Being Human festival 2020 evaluation guide

Dear Being Human supporters,

Evaluation is a crucial part of the Being Human festival, which:

1. Enables us to **demonstrate the true scale and full impacts** of the festival

2. Captures **learning** to ensure optimisation in future of:
   a. the **quality and accessibility** of Being Human events
   b. the **support** for event organisers and hub coordinators

3. Helps to secure the festival’s future by **demonstrating achievements to sponsors and partners**, including core partners, the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy.

We have commissioned independent evaluators Free Thought Research Ltd. to undertake our evaluation this year. In order for them to carry out evaluation across the whole Being Human festival they need your assistance in gathering sufficient and meaningful feedback and we would like to thank you in advance for your help.

Free Thought Research have designed an evaluation methodology and materials that offer a flexible approach which will be applicable to the vast majority of your events and activities.

Please take time to read through these guidance notes and make evaluation a key part of your planning and delivery. Please also do as much as possible to maximise response rates by using our online survey for digital events, and paper surveys where appropriate for in person events.

If you would like advice or have any questions about the evaluation, please contact Liberty at Free Thought Research at liberty@freethoughtresearch.co.uk or the festival team at beinghuman@sas.ac.uk.

Regards

*The Being Human festival team*
Introduction

The Being Human 2020 evaluation aims to:

- Assess Being Human’s performance against its strategic objectives.
- Understand who attends and takes part in delivering Being Human events and activities.
- Demonstrate the value and impact of Being Human for attendees, contributors, partners, event organisers/hub coordinators and funders.
- Identify learning and potential improvements for future Being Human festivals or other humanities public engagement activities.

Working with Free Thought Research, we have developed a methodology and evaluation materials to capture information from key stakeholder groups. This evaluation guide takes you through evaluation methods for each group in turn. At the bottom of this guide you will also find a timeline with our key deadlines.

Evaluation

Free Thought Research will conduct the following activities as part of this evaluation and is grateful for your support with these. Each is expanded upon below.

1. Attendee survey (aiming to achieve 500 completed responses)
2. Attendee tele-interviews (30 x 20-minute interviews)
3. Online survey amongst festival organisers
4. Online survey amongst festival partners and contributors
5. Organiser and partner tele-interviews (20 x 20-minute interviews)

1. Attendee Questionnaire (audience members)

The main data collection method for attendees is via a short survey, available online and as a paper-based copy. There are two versions:

- Attendees aged 16 and over
- Attendees aged under 16

The questionnaire survey is divided into sections to find out:

1. Attendees’ experiences at the events/activities.
2. Main outcomes of events/activities aligned to Being Human objectives.
3. Demographic information to understand who Being Human is reaching.

Those over 16 that complete the survey can choose to be entered into a prize draw to win a £100 online shopping voucher. Their feedback remains anonymous.

If using hard copy, paper surveys, please add the name and date of your event/activity in the header before printing copies for distribution. This is essential for tracking purposes.

Distributing questionnaires and maximising response rates

With most activities taking place online this year, we expect the online survey to be our main source of evaluation data. We recommend the following to ensure that as many people as possible complete this survey:
For online activities:

1. Circulate the online survey during events using the ‘chat’ function or embed a link on YouTube or similar platforms if streaming
2. Add a link to the survey on relevant Facebook pages and other platforms
3. Remind people about the survey during the event (e.g. in intros and at the close)
4. Email the online survey to attendees after events

It is really important to distribute the attendee survey via an email as soon as possible following an event. Don’t wait too long or the event will not be fresh in peoples’ minds.

Survey links

Please email the survey link(s) to registered attendees as soon as possible after your activities or events have taken place.

- Attendee survey (aged 16+): https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/TCYGGl/
- Attendee survey (under 16s): https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/E6XBA5/

You can also promote the attendee survey(s) via social media and there are short links to help with this:


A follow-up email can be sent via your booking system, e.g. Eventbrite. Please note that the festival cannot send this link on your behalf so please do remember to send this out post-event. Here is some suggested text for your post-event invitation email:

**Being Human 2020–invitation to give feedback**

**A message from [X University or other lead organisation]**

Thank you for attending [event or activity title], part of the 2020 Being Human festival of the humanities.

To help us assess the festival’s impact and improve our events in the future, we would be grateful if you could take a few moments to fill in an online feedback survey. This survey should take less than 5 minutes and you could win a £100 online shopping voucher by entering the prize draw. The survey is confidential and your answers will be kept completely anonymous.

Survey link: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/TCYGGl/
Survey link for attendees aged under 16: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/E6XBA5/ [if applicable to your event]

Thank you for your help.
Online responses are collected directly by Free Thought Research. The attendee online survey will close on **21 December 2020**.

On request, Free Thought will provide you with a spreadsheet of anonymised responses for a particular event/s. See email contact above.

**For ‘in person’ activities:**

- Use well-briefed volunteers to distribute questionnaires, encourage completion and to collect them afterwards. A dedicated ‘feedback’ space at your event may support this.
- Have pens/pencils on hand (sanitised in line with Covid guidelines).
- Use opening and closing comments at events to mention the questionnaires (and the prize draw) and invite attendees to complete them.
- Inform attendees that the evaluation is confidential, that their feedback is anonymous and they will not be identifiable in any reports including if they give their e-mail and/or phone number for the prize draw.

