were funded by AHRC and 4.0% were funded by the British Academy. 18.9% and 17.6% respectively had in the past received funding from these organisations.

Over half (58.8%) of lead organisers were taking part in Being Human for the first time in 2016, comprising 19.1% for whom this festival was their first experience of public engagement and 39.7% who had taken part in other forms of public engagement, but not Being Human, before the 2016 festival. This indicates that Being Human attracted organisers who were new to both the festival and public engagement generally and 41.1% of lead organisers had participated in Being Human in 2014 and/or 2015.

Participants’ roles and backgrounds in research and public engagement

Feedback was received from 78 participants, such as speakers, panellists, creative practitioners etc., who were involved in 45 Being Human events. Over half (56.6%) were employed by universities, with 11.8% being employed by arts organisations and 6.5% being freelancers in the arts or creative industries, suggesting 68.4% contributed creatively to events. 7.6% were employed by museums or archives and 2.6% represented community groups or charities. All others described themselves as interested individuals or volunteers.

Just under half (46.5%) of participants who were employed by universities were academic staff, 23.3% were postgraduate researchers, 16.3% were professional services staff and 7.0% were early career researchers, suggesting that most (76.8%) university participants were involved in research or academic study. 26.7% of university participants were currently funded by AHRC and one participant was funded by the British Academy. 19.2% and 15.4% respectively had in the past received funding from these organisations.

Being Human 2016 was the first public engagement experience for just under half (46.2%) of all participants and 41.9% had participated in other forms of public engagement but not in Being Human before the 2016 festival, meaning 11.9% had taken part in Being Human in previous years.
2.5. Event outputs

2.5.1. Numbers of events and attendees

Each lead organiser ran between 1 and 12 events as part of Being Human 2016, with 12 events being reported by one hub coordinator and the number of events organised by the other regional hubs ranging from 6 to 10. Over half (60.3%) of all lead organisers outside of hubs ran one event, with two reporting that they ran 5 events or more.

Lead organisers reported an estimated total audience of 20,564 covering 173 events, representing an average of 118.9 attendees per event. Reported attendances ranged from 3 to 3,000 per event, with the festival closing event attracting 3,000 and four exhibitions each estimated to have attracted in excess of 1,000 attendees.

Based on an average attendance of 118.9, the 263 events that comprised the festival attracted a total audience of 31,270, exceeding the target of 25,000 by 25.1%. Whilst less than the 33,000 reported by the Being Human central team, the difference can be accounted for in the approximate nature of estimated numbers for exhibitions and drop-in events.

2.5.2. Numbers and types of partner organisations

Most (85.1%) lead organisers indicated that partner institutions or organisations were involved in their Being Human events, with 33.8% reporting that at least one of their partnerships came about because of Being Human 2016. Other than two hub coordinators who reported 11 and 17 partners, the numbers reported ranged from 1 to 7 per lead organiser.

A total of 160 partner institutions/organisations were named by lead organisers and these were categorised by type as in table 4. This demonstrates that the most common type of partner was ‘arts organisation’ at 25.0% followed by ‘heritage organisation’ and ‘freelance arts specialist’, both 18.1%. All lead organisers described beneficial outcomes from these partnerships and expect them to continue, as covered in section 4.2.

Table 4. Categories of partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner type</th>
<th>% of named partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts organisation (theatre companies, film groups, cinemas, arts venues/centres, arts collectives, galleries etc.)</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage organisation (museum, archive, National Trust etc.)</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freelance in arts sector (artist, writer, musician etc.)</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community organisation (community groups, community centres, churches, local libraries etc.)</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University or research organisation</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement organisation (public engagement consultancies/business etc.)</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (includes local authorities, miscellaneous local businesses etc.)</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5.3. Numbers and types of legacy outputs

Most (78.8%) lead organisers reported that their involvement in Being Human had developed legacy resources or outputs, which they could use in future public engagement. This is similar to the percentage (76.2%) who reported these outputs in 2015. Table 5 presents the six types of outputs cited most frequently by lead organisers. Other described outputs were articles, websites and a radio programme.

Table 5. Top six legacy outputs reported by lead organisers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of legacy output</th>
<th>% of organisers who reported this type of legacy output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Films/videos/photographs</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog posts</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitions</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model formats for events</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podcasts/sound clips/audio recordings.</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop resources</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.4. Media coverage of events

Most (76.8%) lead organisers achieved social media coverage of their events, which is over 50% higher than in 2015. As shown in table 6, just under half (46.4%) achieved coverage in local/regional online or printed press, which is similar to 2015, when the equivalent figure was 45.2%. Some who reported no media outputs said that they had not sought any coverage as their events were oversubscribed. All who reported national radio coverage mentioned Radio 3, whose Free Thinking programme broadcast an edition on 15th November 2016 which acted as a preview to the festival.7

Table 6. Media coverage reported by lead organisers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of media</th>
<th>% of organisers who reported this type of coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>76.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/regional press – online or printed</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/regional event guide or what's on guide -online or printed</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/regional radio</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National press – online or printed</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National radio</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/regional TV</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National TV</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b082kws1
2.6. Levered funding and in-kind support

**Estimated amount of funding and in-kind contributions**

Over half (55.1%) of lead organisers raised additional (i.e. not from Being Human) funding. Based on the mid-points for the reported funding ranges and including £32,000 raised by the central team, the total amount of levered finance is estimated to be £103,500, which represents a 59.3% increase on the 2015 figure of £65,000.

Almost all (97.1%) lead organisers received in-kind support from their institutions, and most estimated its value. Based on the mid-point for each of the estimated value ranges, the total worth is calculated to be £157,500. This is substantially less than the 2015 estimate of £303,000, which included a single organiser’s estimate of £100,000.

Based on these reported figures the total value of resources levered by Being Human 2016 was £261,000.

**Additional staff and student involvement**

Nearly all (91.3%) lead organisers reported involvement of other academic staff from their institutions, and 47.8% and 58.0% reported involvement from early career researchers and students. The total numbers who took part in each of these groups were 262, 86 and 231 respectively, which when added to the 74 lead organisers indicates that a total of 653 people from lead institutions were reported to have taken part in delivering Being Human events.
3. Experiences and opinions of Being Human 2016

3.1. Attendee experiences and opinions

This section summarises feedback from attendees about the audience experience at Being Human 2016. It includes how they first heard of the festival, whether or not they had been to the venues or Being Human before, how many events they were attending in 2016 and their ratings of events they attended.

3.1.1. Information about Being Human for attendees

**Finding out about Being Human**

Table 7 shows the top six ways in which attendees heard about Being Human in 2015 and 2016. It suggests that, as in previous years, ‘word of mouth’ was the most important communication method and maybe have become even more significant this year. Direct mailing or emails from venues and organisers also remained significant, with the main website and printed programme having decreased in importance slightly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Word of mouth (told by someone)</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Being Human website</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Other (not from venue) direct mailing/email</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Being Human Printed Programme</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Direct mailing/email from venue</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In interview, attendees welcomed the concept of Being Human as a national festival but highlighted the importance of advance publicity making it clear events are part of a nationwide programme. This would have ensured people were aware of all events in their local areas – particularly outside London- or could identify events that were linked by similar themes.

*I’m surprised there was no evidence to me of any publicity other than word of mouth. We have a wonderful Library which provides much information about cultural events but there was no notices about this festival on display there. – attendee*

*Festival could use more publicity as I hadn’t heard of it until the event; the event itself was really fascinating and engaging. - attendee*

**The Being Human printed programme**

Just over half (52.1%) of attendees age 12 and over rated the Being Human printed programme, which suggests they had seen or used it. Most who rated the programme were positive, with a total of 92.9% rating it as ‘excellent’ (48.6%) or ‘good’ (44.3%). In 2015, the respective figures were 86.8%, 32.1% and 54.7%.

Table 8 overleaf shows that attendees appreciated the wide range of activities and events found in the programme. Many suggested that it would be helpful to have the programme in advance of the festival dates and questioned the value of distributing it in the festival’s later stages. Other suggestions focused
on making the layout clearer, particularly local identities, and making it easier for readers to identify individual events, as some multiple events appeared under a single heading.

