Being Human festival 2021: 11–20 November
COP26 Hub Award application guidelines

Introduction
As part of the 2021 Being Human festival, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) have made available £20,000 in special funding to support a festival Hub in Glasgow. This is a closed call open only to research institutions in Glasgow (see eligibility criteria below). It aims to fund an innovative Hub that will focus on public engagement with climate change and the environmental humanities, tying in with the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26). Particularly, it is anticipated that the Hub will focus on engaging individuals and communities that are typically not reached by universities or higher education with new research in the humanities which explores various aspects of the climate emergency and its impacts on what it means to be human. The Hub will run 11-20 November, overlapping and immediately after the COP26 conference (1-12 November).

This special funding is intended to support a thematic festival Hub drawing on research from universities across Glasgow and linking this research directly to the communities of the region. Via cultural partnerships, festival activities and projects will explore Glasgow’s industrial past, its responses to the climate emergency in the present, and its possible futures. Following the well-established Being Human festival model, the Hub will be focused on principles of best practice public engagement, community participation and co-production.

Overall project aims include:

- to catalyse collaboration between humanities researchers at research institutions in Glasgow;
- to incentivize collaboration between humanities researchers and those in other disciplines, including the social sciences, art and STEM;
- to help initiate and build partnerships between researchers, universities, and community organisations in Glasgow;
- to engage, inspire and connect members of less advantaged communities in the region with new research in the environmental humanities;
- to secure legacies beyond both COP26 and Being Human festival, acting as a catalyst for further work with communities involved.
The Hub will run alongside other planned AHRC activities around COP26 and will also spearhead an environmental humanities strand of programming running through the 2021 Being Human festival.

**About Being Human festival**

Established in 2014, Being Human is the only UK-wide festival dedicated to engaging public audiences with humanities research. Run by the School of Advanced Study, University of London, in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy, the festival exists to make research in the humanities accessible to non-specialist audiences and demonstrate its relevance to the everyday lives of communities across the UK. The festival has a particular focus on community co-production, and on using creative formats to work directly with communities not engaged with humanities research.

The festival aims to:

- demonstrate the value and relevance of humanities research to society in the UK and globally;
- encourage, support and create opportunities for researchers to engage with non-specialist audiences;
- embed and join together public engagement activities in the humanities across the higher education (HE) sector.

**Being Human festival in 2021**

Being Human festival returns in November 2021. Amidst continued uncertainty, we still aim to deliver a national celebration of the humanities that inspires people and shows the resilience, creativity and imagination in communities across the UK. To enable planning to begin, we are committing to a **hybrid-delivery festival** this November that combines the best of online engagement with safe in-person activities. Together we will build on the best elements of Being Human 2020 to offer a national festival of public engagement taking place both in-person and online.

Although digital delivery helped expand the festival’s horizons, it will continue to champion its core principles: Being Human remains a **place-based festival** that emphasises interaction, working with communities outside academia and those less typically engaged with humanities culture (people who might not normally go to a public university event, or an exhibition in an art gallery, for example). Whether digital, or in-person (socially distanced), we will support innovative, participatory, and creative activities that foster genuine, two-way connections with people not usually engaged with academic research. As ever, events should be designed to facilitate mutual learning between researchers and publics.

Our festival theme in 2021 is ‘**Renewal**’, which can be used as broad inspiration for shaping events around research and will help promote connections within a very diverse programme. More on the theme can be found in the final section of this document.

We are especially interested in how humanities research might help us to ‘renew’ our understanding of what it means to be human in 2021, including our relationships with the
places around us, how we work and play, how we understand identity and culture, and how we interact with the planet and nature.

Being Human festival is led by the School of Advanced Study at the University of London, in partnership with the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the British Academy.

COP26 in Glasgow

The United Nations Climate Change Conference is the foremost global forum for discussions on climate change. COP’s advance work on multi-lateral agreements assess the progress of global efforts to limit global warming and provide a focus on a common way forward to tackle the realities of climate change.

The 26th Conference of the Parties is the most significant COP since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015 as nations will be reviewing their emissions targets. Five years ago, world leaders committed to an historic agreement to tackle climate change. They agreed to keep global mean temperature rises well below 2°C and to strive to limit the rise to 1.5°C.

Made up of international negotiations, global civil society activity and activists, COP26 will be the biggest and most complex event ever staged in Scotland, with the largest gathering of Heads of State ever to happen in the UK.

COP26 will run from 1-12 November 2021 at the Scottish Event Campus (SEC).

