

Frequently Asked Questions FOR 2024 EXHIBITORS

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Q1: What is Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival?

[Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival](#) (UoSArtsHumFest) is the University of Southampton's annual interdisciplinary celebration of humanities and the arts. It is a 10-day programme of digital and in-person events taking place across the University and the City of Southampton.

The festival usually coincides with [Being Human festival](#), the UK's only national festival of the humanities. More information is available on the [Public Engagement with Research unit \(PERu\) website](#).

In 2024, Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival will run **from Thursday 7th to Saturday 16th November**.

The festival includes a free family friendly day named Arts and Humanities Day, formerly known as Hands-on Humanities Day. The day includes a selection of interactive stands, workshops, talks, exhibitions, and live performances to explore the world of humanities and the arts. This year's Arts and Humanities Day will take place on **Saturday 9th November 2024** at the Southampton Cultural Quarter. To find out more about the day, please see the dedicated FAQs document in the [Exhibitors Area](#) on the festival's official website.

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Q2: Who can contribute to the festival?

Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival (wider festival) is open to all members of the University of Southampton, including **researchers, technicians, student societies** and **members of professional services**. **National and international collaborators** of our researchers are also invited to submit content.

If the proposed content is relevant to the festival's theme and values, we welcome **local community groups (including CIC and VCSE), freelance public engagement professionals and artists, community libraries, cultural**

organisations and venues, and other higher education institutions to contribute to the richness and interdisciplinarity of Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival.

We appreciate from experience that different disciplines and groups will have varied approaches to public engagement. Talk to us about how you could best adapt your subject to meet your and the festival's audience needs. For more information about approaches to public engagement, browse the [National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement website](#).

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Q3: What type of activity/event can I contribute with?

For the wider festival, we welcome **interactive talks, workshops, debates, exhibitions, installations, shows and art performances**.

Some creative and engaging suggestions include, e.g.:

- a movie night followed by a lively Q&A with the audience,
- an engaging quiz night with short presentations and Q&A,
- an online interview with an international host followed by a Q&A,
- an afternoon workshop with hands-on activities for children or young teenagers,
- the creation of a collaborative art piece with a local community group.

Some events might follow a well-known format, such as a writing workshop, a school competition, a human library, a research café, a book discussion, or a poetry reading event.

The activity/event will need to be accessible to a wide range of audiences, including children and adults, with no expectation of previous knowledge or experience. Accessibility will need to be considered, from conceptual design to delivery, to allow participation by all, regardless of ability. Core values of the University of Southampton must be upheld including **integrity, accessibility, inclusivity, and sustainability**.

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Q4: Who are the Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival audiences?

There is no single audience for Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival, and guests/visitors will differ depending on the nature/format of the activity/event. They can include students and staff at the University of Southampton, local residents, schools, colleges and community groups, and others from across the country and internationally.

Online: with our digital component of the festival since 2020, we engaged with hundreds of people across 5 continents. People were drawn to the online Festival mainly through social media, newsletters, word of mouth and by event searching on Eventbrite.

In-person: we welcome people of all ages and backgrounds. Visitors come mainly from Southampton and surrounding areas, but also from other regions in the Southeast and Southwest. Visitors often have a broad interest in culture and wellbeing, from history and writing to archaeology, the liberal arts and mindfulness.

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Q5: Is there an exhibitor mailing list I can join to receive exhibitor information straight to my inbox?

To be among the first to find out when the exhibitor's registration opens, sign up to the **UoS Festival Exhibitors mailing list**:

- For **external exhibitors**, please click [HERE](#),
- For **UoS students and members of staff**, please click [HERE](#).

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Q6: How does the registration process work for the wider festival?

The call to contribute to Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival will open by the end of July 2024. Announcements will be made on SUSSED, on the UoS Engagement social media channels, on the Public Engagement Network MS Teams channel and through the [UoS Festival Exhibitors newsletter](#).

The submission will be a **1-stage process**, ID and password protected.

You will also be able to contribute to [Black History Month](#) (1st – 31st October) and [UK Disability History Month](#) (14th November – 20th December) as we are welcoming relevant events and activities to be featured on the festival website in the period before, during and after the festival.

Registration Guidelines: To find out what the registration process requires (inc. ID and password) and to prepare all required material in advance of your submission, you can access the registration guidelines. These will be available at the following **after the call opens**:

- [UoS Festival SharePoint site](#) (for UoS users only),
- [How to Get Involved](#) section on the PERu website (public).

After the submission: you will receive an automated confirmation email with a summary of your input. Check your spam folder or contact the UoS Festival team if the email does not come through.