**Table 8: Attendee feedback about Being Human 2016 printed programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Printed Programme rating</th>
<th>Typical attendee comments about the printed programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Excellent – 48.6%        | *I was delighted and impressed with the breadth of opportunities. I hope to engage more in future know I know about them.*  
*Great initiative, lots of varied events, all very interesting*  
*I just wish that I had come across a copy of the booklet earlier in the year so that I could attend more of the events that had already passed.*  
*Only got it when attended an event - was it in all the [city] libraries?* |
| Good – 44.3%             | *But hadn't seen it before that evening when it was almost too late... Many events had already happened.*  
*Good to see so much going on across the country for the festival.*  
*I would appreciate more concern for clear language and design in the printed materials.*  
*I would love if programme had categories and some events are actually groups of events with one heading – most confusing.* |
| Average – 5.8%           | *Frustrating to see events all over the country which I couldn’t attend but great that so much was happening*  
*It was not that useful to hand them out when it’s coming to the end of the festival.*  
*Too packed and much of which wasn’t relevant to me or my location - would prefer a smaller booklet for events in and around my area only.* |
| Poor – 0.6% & Very poor – 0.6% | *Very confusing; hard to tell when events are on, also need clear indication of festival purpose.* |

### 3.1.2. Attendees’ prior experience of Being Human and venues

39.3% of attendees had been before to the venues where their events were held, which indicates that the majority (60.7%) were visiting venues for the first time. Most (89.8%) attendees had not visited Being Human events in previous years, suggesting that the 2016 festival attracted a good number of new audience members. These features will be useful in promoting the festival to potential partners and event participants in future years.

### 3.1.3. Attendance at Being Human 2016 events

Almost half (45.6%) of attendees age 12 and over were uncertain if they were going to attend other Being Human events and 27.0% were definitely not, meaning that 27.4% planned to attend more than one event. This is lower than the 37.9% who stated this intention in 2015.

Some attendees answered using time and others answered in distance when asked approximately how far they travelled to an event. As shown in table 9 overleaf, most attendees were based close to the events they attended, with 69.8% travelling 10 miles or less or 15 minutes or less to attend and only 4.8% travelling over 50 miles or over 1 hour to attend.
Table 9. Distance travelled to attend Being Human 2016 events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance travelled in miles</th>
<th>% of Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 mile or less</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 10 miles</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 50 miles</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 100 miles</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 100 miles</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance travelled in minutes</th>
<th>% of Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 minutes or less</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 60 minutes</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 1 hour</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.4. Attendee ratings of Being Human events

Being Human events were highly rated by attendees. Nearly all (94.8%) of those age 12 or over rated events as ‘excellent’ (56.0%) or ‘good’ (38.8%) overall, meaning the festival exceeded its target for 85% of attendees to select the two highest overall ratings. The combined percentages for the two highest categories were 92.6% and 81.0% in 2015 and 2014 respectively. Very few attendees selected an overall rating of ‘poor’ (0.6%) or ‘very poor’ (0.4%) and all attendees aged under 12 reported that they enjoyed the events. Content (94.0%), format (90.7%) and venues (92.3%) for 2016 were also rated ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ by most attendees age 12 and over.

Fig. 1. Ratings of Being Human by attendees age 12 and over (n= 2216-2227)

Most (81.1%) attendees age 12 and over said they would recommend Being Human to others, which is another indicator of positive experiences for audience members.
3.1.5. Attendee success factors and suggestions

Attendees age 12 and over provided 1834 comments describing success factors and 1203 comments suggesting possible improvements (excluding comments such as nothing or none). Tables 10 and 11 present syntheses of these comments.

**Attendee success factors**

Success factors can be categorised in decreasing order of significance as; formats comprising more than one type of activity, speakers who are skilled in engaging non-experts, the humanities topics themselves, and inclusion of specific audience groups in event planning and content.

Table 10. Attendees’ success factors for events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Success factor category</th>
<th>Typical comments by attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Engaging, interesting formats that blended different activities and used high quality resources which allowed audiences to access topics from differing viewpoints and varied levels of background knowledge. | What a fantastic event. A very inclusive balance of historical information, creative discussion and visual display.  
I enjoyed the talk prior to the film starting as it explained the context for the film and its themes. It added to the experience having an analysis of the connotations of the story.  
An exhibition that was a delight to all the senses. This event’s content complemented and did not compete. Very well curated.  
I thought it was well balanced with the film, talks, questions and exhibition making a good combination and the proportions about right. |
| Engaging, high quality speakers who presented new information and topics in a manner accessible to non-experts. | [Name of speaker]'s thought-provoking presentation, supported by current research and knowledge of his subject.  
Excellent speakers - and great to have a chance to speak with them in the smaller group discussions.  
The talks were excellent. I enjoyed the content and felt that both speakers pitched their presentations at the right level for the audience.  
Accessibility - very academic subject matter was presented as accessible to everyone and was very engaging |
| The wide variety and intrinsically appealing and personally relevant nature of topics covered by the humanities, which attracted audiences of all ages and backgrounds. | Fascinating content mainly. It was artfully put together and confidently presented, making for an engaging and hugely through provoking event.  
It told the human story in an informative way. It challenged thinking and allowed me to explore my thoughts from a different angle. It made me consider the links in the wider community.  
The speakers giving a historical context to the event and the subject which broadened my understanding of its relevance. |
| The involvement of target audience groups, e.g. young people or particular communities, in planning, promotion and delivery of particular events resulted in more meaningful experiences for audience members. | Being involved as a young person in the planning and seeing it come together – an amazing experience.  
Hearing from ‘ordinary’ people how it affected them was so powerful.  
The mix of professional and young amateurs made the story more engaging and you got a true feeling of what this subject means for young people. |
Attendee suggestions to improve events

Attendees’ suggestions to improve events were focused on some fundamental aspects of event organisation and management. In decreasing order of significance these were; accessibility and comfort of venues, formats and speakers needing to engage effectively with audiences, and ensuring that sound and AV equipment works properly. There was also specific criticism of one event that was poorly chaired, two events that started 30 minutes later than the published time, two that overran by a similar amount of time and an event that was advertised as 2 hours, but lasted only 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Generally, these suggestions and criticisms highlighted the importance of organisers ensuring their events are well managed and professionally presented.

Table 11. Attendees’ suggestions for improving events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion category</th>
<th>Typical comments by attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessible venues: whilst novel or interesting venues were praised, of greater</td>
<td><em>I missed the first 30mins of the event because I went to the venue mentioned on the website. Even the people at the desk told me the wrong venue, because that’s what they were told beforehand. Very unprofessional.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>importance were venues being clearly signposted (outside and inside) and feeling</td>
<td><em>Initial welcome to the event, someone to tell you what was going on would have been helpful!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>welcoming and comfortable.</td>
<td><em>The information about the place, it was really difficult to find, nobody had information at the information desk.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Improved signage in the venues would help. Ensure that exhibitions and events are ready for visitors from the time advertised. Especially important for visitors who are travelling.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event formats and individual speakers that failed to engage successfully with non-</td>
<td><em>No time given for questions from audience after lecture - no audience participation at all which is weird for a public event.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expert audiences were off-putting and at odds with Being Human’s position as a</td>
<td><em>The dense academic nature, I had switched off by the end and I’m an MA student.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public festival.</td>
<td><em>It was all too self-indulgent from the speakers and the chair did nothing to change this.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Public involvement was limited to listening, watching – not much ‘public engagement’.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor acoustics or sound equipment or AV technology not working properly frustrated</td>
<td><em>We could not hear! We loved the contents but wherever we tried to position ourselves, we missed so much and felt frustrated</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attendees and prevented them from engaging fully with topics.</td>
<td><em>Sound system - feedback was awful and did spoil the narration and disturbed the performance.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>I think the material was very interesting but the event could have been set up better, particularly sound quality. I really struggled to understand what was being played.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Hard to hear at times given the room layout/other activities going on at the same time.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2. Lead organiser experiences and opinions

This section outlines the feedback from lead organisers (including hub coordinators) on their experiences of arranging and delivering events as part of Being Human 2016.

3.2.1. Information about Being Human for lead organisers

Lead organisers first heard about Being Human in a variety of different ways and the benefit of multiple communication channels should be noted. Generally, communications via organisers’ host institutions were significant and included formal channels, such as calls for proposals and newsletter announcements, as well as informal, direct communication from individual colleagues.