Glasgow was chosen by the UK to host COP26 due to its experience in hosting world class events, commitment to sustainability and first-rate facilities. Recently awarded the status of Global Green City, Glasgow has an ambitious target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.1

The Glasgow Hub

Every year, Being Human festival supports a number of ‘festival Hubs’ across the UK. Hubs are intended to offer highly visible concentrations of best practice public engagement activities. They provide coherent, imaginative and eye-catching programmes of events that raise the festival’s profile nationally as well as regionally. They are also intended to support and develop institutional capacity for public engagement activity in the humanities (e.g. by offering opportunities for researchers or public engagement teams to do something humanities-focused, to try something new or to work with new communities).

In 2021, we are working with the AHRC and UKRI to fund a special, thematic, Hub in Glasgow. This is the first time that Being Human, in collaboration with the AHRC and UKRI, have issued a closed call for a festival Hub, limited to a particular city. This reflects the unique opportunity offered by COP26 to engage communities in that city with humanities research relevant to climate and the many ways that this research sheds new light on the past, present and future of Glasgow as a city.

---

1 Text on Cop26 is adapted from that provided from Glasgow City Council’s website: https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/cop26
What are we looking for?

A key criteria for this award is to drive innovation in public engagement with humanities research relevant to climate change and the climate and nature emergency. As such, we are open to bids that take various approaches to programme content, form and delivery. Hubs could use existing infrastructure (for example, take over a community space, gallery or museum) or build something new (create a new space or platform). The key things that we want to see are proposals that:

- offer a broad ranging and locally relevant programme of events and activities for the Being Human festival 2021;
- explore innovative approaches to public engagement in the current challenging conditions. We want to support innovative, exciting programming that has been designed with the needs of audiences firmly in mind;
- reach genuinely disengaged or under-represented audiences (e.g. audiences in areas of high deprivation or low educational attainment. (The Office for Students’ map of youth participation areas may be useful here);
- engage with black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) audiences;
- provide programming targeted at families and younger audiences, or provide opportunities for intergenerational dialogue;
- give serious consideration to issues of accessibility in choice of venue/ platform and format (including, importantly, accessibility for people with disabilities);
- take activities off-campus, connecting directly with people and communities outside the academy in places that are familiar and comfortable to them;
- are relevant to communities local to the institutions bidding for funding (for example, place-based activity highlighting unexpected aspects of local history and/or contemporary culture);
- create equitable partnerships with community organisations, that are genuinely beneficial for both sides;
- feature an element of co-production with these communities, involving them in programming and in creating legacies and outputs;
- have potential to make change happen locally and leave a legacy beyond the duration of the grant;
- respond in a topical way to COP26, the climate and nature emergency and our 2021 theme of ‘Renewal’.

A typical Being Human Hub would contain around 10 events. Whilst we are not necessarily looking for more events and activities than this in Glasgow, it should be noted that, reflecting the higher level of funding available, we are looking for programmes that are particularly
ambitious in working with communities and which incorporate elements of co-production. In other words, depth of engagement and creativity of format may be more important than numbers of events.

Given the focus of COP26, we are particularly keen to see proposals that give serious thought to issues around sustainability and renewal. We would be keen to see proposals that think seriously about minimising any environmental impacts of the proposed programming or which leave a positive climate legacy. Activities might, for example, leave a tangible legacy by planting, re-wilding, recycling or other such environmentally positive actions.

What formats are suitable?

The best Hub programmes feature a range of event and activity formats that have been designed to meet the needs of different participants and audiences. This might range from larger scale activities featuring partnerships with museums and theatres to much smaller scale programming working with grassroots and community organisations.

Audiences, communities and participants should have opportunities to contribute their own experiences and knowledge as part of the project. They should also come away having learnt something clear and understandable about humanities research.

Some of the best activities involve communities in their production, via ‘co-curation’ and ‘co-production’. This might mean, for example, that socially distanced workshops, postal packs or phone calls take place in advance, feeding into a main activity during the festival.

Examples of suitable formats, which can work in person, online, or in a hybrid fashion, include:

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

We are open to programmes that feature activities such as podcasts, a daily newspaper, films, radio stations, exhibitions. These activities would be supplements to a programme, rather than the heart of it. As above, they would also need to be interactive, feature aspects of co-production, and be firmly rooted in public engagement with research.
Eligibility
For this one-off Hub we are inviting applications from UK universities or AHRC-recognised Independent Research Organisations based in the city of Glasgow to form partnerships with cultural/ community partners in the city with the following criteria:

- applications must be led by a UK Higher Education Institution (HEI), or an AHRC recognised Independent Research Organisation (IRO);
- applications must feature collaboration beyond that institution, drawing on expertise from at least one other HEI or IRO in Glasgow (meaning that research from at least two research active institutions is involved);
- applications must feature partnership with at least one community organisation (e.g. charities, museums, libraries, cooperatives);
- applicants must agree to match fund to at least 50% the value of the award. The funding is a one-off award of £20,000, to be awarded in a lump sum, so there is a requirement for this to be match funded to a level of £10,000.