What's next: the UoS Festival team will review your entry after the deadline and approve your activity or in some cases request amendments, you will then receive an email with a **customised link, password** and **ID** for you to edit your entry.

a. Where can I find the ID and password?

ID and **password** will be included in the registration guidelines that will be provided **after the call opens** at the following:

- [UoS Festival SharePoint site](#) (for UoS users only),
- [How to Get Involved](#) section on the PERu website (public).

b. Can I save the deadline dates on my calendar?

All stage deadline dates are available to view and save to your calendar on the [Festival Registration page](#). Just click on the calendar icon next to each date to download a calendar file. The file also includes a notification reminder and information to assist with exhibitor submissions.

c. What are some of the top tips when making a submission?

- Activity Description - **Avoid the use of jargon and acronyms** in the activity description of the website. Consider a 30 second introduction including the benefits of your activity, the problem you're looking to solve and the benefits you aim to deliver from this.
- Address the website visitors by using the word '**You**' as opposed to 'the audience'.
- Consider the detail of the information you provide and reinforce **why you feel people would be interested and what they should expect** from your event/activity.
- Website/social media - **Include full URL's (https://)** on the website/social media section and avoid using broken or incomplete links to ensure people are directed to the right page.
- Activity Image – Images are required to be **square** (rather than rectangular), with a maximum dimension of **150 x 150 pixels**. Please avoid using images that have text on it, as the text will not be easily readable and seen as part of the image, limiting accessibility for screen readers.
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d. I'm a returning exhibitor; can I access information from my submission last year?

You should be able to access submitted data from past years (2021-23) entries by searching your inbox for your previous automated email communication.

You can also request a copy from us by emailing festival@soton.ac.uk, stating your activity name and stage you need access to.

e. When will I find out if my submission has been accepted?

The UoS Festival team will start reviewing all entries after the call closed. Due to the number of entries this might take **up to 2 weeks**.

PLEASE NOTE: a delay in accepting your submission does not mean that your activity has been rejected.

f. How can I make a change to my submission?

To make a change after your submission, please **email the UoS Festival team** at festival@soton.ac.uk as soon as possible so that we can do our best to accommodate your changes. The UoS Festival team may also contact you directly to request you make changes yourself.

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Q7: What support is available to exhibitors?

The UoS Festival team can provide some support for your activity, depending on the demand, resources, and timescale, as follows:

- **Educational resources** (restricted to UoS users): a dedicated series of online resources, from handouts to recorded seminars and interactive resources, spanning from digital platform selection to event organisation and social media marketing are available on the [UoS Festival SharePoint site](#). More resources can be also found on the [Public Engagement with Research unit SharePoint site](#), including a guide on [planning your public engagement](#) and [evaluation resources](#).
- **Training:** the Public Engagement with Research unit (PERu) offer training sessions in the public and community engagement sector. To find out what trainings are available, please visit the [PERu SharePoint site](#) or take a look at our advertisements posted on the [Public Engagement Network MS Teams channel](#) (restricted to UoS users).
- **Drop-in sessions:** we offer weekly 60-minute drop-in sessions on MS Teams, starting from Wednesday 4th September 2024, 13:00 – 14:00, for all UoS members to discuss their event/activity, without the need to book a 1-2-1

meeting. Links to the sessions will be available on the [UoS Festival SharePoint site](#) in the 'Upcoming Events' section closer to the time. The sessions will also be advertised on the [Public Engagement Network MS Teams channel](#) (restricted to UoS users).

- **Consulting:** depending on demand and capacity, we can provide 1-2-1 support for events or activities at the festival, from planning and design to delivery and evaluation. Please get in touch at festival@soton.ac.uk if you want to discuss your ideas with us. Otherwise, for all other public engagement enquiries, please contact peru@soton.ac.uk.
- **Technical support:** the PERu team owns a [StreamYard](#) account that is used for live broadcasting on the [UoS Festival YouTube channel](#) and the [PERu Facebook page](#). We also provide technical support for some online and in-person events. Please get in touch at festival@soton.ac.uk if you want to discuss streaming with us or need further support.
- **Online event package:** for live online events, we will provide branded material to use and key communications to send out during your live event(s).
- **Eventbrite:** we have a dedicated [UoS Festival Eventbrite](#) account, which is the platform we use to advertise event booking and activities. This is our main channel of communication for event booking, tickets, feedback and reminder emails, to ensure the consistency and management of the Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival programme.

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Q8: How do I get in touch with the UoS Festival event team?

If you are a member of the University of Southampton, you can use the [Public Engagement Network](#) channel on MS Teams to get (or share) advice, tips and suggestions.