Table 12. Ways in which lead organisers heard about Being Human

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication method</th>
<th>% of organisers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taken part (e.g. organiser or speaker) in previous Being Human</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal email /call for proposals/newsletter</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHRC website or mailing</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Advanced Study website or mailing</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Academy website or mailing</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience member at previous Being Human</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.2. Ratings of central support from Being Human team

Central support, resources and marketing were generally highly rated. Overall, 88.7% of organisers/hub coordinators rated the support from the central team as ‘excellent’ (54.9%) or ‘good’ (33.8%).

Fig.2. Lead organisers’ ratings of central support and resources (n= 71)
Table 13 presents a breakdown of lead organiser’s ratings for different aspects of central support, along with typical comments.

**Table 13. Lead organisers’ ratings of central marketing, communications and support**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Typical comments from lead organisers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support from the central Being Human team</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent 54.9%</td>
<td>I was really impressed over all. People really tried to help me promote and to put on my event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good 33.8%</td>
<td>Good overall but it wasn’t helpful having to wait for the launch date before we could start advertising, as many of our partners needed to include our events in their programmes and other advertising which came out prior to this date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 5.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor 1.4%</td>
<td>The lead-up scheduling was a bit uneven - ‘rush- wait-rush-wait’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know 4.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central marketing &amp; key messaging</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent 39.4%</td>
<td>Great. I loved that all the support was available and the meticulously prepared and attractive materials for promotion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good 47.9%</td>
<td>It’s always very difficult to buy in national media coverage in advance of events, but perhaps with plenty of advance notice it might be possible to secure a little more print / television / radio coverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 7.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor 1.4%</td>
<td>It’s quite tricky that some of the imagery is quite a long way from what you are doing [at your event] so people my look at it and be confused.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know 4.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being Human festival website</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent 43.7%</td>
<td>It was very easy for our marketing people to use the link on the website and get the right logos and get the right colours and all that sort of stuff, all that worked really. Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good 43.7%</td>
<td>It was crucial to have the BH online presence and brochure to kick-start everything. We couldn’t do the publicity without BH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 7.0%</td>
<td>The information sent by the Being Human organisers was good, but it was confusing when they asked to write the description of our event. Depending how one counts, we have 2 (or 4) events. However, only one description was asked for, that resulted in confusion regarding when and what was going on. It would have been much better if separate description were provided for each day of our big event :-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor 2.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know 2.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being Human printed programme</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent 49.3%</td>
<td>Excellent programme booklet and website. This all makes a great difference to the organizer of an individual event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good 32.4%</td>
<td>Audiences liked the printed programme but were frustrated that they had missed events elsewhere around the country when they saw the programme for the first time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 5.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor 4.2%</td>
<td>It was very good to read, but what they did was group three of our events under one ‘blip’. So that when it arrived it wasn’t much use to us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know 8.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Uptake of supporting information, marketing and evaluation resources**

Table 14 summarises lead organisers’ uptake of the information and resources that were provided by the central team. It shows that most used the printed programme (used by 78.9%) and promotional guide (71.8%). Over half used the audience questionnaire for age 12 and over (64.8%), logos (59.2%), evaluation guidance (57.8%) and Eventbrite instructions (53.5%).

**Table 14. Lead organisers’ use of centrally-provided information and resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information for event organisers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71.8% used the Promotional guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.8% used the Evaluation guidance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.5% used the Eventbrite attendees instructions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4%⁸ used the Live streaming instructions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2% didn’t use any of the information outlined above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing resources</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>78.9% used the Printed programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.2% used the Logos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.4% used the Online branding materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.9% used the Press toolkit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6% used other resources, mostly poster and flyer templates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2% didn’t use any of the above marketing resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation resources</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64.8% used the Audience questionnaire for age 12 and over</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.5% used the Link to online audience survey (26)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.2% used the Participant (speaker/partner) survey (19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.5% used the Audience questionnaire for age under 12 (8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0% used the Audience interview schedule (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0% didn’t use any of the above evaluation resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning points around central support and resources**

Although central support and resources were positively rated by the vast majority of lead organisers, there were some areas that were identified as challenges or difficult to implement around marketing materials, promotion and evaluation. A synthesis of these along with relevant suggestions is presented in table 15 overleaf.

---

⁸ The Live streaming instructions were used by one regional hub only
Table 15. Lead organisers’ challenges relating to central support and information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing materials</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main imagery used in the marketing material fitted with some events,</td>
<td>Ensure central imagery is as ‘neutral’ as possible and covers all aspects of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but for others, particularly those focusing on hope, it was felt</td>
<td>the festival theme, to reduce the need for other imagery to be created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inappropriate so organisers made their own imagery to accompany their</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pull-up banner, although well received, wasn’t fully used in</td>
<td>Distribute banners well in advance of the festival so that they can be used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promotion due to it arriving close to the start of the festival. Hubs</td>
<td>in pre-event promotion. Consider providing hubs with more than one banner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>only had one banner which could not be used at all their events, either</td>
<td>so that they can be used across multiple events and venues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because these were running concurrently or there wasn’t the time or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resource to move a single banner around different locations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was difficult to distinguish what the individual hubs were</td>
<td>Index the programme so that each hub has a dedicated, easily identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offering through the printed booklet and so some hubs created their own</td>
<td>section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>booklet for their events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotion</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead organisers, mainly based outside of London, felt that more could be</td>
<td>Provide the central team sufficient resources and budget to promote the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>done to help promote the Festival nationally and regionally.</td>
<td>festival at a national level, without detracting from their role as overall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central marketing was sometimes seen as London-centric and it was</td>
<td>festival coordinator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suggested that more could be done to promote the festival within national</td>
<td>Ensure responsibility for promotion to regional media is clearly assigned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or regional media across the UK, with the British Science Festival cited</td>
<td>Explore what, if any, lessons can be learnt from how other national festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as an example.</td>
<td>(such as the British Science Festival or ESRC Festival of Social Sciences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was some confusion around the purpose and value of the press</td>
<td>undertake their promotion nationally and regionally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>embargo and its impact on events not being able to obtain early publicity,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>particularly through local partners.</td>
<td>Review the timing of the embargo deadline and ensure it does not prevent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some organisers were challenged by the timing of the promotional</td>
<td>lead organisers from exploiting local opportunities for publicity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information and instructions they received in the run-up to the event</td>
<td>Ensure important communications are clearly distinguished from routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which they said sometimes required immediate action and sometimes did not.</td>
<td>administrative communications and are issued at a time that is most relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of relevance in having reference to an Underground poster for events</td>
<td>Review the purpose and emphasis of the evaluation and the questions asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outside of London</td>
<td>in all materials to ensure the evaluation is focused and relevant and does</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The attendee questionnaire was quite long and could have put people off.</td>
<td>not become too burdensome for attendees and lead organisers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in using a rating for ‘increasing understanding of the</td>
<td>Review wording to ensure questions are as accessible as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>humanities’ as it would be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
difficult to increase understanding from one event on a specific topic.
The question around the understanding of the main sponsors in the vox pop interviews put some interviewees off.
In a few cases, there was confusion around the word ‘participant’ and two organisers issued the participant survey to attendees.

3.2.3. Local support from host institutions and partners

Lead organisers emphasised the value and importance of the support and resources provided by their own institutions. They particularly highlighted how institutional support at central and departmental levels helped them to plan and promote events successfully.

*It was the only Being Human event held in [the location] and we had strong support from the Departmental Impact coordinator, which helped us to get the event right.* – lead organiser

*Our event was boosted because of 3 marketing efforts: [name of] University marketing team, Being Human and [local partner].* – lead organiser

Local partner organisations were appreciated for providing support and resources to organise and run events. This included general expertise in event organisation, plus access to ‘public’ venues away from lead institutions and providing additional promotional channels. In some particular cases, partners facilitated engagement with new audiences or audiences that are traditionally ‘harder to reach’ for universities.

*I think that we all benefited from working together and pooling resources/contacts/skills. I imagine that we are extremely likely to work together again to organise public events, or on future creative and/or research projects, which include engagement and dissemination.* - lead organiser

A number of learning points around local support were identified and are summarised in table 16.