Completed hard copy questionnaires should be sent to the Being Human team for data inputting by **14 December 2020**. It is important you take a copy for your own records, as the festival will not keep these after inputting the data.

Please send completed hard copy questionnaires via email to beinghuman@sas.ac.uk OR via post to:

Being Human festival c/o Michael Eades  
School of Advanced Study, University of London  
Room 205 (south block), Senate House  
Malet Street  
London WC1E 7HU

**2. Attendee telephone interviews**

Free Thought Research will undertake a number of telephone interviews with attendees following their attendance at a Being Human festival event. Thirty interviews with a range of festival goers present opportunity to gather more in-depth, qualitative data. As an incentive, a £10 voucher will be offered to those taking part in a telephone survey.

Participation is entirely optional. Attendees will be invited to volunteer to take part via a section of the online survey and will be approached directly.

**3. Online survey amongst festival organisers**

We will invite every event organiser to complete a short online survey at the close of the festival. This will enable you to share your perspective on how your event was received, its impacts on you and on participants and how you would like to develop in future.

We will email you a link to this survey at the end of the Being Human festival. It will close at midnight on **21 December 2020**.
4. **Online survey amongst festival partners and contributors**

The Being Human team and sponsors are also keen to understand the perspectives of festival event and activity contributors (partners, speakers, panellists, performers etc.). This includes **contributors from partners involved in your event(s)**.

An online survey for you to email to all individuals involved in delivering your events will be circulated before the close of the festival.

You can email this survey as part of a thank you message to contributors. It will close at midnight on **21 December 2020**.

5. **Stakeholder telephone interviews with event coordinators and organisers**

Free Thought Research plans to conduct 20 x 20-minute interviews with event organisers, partners and coordinators following the festival. These interviews will require no preparation and will allow us to gather perspectives on what went well, on challenges faced and to help understand better how Being Human can best support you. The research team will contact a number of you after the festival to invite you to take part in an anonymous interview. It is not compulsory to participate but your feedback will be greatly appreciated.

**Evaluation deadlines**

- **20 October** Guide and tools distributed to event organisers and Hub coordinators.
- **During the festival** Online survey link sent to all participants after the event (plus follow up reminder link). To take place on a rolling basis.
- **14 December** Attendee hard copy questionnaires sent to Being Human team (see page 4 of this guide) for data inputting.
- **21 December** Attendee and contributor online surveys close.
- **21 December** Event organiser/ Hub coordinator online surveys close.
- **21 December** Reporting templates for Alternative Evaluation Methods submitted to Free Thought: [liberty@freethoughtresearch.co.uk](mailto:liberty@freethoughtresearch.co.uk)
### Appendix – Suggested alternative evaluation methods for attendee feedback

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<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Use</th>
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<td><strong>Polls</strong></td>
<td>For online events, you might want to use your platform’s ‘polls’ function to create a simple way of asking your audience a specific question.</td>
<td>In addition to the Being Human survey, this function could be used as a way of asking a question more closely related to your own research area. It could be used for example to do a snap poll on subject familiarity at the start and close of event, to see what has been learnt.</td>
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<td><strong>Quizzes</strong></td>
<td>Similar to the above, but can be done in different ways without necessarily using the ‘poll’ function. For example, a quiz might be more closely integrated into the event itself.</td>
<td>In addition to the Being Human survey, a quiz can be used to gauge knowledge of a particular area, and whether this has increased over the course of an event. For example, an event might open/ wrap up with a ‘quick quiz’ that demonstrates what has been learnt.</td>
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<td><strong>Chat</strong></td>
<td>For online events, the chat function can also be used for asking simple questions for evaluation purposes. The chat can also be used to circulate the Being Human survey.</td>
<td>A good example would be to ask, ‘where are people tuning in from today?’, giving a sense of the location spread of your attendees.</td>
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<td><strong>Dropping tokens in a jar</strong></td>
<td>For ‘in person’ events. A voting system where audience members select an option by dropping a token into a corresponding receptacle/jar.</td>
<td>Good for: closed questions e.g. yes/ no answers about experiences &amp;/or intentions. Can also use smiling/ frowning/ neutral faces or emoticons to label receptacles.</td>
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**Quantitative information**
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| **Qualitative information**   | **Graffiti or feedback wall** | A whiteboard, flip chart, chalkboard or large sheet of paper on which audience members can write comments or draw feedback. Ideally headed with a specific question or more than 1 question in different corners. Online equivalents exist, for example programmes such as 'Padlet'.
If 'in person', it will be important to ensure social distancing and safety guidelines are observed if using this method, e.g. making sure that any pens provided are disinfected after use. | Good for: capturing thoughts/ feelings / attitudinal outcomes.                        |
| **Comments book**             | A more discreet form of the above. Good for quiet spaces, art exhibitions etc. Online equivalents do also exist, again, including ‘Padlet’.                                                              | Same as graffiti or feedback wall above.                                              |
| **Quantitative and qualitative information** | **Observations** | Observations give a snap-shot overview of an event/ activity. They record observed participant details such as audience numbers, approx. age and gender breakdown. They also record audience reactions, such as body language, questions asked etc. | Good for: accompanying other evaluation methods, or used on own if other evaluation methods are not appropriate, e.g. a very young audience, audiences with multiple needs, time or resource constraints.
Could be used for: estimate audience numbers needed for event organisers feedback survey. |