Alternatively, and for any external enquiries, please email the core UoS Festival team at festival@soton.ac.uk - This inbox is monitored regularly from Monday to Friday, 9:00 – 17:00, but response time may be slower at busy times e.g. just before and during the Festival.

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Q9: How is accessibility considered at Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival?

We do our very best to make Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival accessible to everyone whether it is our recent online version or face-to-face.

The **official website** has tools to enhance contrast, by inverting colours, and increasing/decreasing font size. All the activities will be coded for accessibility and age suitability.

For **online events**, we ask you to consider suitable options, such as platforms with live captions, and making sure slides are carefully designed to follow best accessibility practice.

We ask all exhibitors to bear in mind accessibility issues with their online or in-person events and activities, and to provide alternative options (e.g. handouts) to ensure inclusivity.

If you have further questions or recommendations regarding accessibility, please email the UoS Festival team at festival@soton.ac.uk

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Q10: How is Southampton Arts and Humanities advertised?

The UoS Festival team and the UoS Engagement and Advancement team will advertise the event through several channels to maximise reach locally and nationally.

Social media is a major channel for events promotion, with the support of other relevant teams across the University, including Marketing and Communications, Alumni, and Students Communication.

We also ask for each exhibitor's support to advertise their own activities or events through their social media, blogs, websites or other communication channels. This helps market the event to different audiences in the UK.

In-person and digital events are advertised through the **UoS Festival mailing list** (2.5K+ subscribers), as well as on **regional event websites**.

Some exhibitors will also be invited to promote Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival and Arts and Humanities Day on **local radio and television**. These opportunities will be supported by the UoS Media Relations team.

Posters and flyers will be distributed in venues across the Southampton, Eastleigh and Winchester area. The team at Widening Participation and Social Mobility will distribute copies at several local schools and post announcements on national websites.

Printed copies of poster and flyers can be requested at festival@soton.ac.uk

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Q11: How is Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival evaluated?

The Public Engagement with Research unit evaluate Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival against its core objectives:

1. Provide a platform for engagement with public groups around research/activity at institution.
2. Provide an opportunity for researchers/staff/students to develop and improve their skills in interacting with public groups.
3. Enable involvement and new voices/perspectives in research.

As well as more generic monitoring, we consider formative and summative evaluation questions to support understanding of the value of the event and how to improve. Data collected will be used to improve our events, report to internal stakeholders and themes may be used to report to external stakeholders. All data collected is either anonymous at collection or anonymised at processing stage.

If there are specific outcomes you would like to measure from your activities/events, we suggest building it into your plans. We can provide advice on how to do this, if needed. We cannot carry out evaluation for your specific activity/event.

Current approaches:

- **Online live events– “Today’s Event”**: to capture immediate reactions and build knowledge of our audience. By invitation in closing remarks of event host (link posted in the chat) and via follow-up email (Eventbrite bookings).
- **In-person events**: feedback form attached in the “Thank you!” email sent to visitors who have booked via Eventbrite.
- **Systems/Social Media analytics**: via booking system, Eventbrite, hashtags, platform insights, etc.

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Q12: How can I stay connected on social media with Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival?

To stay connected with the UoS Festival team, you can follow **UoS Engagement** on our social media channels, on [X](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

You can also follow **#UoSArtsHumFest** on social media for updates and news.

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Q13: What other events can I contribute towards?

For Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival, you can contribute with one or more **online** or **in-person** events or activities.

The UoS Festival team will organise **Arts and Humanities Day** as a face-to-face event in 2024. Internal and external exhibitors are welcome to submit one or more activities for the day.

This autumn/winter, you can contribute towards related special events including [Black History Month](#) (October), [UK Disability History Month](#) (November – December) and [LGBT+ History Month](#) (February 2025).

Apart from Southampton Arts and Humanities Festival, the UoS Festival team at the Public Engagement with Research unit organises a number of family-friendly events across the year.

Our annual [Southampton Science and Engineering Festival](#) (SOTSEF) is held every March, during [British Science Week](#), and the programme usually includes Science and Engineering Day, a free family-friendly event taking place across Highfield Campus and Boldrewood Innovation Campus, packed with more than one hundred interactive hands-on activities, workshops, live shows, art performances and laboratory tours from across all of our faculties.

During the summer, the UoS Festival team also bring UoS members of staff and students at different regional events with the [‘Bringing Research to Life’ Roadshow](#), the University of Southampton’s itinerant platform designed to bring research to new audiences across the region.

For past events, please watch some of the recordings on the [UoS Festival YouTube channel](#).

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