**Table 16. Local support - learning points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning point</th>
<th>Typical comments from lead organisers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some organisers had to work very hard to ensure that their events were appropriately supported by their own institution’s marketing and communications teams. It was anticipated that the central team may be able to help inspire such support in future.</td>
<td>With so many events and with relatively few staff, the Being Human team can only do so much to assist with promotion etc. but this assistance is also difficult to obtain from University and partner organisations. Lack of marketing held our events back. It has made me realise just how difficult it is to get central university interested in humanities public engagement. They are much more interested in science...... The central university marketing just was not interested and we could do with help to engage them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement of senior staff within institutions was deemed necessary to ensure that organisers have sufficient resources and backing to deliver multiple events. This was noted as a particularly important learning point for hubs.</td>
<td>I think I've learnt that we need to engage the institution, the top level of the university, much more. We need to ensure that this is seen as a priority event that needs resourcing. If it carries on and I again end up in a similar role, then I will try to work from the beginning with the various management and supporting structures in the universities so that the duties are clearly delegated where they need to be.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The need for dedicated administrative support

The need for dedicated administrative support was highlighted by some hubs and other organisers who ran multiple events.

Our departments obviously gave staff time and departmental contributions, but that in itself isn’t enough, we almost need an admin or support person who is running the hub.

### When local support was high, or a lead organiser had the experience and capacity to deliver their events effectively, support from the Being Human central team appeared to become less important.

I think it’s good to have a humanities festival, I think that’s a good thing. I think whether you need a centralised organisation which tells you to Tweet on a certain day, I’m not sure if that actually helps with anything.

### 3.2.4. Working within a festival structure

#### Benefits of a festival structure

Most lead organisers described that there was added-value from working within a festival structure, particularly around funding, profile-raising and attendee sign-up and retention.

#### Table 17. Added value of a festival structure for lead organisers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of a festival structure</th>
<th>Typical comments from lead organisers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The funding from Being Human</td>
<td>I used Being Human as my first go working with collaborators. I was testing out and proving that I could so it. It proved a concept. [The funding] is a catalyst, I suppose. It appealed to our partners and meant we created something that was really quite novel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enabled lead organisers to create or try-out new activities or formats, or develop partnerships that they may not have been able to forge without the festival’s financial support.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support acted as a focus and gave a sense of purpose to explore ideas that otherwise may have remained unrealised. It allowed lead organisers to take measured risks or be innovative in what they were doing.</td>
<td>I think having that kind of financial support and that national festival backing really helped us to argue things internally and it’s really helped, it’s opened areas that might have been seen as a bit more risky or a bit controversial. Being a hub allows you to be generous. To say ‘yes’ to colleagues rather than ‘no’. And to take risks. And to be experimental. And to find out by doing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profile raising</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being part of a nationwide festival gave the majority of lead organisers an opportunity to raise the profile of their work and events both within their own organisation and at a national level.</td>
<td>It’s nice to be working on something that is across the whole nation and you have a focus on that particular week. It gives an indication of what you are doing within your institution as well. To be a hub at a nationwide humanities festival realises the ambition of registering at a national level as a place where research in the humanities is being done and public engagement so that that research is taken seriously.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For most lead organisers, the organisational structure and support around Being Human meant events were perceived as significant, which may have expanded audience reach. Being part of a national festival, and the publicity and promotional support it provided, also gave a feeling of being part of a celebration of the humanities and lifted the significance of what would otherwise be local-interest events and activities.

I think the advantages were certainly the profile and publicity and just it being connected to the overall festival, I think that helped it. I don’t know there was anything really negative about being part of the festival. I think more people did come through because of it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience booking and retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some lead organisers used their prior experience of Being Human to implement successful strategies to attract and retain audiences. They created demand through extensive local promotion and interacted on an ongoing basis with target audiences through pre-festival events and activities. Some organisers overbooked events this year and created waiting lists to manage the issue of drop-outs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We oversold as we kind of wanted people to be almost disappointed that they didn’t get tickets. And that’s worked out quite well as people have been saying to us ‘how can I get involved in future’ they are already asking us about next year basically. It sounds odd. It sounds counterintuitive, but we’ve realised it’s quite important to create those legacies where other projects might come from.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well I think one of the brilliant things this year for us was in comparison even to last year, was how quickly we had take-up for our events and I think that really is building on the legacy of the festival from last year, because we’ve had so many people out in the community who’ve just been hungry for more. So you know, we did create our audiences from last year’s events.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opportunities to enhance the value of a festival structure

Lead organisers identified opportunities where they felt the advantages of a festival structure could be enhanced or maximised.

Table 18. Potential areas where the festival structure could be optimised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of opportunity</th>
<th>Typical comments from lead organisers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding model</td>
<td>It’s something about the whole Being Human model, I know it’s difficult for the team because they only get funding on an annual basis, but I think if they could even give some funding, or some guarantee that they could at least fund for two years, then I think it allows lessons to be learnt and carried forward. To help with forward planning I suppose there might be a hard application for the year that’s immediately coming, but actually have softer pitches for future years, which actually might help [the central team] bid on for continuation funding, because they would actually have a pipeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extending the time period between the date when annual funding is awarded and the festival takes place would maximise planning and publicity opportunities generally. It could also provide enough time to engage</td>
<td>It could have been a bigger event. We were restricted by the time periods and what rooms were available. But if we had a year to build up to the event, we actually could have done it across the whole archive, we could have made it a really big event and attracted an even bigger audience but we were restricted by things like time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools who have to timetable events and activities into their annual calendars.</td>
<td>Knowing the dates much further in advance - we are already fixing dates for academic year 2017-18 and it is difficult to include suitable parts of our programme in 'Being Human' when we don’t know which week it will be. Schools said they had to have more advanced notice and we cancelled an event due to lack of uptake from schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consideration should be given to moderating the demands made on lead organisers who do not receive financial support but whose events are promoted as part of the festival.</td>
<td>For organisers who don’t receive funding, a less onerous application and reporting form might be appropriate. We still want to be part of the festival, but it’s a bit unfair to expect us to do the same admin as those who get money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ensuring benefits of a national event extend to all lead organisers**

| The diversity and size of the festival meant that the benefit of working within a nationwide event was not always felt. | Because there are so many events going on all over the country, individual events can easily get lost. Fewer, better promoted events might make for a stronger festival.  
To be a hub at a nationwide humanities festival realises the ambition of registering at a national level as a place where research in the humanities is being done and public engagement so that that research is taken seriously. |
| --- | --- |
| Greater central resource may be needed to maximise national profile and ensure the benefits of a national festival extend as widely as possible. | Because there are so many events going on all over the country, individual events can easily get lost. Fewer, better promoted events might make for a stronger festival.  
I think the Festival team clearly needs more staff to support what is a hugely valuable but resource-intensive undertaking. |

**Optimising audience numbers**

| Low attendance was a source of frustration for some lead organisers who described cases where more people had booked then turned-up at events. Some suggested a nominal charge to help encourage uptake of booked places. However many thought that charging was inappropriate given the festival’s public engagement remit. | It is really annoying when people don’t turn-up and some people have suggested we should be able to charge for events as people are more likely to come if they have paid.  
I know people have talked about charging for events. But that would make them seem more exclusive and much less accessible to large parts of the communities we want to attract. |
3.3. Event participant experiences and opinions

This section summarises feedback from event participants such as speakers, panellists, workshop leaders, creative practitioners etc. about their involvement and experiences at Being Human 2016.

3.3.1. Participant involvement in Being Human

Participants undertook a number of different roles within events. These roles were varied and included speaker/panellist/workshop leader (38.5%), event partner/co-organiser (19.2%), host venue representative (12.8%) and creative input (10.3 %). The main reasons cited by participants in all roles for becoming involved in Being Human can be categorised as reaching out to new audiences or locations, promoting research, taking part in a national event and enjoyment.

Table 19. Participants’ reasons for getting involved in Being Human

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for taking part</th>
<th>Typical comments from participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reaching new audiences or locations</td>
<td>To reach a new, non-academic audience and engage them in my research. We wanted to bring Being Human Fest to an area where it has not run previously. To reach a new audience through the collaboration with our partners and the Being Human Festival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting their research or engaging public within research</td>
<td>Exhibit my research and its potential to the general public. To get the thoughts and ideas of the public for how a future with robots might work. To share interesting and politically relevant research with a wider audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being part of a national festival to help raise profile of individuals’ work and expertise</td>
<td>Be part of national festival and great team. We hoped that Being Human would give our event greater publicity and we were pleased to be part of a national festival that supports public engagement activities in the humanities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>I hoped to gain experience organising an event and having fun along the way! I thoroughly enjoyed participating in last year’s festival and wanted to build on that success.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.2. Participant ratings of Being Human

Being Human was highly rated by almost all event participants. 94.3% rated their experiences as ‘excellent’ (58.6%) or ‘good’ (35.7%) and only one participant gave a rating below average.