A bid, therefore, should be led by a single university or IRO, in partnership with a community or cultural organisation, and should also feature collaboration with other universities/ knowledge institutions in the Glasgow area. This might mean, for example, bringing in researchers from other universities as joint organisers, performers, or speakers.

In addition to these specific criteria, all activities featured in the Being Human festival programme must:

- demonstrate aspects of humanities research in ways that are entertaining, accessible and relevant for non-specialist audiences;
- have direct involvement from a humanities researcher in delivering activities;
- be held during the festival dates;
- be free to attend. This includes free access to venues where events are being held (such as heritage sites or museums that charge an entrance fee);
- be held off-campus wherever possible (excluding campus-based theatres etc.);
- respond to the interests and needs of clearly defined non-specialist audiences.

What costs can a Hub Award cover?
Funding from Being Human is intended to support expenditure that cannot be easily absorbed into existing institutional budgets. For example, eligible costs include using funding to pay for:

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

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

**Match funding**

It is important to remember that Hubs are expected to match-fund to at least the cost of the award offered. We do not count salaried staff time as part of the match funding.

Match funding is provided from institutional budgets to support and amplify Hub programmes. Funding might come, for example, from:

• existing events or cultural activity budgets;
• existing marketing budgets;
• budgets that support student internships;
• research grant budgets.

Some typical costs that might be covered by match funding include:

• use of university studio space or other production costs for films, podcasts or streaming;
• the use of an exhibition space or venue, or use of digital platforms;
• documentation of activities (filming, photography);
• paid student internships run in conjunction with the programme;
• other costs charged internally as part of a project or event.

**What criteria are Hub Award applications judged against?**

All applications are assessed by a panel comprising representatives from Being Human festival, the AHRC and UKRI alongside other public engagement experts and community stakeholders. The review panel will be assessing your proposal according to:

• quality and originality of individual activities and overall programme;
• overall programme’s fit with the festival’s core aims and objectives;
• evidence of fit between planned activities and intended audiences;
• evidence that issues of accessibility have been considered across venues and platforms
• evidence of institutional ‘buy in’;
• evidence of support from named cultural or community partners;
• evidence of achievability and team capacity to deliver the project.

Application process

The COP26 Hub Award application form and activities grid are available on our website at www.beinghumanfestival.org/apply. Letters of support should be provided from any cultural and community partners named on your application. Applications should be made on the correct form and returned via email to: apply.beinghuman@sas.ac.uk.

Shortlisted applicants may also be invited to take part in an interview, which can be conducted via Skype, with the festival team. This is to allow an opportunity to explore the application in greater depth and address any questions raised by the assessment panel.

• Friday 4 June (5pm) – Deadline for applications for funding
• End June – Notification of outcome of applications

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

2021 festival theme: ‘Renewal’

The past twelve months have brought enormous challenges across the globe. The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular, have been world-changing and are far from over. Whilst we continue to live through a moment of unprecedented challenge, strain, and change, however, one thing is clear for many people: whatever follows on from Covid-19 must, if nothing else, be an opportunity to do things differently. Whether in relation to our political systems, the cities in which we live, the ways in which we work and spend our leisure time, our relationship with the planet and the natural world, the current historical moment offers an opportunity to rethink, to do things differently, to renew.

In 2020 Being Human festival imagined ‘New Worlds’. In 2021 it is time to renew our sense of Being Human.

This year’s Being Human festival will focus on ‘renewal’. Across the humanities we are interested in new ideas, new generations, new ways of doing things, new responses. This year sees a new president take office in America; Britain and Europe embark on a new relationship; and the COP26 Climate Conference in Glasgow will focus the attention of the world on finding new solutions to the climate emergency and ways to address it, from renewable energy to a renewed social contract between humans and the world that they inhabit. Cityscapes are being renewed, with monuments and public history being interrogated and interpreted in new ways. Different ways of living are being considered,
different identities are being explored, and the pandemic has pushed people all over the world to invent new ways of being social, being professional, and being human. Of course, ‘renewals’ don’t have to be only contemporary. Renewals can also revisit past times of change or disruption, discoveries that altered our world, or renew our ideas about the past. They can be about breakthroughs in art, literature, film. They can be moments in which national cultures and identities were reconsidered, reimagined, realigned.

Across all the disciplines of the humanities, we are keen to support projects that help us think of ways of renewing approaches to:

- Health
- Faith
- Work & play
- Identity
- Climate

These are just starting points to get you thinking though. Surprise us! The main thing that we are looking for are projects that help us to demonstrate why the humanities are relevant to people’s lives and how they help us understand what it means to be human.