Fig.3. Participants’ ratings of their experience of Being Human (n= 78)

Participants’ explanations of their ratings are summarised in table 20. Those who rated their experiences highly appreciated the support they received from both the central team and local partners and were pleased with positive responses and reactions from attendees.

Table 20. Participants’ explanations for their ratings of Being Human

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Typical explanations from participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent 58.6%</td>
<td>BH team are v. helpful. Attendees enjoyed both events and speakers were v. happy with engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good 35.7%</td>
<td>I found that everyone who came to the workshop was happy to get involved in the drama and happy to engage in a true dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 4.3%</td>
<td>We ran a successful event and I was generally very happy with how the evening went. I was also happy with the support from Being Human in terms of communications / marketing, although it would have been nice to get some funding!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very poor 1.4%</td>
<td>Virtually no support or publicity or assistance. The University worked hard in supporting the event, but I felt thoroughly exploited by the Being Human team, who seemed to think that a few re-tweets was all they had to do to support the event.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most (85.5%) participants would definitely get involved in Being Human in the future and a similar number (81.7%) would definitely recommend Being Human to colleagues or peers, which are further indicators of participants’ positive experiences. Only one participant said they definitely would not recommend or participate again in Being Human.
4. Outcomes and impacts from Being Human 2016

4.1. Attendee outcomes and impacts

This section summarises Being Human’s achievements with respect to its intended outcomes for attendees plus attendees own reported impacts.

4.1.1. Intended outcomes

Being Human intended to have four specific outcomes for attendees age 12 and over. As fig. 4 shows, festival events delivered these outcomes for most attendees, with 85.3% reporting that events increased their general understanding of the humanities ‘a lot’ (31.1%) or ‘a little’ (54.2%). The corresponding combined percentage for increased understanding of the humanities’ relevance to everyday life was 85.2% and for encouraging further exploration of the humanities was 84.2%. Events also raised awareness of the festival’s core partners for most (73.7%) attendees.

Fig. 4 Intended outcomes for Being Human attendees (n=2076 to 2106)

Most (86.4%) attendees age under 12 answered ‘yes’ when asked if they learned something new from a Being Human event and a further 9.1% who answered ‘don’t know’ or ‘no’ were able to describe a fact they learned, meaning only one of these attendees had not learned something. All but one also described something else they would like to learn as a result of what they heard at an event, suggesting that they were inspired to want to find out more about the humanities topics they experienced.

More about inspiration and ideas for writing stories. - attendee age under 12

I’d like to learn more about why people began doing graffiti (sic.) in the first place? – attendee age under 12

4.1.2. Personal impacts for attendees

Attendees age 12 and over provided 696 comments when asked to describe other impacts that Being Human events had on them and/or their understanding of the humanities. The most-commonly reported impacts fell into three main categories:

- Greater comprehension of the importance of the humanities in society generally and locally.
- Improved understanding of the connections between the humanities and other disciplines, particularly the arts, but also science.
- New or renewed interest in humanities subjects.
Relevance of humanities to society

The topics and themes that were addressed in Being Human events encouraged attendees to appreciate the humanities’ historical, current and future influence in society and everyday life.

*It made me think about history, ancestry and the politics/religion of the day and the impact it had on the lives of ordinary people.* – attendee

*I understand now the way women’s’ rights have had an impact on today’s living and our lives.* - attendee

*For me, it showed how humanities could be applied in our future. They are our culture and therefore form the future.* – attendee

Events and activities with a strong local connection received particular mention for providing attendees with new insights and greater understanding of local life, communities and landmarks.

*Found it fascinating that a relatively unknown book could provide such insights (social, historical, linguistic, economical) in the Spitalfields area.* – attendee

*The content was very nicely linked to the local area, which made it very relevant. It also had a wide historical and cultural perspective, which made it global but relevant to me as an individual at the same time.* – attendee

*I had not heard of Ira Aldridge, and after watching this production I felt proud of my City. It also made me more conscious of helping in community programmes. I would also take time to watch more local youth productions.* - attendee

Greater connection between the humanities and other disciplines

Creative or scientific input at events stimulated attendees to recognise the value and role of the humanities in understanding other disciplines and the value of interdisciplinary collaborations in understanding society.

*How research into the humanities reveals new and surprising connections between the arts and other disciplines such as science, politics, philosophy and sociology and opens up new avenues of enquiry.* – attendee

*Coming from a science background, I find it interesting to see how arts and humanities are linked with science in our everyday life. I like these events.* – attendee

*Made me further the overlap between art, humanities and science and how this influences all of our thinking.* - attendee

New or renewed interest in humanities topics

Events that presented humanities topics in an accessible, engaging manner inspired attendees to want to explore these topics in the future, including for attendees who were discovering particular topics for the first time.

*Encouraged me to learn more about the gothic and in that pursuit I bought the lecturer’s book on the subject at the event.* – attendee

*Made me interested something that was new to me in the sonic history of Britain and how radio has changed the lives of everyone, also increased my interest in gender issues both past and present.* – attendee

*I learned a great deal and the event has encouraged me to read more science fiction.* - attendee

Other impacts on attendees

Enjoyment and learning in general were other significant impacts for all types of attendees. Individuals who were working in academia or research also described how Being Human events led them to think more positively about engaging the public with research.
This event made me see the fantastic potential for broadening academic work and making it immediately relevant to a wider audience. – attendee

I left the event tonight feeling very optimistic about how dissemination of research into the humanities could be accomplished and am excited for and about the university’s endeavours. – attendee

4.2. Lead organiser outcomes and impacts

The section presents lead organisers’ feedback when asked about Being Human’s impacts on them and their institutions. Their personal impacts included new partnerships, new ways of working, enhancing skills and gaining practical experience. They also described impacts at an institutional level.

4.2.1. Partnership legacies

As described in section 2.5.2, Being Human stimulated partnerships between lead organisers and an estimated total of 221 organisations outside of their host institutions, which included partners that provided venues, informed the development of activities and content, or helped deliver events. Many lead organisers also collaborated with partners within their institutions. All forms of partnership working delivered three main types of positive impacts for lead organisers:

- Establishing or extending platforms for interdisciplinary collaborations in the future.
- Reaching new or more diverse audiences.
- Creating new approaches and new ways of working.

Establishing or extending platforms for collaboration

Almost all lead organisers expected the partnerships forged through Being Human to strengthen and develop in the future. Some described specific plans to hold future events with non-academic partner organisations and others outlined plans to strengthen links they had made with academic partners within and outside their institution.

I used Being Human as my first go of working with a collaborator and the Centre. It went smoothly and proved it would work. I will be doing something similar with the Centre and an appropriate academic collaborator again. - lead organiser

Some organisers described plans to extend the impact of events and activities beyond Being Human. These included cases where new potential collaborators had heard about organisers’ work through the festival and wanted to partner with them to deliver in the future.

And then (we) are going to be working on the exhibition side of it and so I mean this is a very big project that they’re hoping to attract thousands of people and have a lot of press attention and that has directly come out of this Being Human Festival project so it has been an amazing opportunity for us to attract new audiences. - lead organiser

One hub coordinator described how through relationships that have developed year on year via Being Human they have expanded their partnership reach and diversity.

It was historians the first year, art historians the second year, and this year it was our music department. And it’s just expanding all the time that relationship with one of the city partners, and we’ve done that quite successfully using Being Human. – lead organiser (hub)

Diversifying audiences

Through working in partnership, lead organisers were able to reach new audiences, particularly audience groups that are traditionally considered ‘hard to reach’ for universities.

And we have found that where we build and develop new audiences is through those partners. It’s actually through existing groupings, who are people who just don’t roll out to university events normally. – lead organiser
I don’t know how apparent it was in the brochure, but we also engaged with a social housing organisation and we partnered with them, so we were actually giving opportunities to people in social housing, from underprivileged backgrounds. – lead organiser

**New approaches and ways of working**

Internal partnerships and collaborations were deemed beneficial and provided a legacy in the form of new coordinated approaches. Lead organisers who forged links and collaborated across different departments in their institution found this added a cohesiveness to their public engagement offering.

That’s one thing that worked quite well, the way in which it brought the University together. We weren’t involved last year so we thought the onus was public engagement in going off campus. For us it worked quite well doing that, but also talking to other parts of the University we just hadn’t really engaged with before as there’s been no sort of impetus for that. A take home message from the festival was for us to think about what we do at (our institution), because it’s not just a national festival, but the local aspect is really important. – lead organiser

Other organisers reported a development in learning new ways of working from their participation in Being Human, such as the value of producing research with particular communities when seeking public engagement impact, or developing ideas for new projects.

I think we have proved the model for other events. I.e. where practitioner and theoretical research can combine. – lead organiser

It gives you engagement with lots of different ways of doing things, if that makes sense. It opens your mind and you get to think about it and you think ‘oh I haven’t thought about doing it that way’, so last year’s Being Human gave me different ideas about what I was going to do this year.- lead organiser

**4.2.2. Development of skills and experience**

Lead organisers reported impacts on their own and their colleagues’ public engagement knowledge, skills and confidence. These impacts fell into three main categories:

- Understanding how to present research so that it is accessible to public audiences.
- Developing the skills required to organise and deliver successful events.
- Gaining practical experience in public engagement.

**Making research accessible to non-experts**

Planning and delivering Being Human events encouraged lead organisers to think carefully about what was most likely to engage audiences and to reflect on audience perceptions and feelings in relation to specific research topics.

I have expanded my skills in I really enjoyed this opportunity to communicate my research to a very diverse audience. It’s also helped me understand responses to my research from a very diverse audience. I will be doing similar events in the future. – lead organiser

It has made me appreciate how my research needs to be presented to the public as they are the ones that actually matter - not just other academics. – lead organiser

**Developing organising and management skills**

Experienced and inexperienced event organisers developed their skills in managing and promoting events. The partnership nature of Being Human meant that these skills included developing knowledge about processes and strategies for co-development and co-delivery of public engagement activities.

Although I have had some experience of event organisation, this experience was invaluable to learn about the tricks of the trade when it came to designing and promoting events for most diverse audiences, as well as negotiating between academics’ and artists’ way of working. Working with
external partners has refined my experience and expectations around co-production. – lead organiser (hub)

Very productive personal development opportunity, particularly in terms of pitching events accurately – timings, locations, publicity materials. – lead organiser

**Opportunities for practical experience in public engagement**

The benefit of practical experience was often reported in relation to early career or post graduate researchers, but covered all types of lead organisers. Of particular note was the opportunity for organisers to apply their skills and to learn about public engagement at a fundamental level.

[the post-graduate students involved] did things that they wouldn’t have done otherwise. And I think what I liked was that they grew in confidence and they saw a different way of engaging ...and a different way of communicating their knowledge to people and had to use a different discourse and a different language. And it was also good at building the relationships between them as some of them are quite new. – lead organiser

As PhD researchers and early career researchers you’re not aware of public engagement as a thing and that this could be part of your research, if you’re not doing a practical research. Just the very fact that you’re getting up and doing [engagement] under a national banner, and you’ve got the audience there and you can say, “Well, this is what I find so important,” ...or, “Please come and talk to me about this, that, and the other.” And then next time you’ll do that so much better, but you have to have that first opportunity to practise it. And Being Human is in a way a giant safe space within which that can be practised, I think. – lead organiser (hub)

Lead organisers described how they and other researchers involved in their events also gained experience from interacting with audience members, which at times was deemed to have created two-way collaboration and knowledge exchange which had informed research.

It not only increased our skills in communicating complicated ideas to a wider audience; it gave us valuable feedback and ideas from the audience in how we go about continuing this research. – lead organiser

It gives people almost a focus to actually convert their ideas into something concrete. Yeah, and to collaborate and to look outside the Academy, and really engage with public. And I think that’s so important is it pulls in different public into the research and to engage with communities in different ways. – lead organiser (hub)

**4.2.3. Multiple impacts**

In some cases, Being Human delivered all the above impacts for individual organisers.

I think that my ability to communicate my research succinctly and in a more creative way has been improved by my participation in this BH event. A raised profile, locally, and amongst research colleagues can help me achieve support for future projects. I welcomed the opportunity to test whether my collaboratively-produced research had resonance with diverse audiences. In a long-term way, I think that participating in this kind of engagement will lead to improved design of collaborative research projects (for myself, and other participating academics). - lead organiser

**4.2.4. Organisers’ institutional impacts**

The three main categories of institutional impacts from Being Human identified by lead organisers were:

- Raising the profile of the humanities within public engagement strategies.
- Learning how to target particular audience groups and communities.
- Being inspired to undertake more public engagement in the humanities.
Taking part in Being Human helped to raise the profile for humanities within lead institutions’ public engagement frameworks and plans and in a few cases also generated content for potential REF impact case studies.

*So this will form one of our department’s impact case study when REF comes around. At the moment I’m going through the evaluation forms figuring out what proportion of people said what.* – lead organiser

*I think it’s a fantastic platform, I mean, there are lot of public engagement activities around science, particularly in science-communication things, so humanities doesn’t have such a profile in terms of public engagement events. And I think this is a really important way of doing that. I mean, it ticks all the boxes in terms of the things that people are being asked to do now, in terms of the REF and the TEF in terms of legacy and impact, and the higher profile public engage and the increasing professionalization of it.* – lead organiser (hub)

Being Human was deemed to have increased institutions’ understanding of the amount and types of marketing and promotion that are needed to promote the humanities and engage diverse audiences. In some cases, internal collaboration between professional services staff and academics had resulted in shared learning around audience attraction and engagement.

*One of the things that has struck me this year is that because the activities that we’ve done have been very different we have attracted in very different kinds of people.* – lead organiser (hub)

*I do find it is valuable for my institution as it has been a means to learn how we should reach different audiences to the ones that would usually attend other events we organize.* – lead organiser

Generally, Being Human was thought to have developed institutions’ appreciation of the potential benefits presented by public engagement. In some cases this resulted in stated intentions to undertake more humanities public engagement and to seek funding for engagement activities and projects, including from Being Human in future years.

*Colleagues feel encouraged to apply for funding another year, and at least one academic colleague has talked about developing links with other disciplines in a teaching context.* - lead organiser (hub)

*[Internal group] have asked for a statement from the university so they can use it as leverage (funding) to continue to do more events like this.* – lead participant

### 4.3. Event participants’ outcomes and impacts

Participating speakers, panellists etc. were also asked about Being Human’s impacts on them and their institutions. Their responses are summarised in this section.

#### 4.3.1. Personal impacts for participants

The most significant personal impacts described by participants can be categorised as:

- Gaining transferable skills or experience.
- Developing a clearer of understanding of public engagement opportunities for them and their work.

Participants from universities and other types of organisations described how they gained or practiced skills, including communications and presenting skills, through their involvement in Being Human events and how these skills were relevant to other parts of their careers.

*I think this experience will be beneficial. Hosting was an especially new and daunting experience that I’ve learnt from. I’ve also learnt marketing / website skills, and gained experience supervising students who presented at the event.* – participant
Gained very good skills in researching and selecting information for final installations/performances. Improved communication and public engagement and performance skills. Really learnt a lot! – participant

The experience of planning and delivering Being Human events encouraged participants to deepen their understanding of public engagement, with many reflecting on how they and/or their work could contribute most effectively to public engagement in the future.

It has made me think about which aspects of my current research might be of public interest and how these could be presented. – participant

Taking part in this event has allowed me to focus my ideas on the topics and think hard about how to make them accessible to wider and more diverse audiences. – participant

Other personal impacts for participants were reaching new audiences, enjoyment and making new contacts.

4.3.2. Institutional impacts for participants

Impacts on public engagement

Participants from universities reported two impacts related to public engagement:

- Developing or enhancing public engagement activities or resources for future delivery.
- Raising the profile of public engagement within institutions.

Taking part in Being Human developed new formats and ideas for public engagement activities that institutions can build on in the future.

The event raised some interesting feedback which would be useful if we thought to have another event in this style. It also gave a clear theme to look at which helped to shape the evening. – participant

It has developed my understanding of how to facilitate a piece of work really engaging with a local community, both as participants and audience. - participant

Participants anticipated that the enhanced profile of public engagement that arose from Being Human would increase institutional recognition of its importance and secure internal support, as well as lead to more public engagement being undertaken in the future, including through Being Human.

Being involved in a national festival increases the coverage of the work conducted at the University and hopefully the University will align themselves with these types of programs more readily in the future. - participant

I think the success of last year’s festival really helped to underscore the importance of public engagement at my institution. Our hub status this year has helped to bring public engagement activities to the forefront of the university’s agenda and will doubtless facilitate even greater support for future engagement activities. - participant

Impacts on public attitudes towards institution

Participants from all types of organisations noted how Being Human had enhanced public awareness or the perceived accessibility of their institution.

We would hope that people who attended that evening will think we are an accessible organisation and want to visit us again. - participant

It will make the university seem more accessible to the public. There is great potential for reaching out to new learners, people of all ages who might not have thought about connecting with a university, who will hopefully find the prospect less daunting. – participant
5. Discussion

This section provides an overview of the main insights gained from the evaluation of Being Human 2016. A summary of progress against festival objectives and aims is presented initially. This is followed by a description of key themes identified through cross-cutting analysis of feedback from all sources.

5.1. Progress of Being Human 2016 in meeting its objectives and aims

5.1.1. Objective 1: To demonstrate, to a non-academic audience, the value of humanities research to society in the UK and globally.

There are three main components to this objective. Firstly, the nature of the audiences attracted to Being Human events; secondly, whether or not events featured humanities research; and thirdly, the impacts that events had on attendees’ appreciation of the value of humanities research.

In terms of the first element there is evidence that Being Human attracted a non-expert audience in that just under half (49%) of attendees had a degree in the humanities and around one quarter (27%) considered themselves to have ‘a lot’ of knowledge about the meaning of the term the humanities. Furthermore, just under one-third (35%) were working in or studying the humanities.

89% of lead institutions were universities. Around three-quarters (72%) of university lead organisers were academic staff, early career researchers or students, with another 18% having university roles that include responsibility for promoting research. In addition, over half (57%) of other participants were employed by universities. These figures suggest that most Being Human events would have featured humanities research in their content.

Over four-fifths (85%) of attendees reported that Being Human events increased their understanding of the relevance of the humanities to everyday life, indicating that the festival increased their appreciation of the value of the humanities.

Reviewing the progress against all three components together indicates that Being Human 2016 achieved this objective.

5.1.2. Objective 2: To enhance public visibility and understanding of the humanities, demonstrating relevance to everyday life.

As evidenced in 5.1.1., Being Human events increased understanding of the relevance of the humanities to everyday life for most attendees. They also increased most (85%) attendees’ general understanding of the humanities and increased around three-quarters (74%) of attendees’ awareness of the festival’s core partners, which include the main sponsors of humanities research in the UK.

The most-commonly described impacts for attendees were:

- Greater comprehension of the importance of the humanities in society generally and locally.
- Improved understanding of the connections between the humanities and other disciplines.
- New or renewed interest in humanities subjects.

These findings, coupled with the fact that most (84%) attendees were encouraged to want to find out more about the humanities and nearly all (95%) rated events highly, suggest that Being Human 2016 achieved this objective for attendees.

However, some attendees and lead organisers wanted to see a higher profile for Being Human within national and local media in order to achieve this objective with regards to the visibility of the humanities among the wider public.
5.1.3. Objective 3: To encourage, support and create opportunities for humanities researchers to engage with non-academic audiences.

As described in 5.1.1., nearly all lead organisers and over half of event participants in Being Human had a connection to academic research and most attendees considered themselves to be non-experts in the humanities, which suggest these two communities engaged with one another through Being Human, with at least 653 university staff and students taking part in events.

The fact that the festival was the first public engagement experience for around one-fifth (19%) of lead organisers and just under a half (46%) of other participants indicates that it provided an opportunity and structure for some individuals to undertake public engagement for the first time. The framework of a festival was an important factor in attracting participation as it offers funding, profile and credibility to individuals who want to develop and run events, including many who want to try-out formats for the first time. There are some suggestions to strengthen this framework around the funding model, marketing and promotion and support to secure buy-in from senior management and central marketing teams at some lead institutions.

Also worth noting is the fact that Being Human events took place in all regions of the UK, which suggests that it provided opportunities for researchers who were based in a wide range of locations.

These factors plus the positive ratings of central team support awarded by most lead organisers (89% rated it excellent or good) indicates that Being Human 2016 achieved this objective.

5.1.4. Objective 4: To initiate culture change in attitudes towards public engagement within the humanities – embedding public engagement across the HE sector.

As reported in 5.1.3., Being Human 2016 attracted lead organisers and participants who were new to public engagement. It also delivered a variety of positive personal impacts for participating individuals with a range of experiences in public engagement, namely:

- Partnership legacies: platforms for interdisciplinary collaborations in the future; reaching out to new or more diverse audiences; creating new projects and new ways of working.
- Skills and experience: understanding how to present research so that it is accessible to public audiences; developing the skills required to organise and deliver successful public events; transferable communication skills; practical experience in public engagement.

Lead organisers and participants also reported institutional impacts which suggest that Being Human is raising the profile of humanities public engagement within participating institutions. As noted in 5.1.3, there are still some challenges around obtaining full support from some institutions. The main institutional impacts were:

- Raising the profile of the humanities within institutions’ public engagement strategies.
- Institutions learning how to target particular audience groups and communities.
- Institutions being inspired to undertake more public engagement in the humanities, including seeking funded opportunities.

There were a few cases where it was anticipated that Being Human activities would contribute to future REF impact case studies.

Although culture change can only be achieved and measured in the long term there is evidence to indicate that Being Human 2016 contributed substantially towards making progress within this objective.
5.1.5. Specific aims for Being Human 2016

The 2016 festival also had the following specific aims:

1. To ensure a stronger and more visible connection to humanities research at more festival events, building this into application process.
2. To focus on quality rather than quantity of events.
3. To ensure clarity of messaging and clear focus on humanities.

The evaluation findings suggest Being Human 2016 made progress against each of these aims. They should remain in future years to ensure the festival remains focused on achieving high quality public engagement with a clear connection to humanities research and consistent messaging across all topics and event types.

5.2. Cross-cutting themes

The evaluation identified five thematic areas for consideration when planning future Being Human festivals. Each of these is outlined briefly below, along with indicative quotes to provide a flavour of the evidence within each theme. They were:

- **Focused resourcing**: ensuring central resources are not over committed and resources within lead institutions are mobilised as fully as possible helps both the whole festival and individual events to be of the highest-possible quality.
- **Continuity**: commitment to fund Being Human for more than one year at a time will help to address audience, partner and organiser expectations for a recurring event and support relationship building.
- **Local context**: the ability to give events a local flavour and relevance increases their appeal to audiences and local partners.
- **Variety of content**: the breadth of subjects and topics that come under the heading ‘the humanities’ increases the number of opportunities to engage audiences and participants from a wide range of backgrounds.
- **Public engagement aims**: it is important that events take place in ‘audience–friendly’ locations and venues and that topics and subjects, not institutions, are their main focus to ensure true public engagement takes place.

5.2.1. Focused resourcing

- Lead organisers and participants appreciated and acknowledged the support provided by the Being Human central team, but were concerned about their relatively limited resources and them being overstretched by the many roles they have to play within the festival.

> They do their best, but demands on the centre are unreasonable – they coordinate the whole thing, are responsible for national marketing, run events themselves and are expected to support us. It is a hell of a lot to ask. Perhaps they should focus on coordinating and marketing and run fewer events in London as so much goes on there anyway. – lead organiser

- At a local level, the amount of resourcing needed to run multiple events was noted to be significant and demanding, with particular mention being made of the need to resource not just event organisation but also securing senior institutional support and publicity resources. Capping the number of events in each town/city/hub may help to address this challenge.

> Although it was still a lot of hard work, I think reducing the number of events this year allowed to really focus on what we were doing and wanted to specifically achieve with each event so that has been successful, that greater focus. – lead organiser (hub)
5.2.2. Continuity

- Organisers, partners and attendees who have taken part in Being Human over a number of years recognised the benefits of building year-on-year their relationships to a point that means all parties are now anticipating Being Human and looking forward to future events. They hoped that the festival would continue in future.

It's good to have a variety of events in different locations. I support the continuation of the festival in 2017. It gets better every year and I am looking forward to the next one. – attendee

Because we have done it for a few years we've learned about venues that work and don't. We also built up an audience following and we use them to help us promote our events to new people, it's a virtuous circle. There is now an expectation that Being Human will be here in November every year. Lead organiser (hub)

5.2.3. Local context

- Lead organisers welcome the partnership ethos and flexibility of Being Human that allowed them to organise events which had a strong local flavour, as this increased audience interest and helped develop the feeling that Being Human is a truly national festival. Hubs were particularly successful when they looked locally to develop their own sub-themes and unique offerings within the wider festival.

The sheer range of events, there really something for every interest, and I think the national profile of it is really important because it immediately deflects that London-centric thing. And it also allows for all sorts of interesting stories and research to be brought to light that are relevant to the specific communities that might get lost in the wider...if it all had to be London based. - lead organiser (hub)

- Attendees appreciated events with local connections and identities however they and organisers were concerned about local visibility around Being Human generally and suggested more could be done to raise the profile of the festival in all towns and cities where it takes place, specifically using non-university institutions to help with promotion.

I had no idea it was part of a national festival. The festival could do with a higher profile and maybe more information readily available to the local public, so that people who don’t have humanities as a special interest can find out more. – attendee

- Lead organisers and attendees noted that there are opportunities to do more to ensure Being Human benefits from the high demand for activities and the potential to have significant audience impact that exist away from major cities.

As someone who’s moved here from London I think some of the events that some of the hubs that are away from the metropolitan centres probably work harder but actually reap huger rewards as well, because I think they are going out to less cynical, less jaded audiences. – lead organiser (hub)

5.2.4. Appreciating the variety within the humanities

- The breadth and variety of subjects and topics that come under the heading ‘the humanities’ was seen as a strength for organisers and attendees which should be embraced. However members of both groups believe it is the topics themselves and not ‘the humanities’ branding that attracts people and that more of the evaluation feedback should be about humanities topics and not ‘the humanities’ in general.

It is quite an important thing that they’re trying to get across, which is about the importance of the humanities in all spheres. It’s tricky one because it’s so all-encompassing, it’s a hard thing to try and pin down. Actually trying to pin it down might be a fruitless task and also that might be defeating the point of saying that the events are so varied and all-encompassing. – lead organiser
I think the breadth of the humanities is the key and how the subject is able to interrelate our experiences. It links identity with past our environment our communities and our experiences in a really important way. - attendee

5.2.5. Public engagement aims

- Attendees and some organisers highlighted the importance of choosing locations that were welcoming and accessible to public audiences, as this helps to ensure that Being Human is seen as part of local culture and not just an exclusive, university-based activity.

It’s nationwide in that it is university towns and cities. If you’re going to deal with the public you’ve got to be on the high street. There’s a feeling with Being Human that there’s a kind of other worldliness of the School of Advanced Study. – lead organiser

It was highly appropriate to hold it in the Irish World Heritage Centre in Manchester. The audience had a good mix of people from different backgrounds and experiences, and it felt like a safe space to share memories and ideas, and learn from one another. - attendee

- Lead organisers and participants were very appreciative of the support from the core partners. They are aware that these organisations need to raise their own profiles, but suggested that this should not detract from Being Human’s focus on engaging audiences with research and not institutions. Many noted the importance of humanities topics and subjects in attracting audiences and observed the nature of the main sponsors is of limited relevance to most attendees, especially non-academics or non-specialists.

But I think beyond that I think you wouldn’t want presentations, say, from AHRC because it starts moving away from the ethos of the event which his public engagement and general enjoyment of - almost a celebration of the humanities. – lead organiser (hub)

I am very grateful for the support from AHRC and Being Human, but they are not important for the audience. They come because they are interested in the topic not because of who funds the event. - participant
6. Conclusion and recommendations

6.1. Concluding statement

Being Human 2016 was a successful large-scale, national public engagement festival which achieved or made significant progress towards its core objectives and met or exceeded many of its numerical targets, such as those for audience reach and ratings. Through 263 events, in 45 towns and cities, it attracted a total audience of 33,000.

The objectives and aims of Being Human 2016 were ambitious and it delivered successful outcomes for all stakeholder groups. It increased attendees’ general understanding of the both the humanities and their relevance to everyday life and encouraged further exploration of humanities topics. It had specific impacts on attendees’ greater comprehension of the importance of the humanities in society generally and locally; improved their understanding of connections between the humanities and other disciplines; and stimulated new or renewed interest in humanities subjects. At a personal level, Being Human enabled organisers to establish or extend platforms for future interdisciplinary collaborations; it supported them to reach new or more diverse audiences, and provided them with opportunities to create new approaches and new ways of working in public engagement. Within lead organisers’ institutions, Being Human successfully raised the profile of the humanities within public engagement strategies; facilitated learning about effective targeting of particular audience groups and communities; and stimulated institutional enthusiasm to undertake more public engagement in the humanities. Participants, such as speakers or partners, reported personal impacts in the form of transferable skills or experience and enhanced understanding of public engagement opportunities relevant to them and their work. Taking part in Being Human enabled participants’ institutions to develop new formats and ideas for public engagement activities that can be built on in the future and generally enhanced the institutional profile of public engagement. In some cases, participation also enhanced public awareness or the perceived accessibility of an institution.

The central team and individual organisers continue to learn important lessons about running a festival of this scale and there is strong evidence to suggest that if they are provided with sufficient resources and support to enable them to act upon this learning, the impact and quality of Being Human will only increase in the future.

6.2. Recommendations

6.2.1. General

1. Being Human should continue in the future, with a focus on delivering high quality events and providing engaging and relevant experiences for audiences.
2. Retain the specific aims from the 2016 festival to ensure events are focused on delivering quality experiences and facilitate audience engagement with research.

6.2.2. Funding and support

3. Core sponsors should consider a longer funding-term than one-year to allow the central team to plan more strategically and ensure the festival as a whole is afforded the best-possible opportunity to build on all learning and relationships generated in previous years.
4. The central team should give consideration as how to how it can best support hubs to secure senior level institutional support for Being Human, which will help raise the profile of the festival and should optimise both local resourcing for events and local promotion of the festival.
5. Ensure the application process for hubs and individual events remains competitive to optimise quality of events and ensure strong alignment with festival aims.
6. Consider using the pre-festival showcase to share best practice and provide practical guidance and advice to 2017 lead organisers.
6.2.3. Structure

7. Aim for a maximum of 6-8 events per hub to avoid overstretching hub coordinators and local resources and to reinforce the importance of quality over quantity.
8. Retain the hub model but give consideration as to how events that are not hub events but are held in hub town/cities are promoted to maximise and not dilute local publicity for Being Human.
9. Continue to promote partnership working with local organisations as this enhances the quality of events and delivers benefits for organisers and their institutions.

6.2.4. Audience numbers, events and venues

10. Consider setting targets for particular audience types e.g. age groups, school children etc. to encourage events that target particular audiences and to ensure these audience types are monitored.
11. Ensure events continue to be distributed across all geographic regions to provide access to audiences throughout the UK.
12. In the application process, require events that are targeting particular communities or groups, e.g. young people or ethnic groups, to include those stakeholders as partners in their planning and delivery of activities.
13. Emphasise the importance of choosing venues that are appealing and welcoming to the public, particularly for audiences who would not normally visit universities.

6.2.5. Promotion and marketing

14. Ensure the central team is sufficiently resourced to undertake national promotion of the festival, as well as coordinate a nationwide programme of activities.
15. Consider how the central team can best support organisers in promoting the festival within institutions and externally.
16. Review the press embargo deadline to ensure it does not restrict local publicity.
17. Ensure marketing resources are available as early as possible prior to the festival to maximise opportunities for local advanced publicity.
18. Review the printed programme to ensure every individual event and hub events can be easily identified.
19. Consider holding one major Being Human event (e.g. pre-festival showcase, launch, closing event) outside London, possibly at one of the regional hubs, to reinforce the national credentials of Being Human.

6.2.6. Evaluation

20. Separate the questions and methods used for collecting organisers’ event monitoring data and evaluation feedback to avoid duplication (e.g. attendee and partner numbers were reported in different forms to the external evaluators and the central team).
21. Consider additional formats for collecting data from young people and teachers, particularly if Being Human aims to grow these audiences in the future.
22. Add a question asking attendees explicitly if they are aware events are part of a national festival.
23. Streamline the evaluation materials to ensure they are focused on festival objectives, particularly around engagement with research, and to remove some inconsistencies or delete unnecessary questions or answer options. Reducing the length of surveys should optimise response rates.
24. Consider running a more in-depth longitudinal evaluation with a sample of organisers who have been involved in the festival since 2014, to determine any longer-term lessons and impacts or benefits, such as Being Human’s contribution to funding bids, impact reporting and research collaborations.