



SUMMER SHOWCASE 2021 Guidelines

Please read these guidelines carefully before completing your application

Introduction

The annual British Academy Summer Showcase celebrates the outstanding humanities and social science research shaping our world. In previous years, the festival has featured in-person exhibits alongside pop-up talks, workshops and performances. However, due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the plans for 2020 were significantly altered to take place as an online event. While the current situation remains uncertain, the Academy is hopeful for a phased return to live events in Summer 2021, with a hybrid model of festival activity featuring digital and in-person elements.

With this in mind, the 2021 Summer Showcase will run from **14-19 June**, with online events taking place **14-17 June** and a smaller scale in-person festival featuring interactive exhibits on **18-19 June** (guided tours of the exhibits on the evening of **17 June** will serve as an exclusive private view for a VIP audience).

We are looking for around 10 interactive exhibits, which will be given a space in the British Academy's building during the festival run. And we are also looking for creative proposals for online events, which will take place in the week leading up to the festival (14-17 June); we expect to include up to 10 events in the online programme. All exhibits and online events will be based on research funded by the British Academy (or the British International Research Institutes).

Regardless of the circumstances we find ourselves in next June, we are confident about staging a memorable occasion, to showcase the humanities and social sciences and the brightest minds working across these disciplines.

Deadline for applications: Wednesday 25 November 2021

Who attends the Showcase?

In 2020, we delivered a fully online festival, with 3600 views of the festival content in the first 48 hours. The majority of views came from audiences based across the UK.

In 2019, we welcomed 1900 visitors to the Summer Showcase, with 515 attending the Private View and 1385 attending the public days. Over the two public days, visitors included school students (age 14-18), higher education students, and a social younger

audience (38% of visitors were under the age of 35), in addition to lifelong learners and families.

In 2021 we are looking to attract the following audiences:

Monday 14-Thursday 17 June: Online events – these activities will reach an established digital audience both in the UK and internationally. We are also particularly keen to reach a younger public audience of under 35s.

Thursday 17 June, 5-9pm: Private View tours – this exclusive event will allow exhibitors to showcase their research to a small, invited audience including senior figures from cultural organisations, funders, politicians, senior government figures and members of the press.

Friday 18 June, 1-9pm: The showcase will be open to the wider public, and will particularly appeal to lifelong learners, higher education students, people in their 20s and 30s, families etc. This will include the Summer Showcase Late, a social evening aimed at younger audiences in their 20s and 30s and a wider public.

Saturday 19 June, 11-5pm: The showcase will be open to the wider public, and will particularly appeal to lifelong learners, higher education students, people in their 20s and 30s, families etc.

How can you be involved?

The in-person exhibits

Interactive in-person exhibits, based on research funded by the British Academy (or the British International Research Institutes) will be given a space in the British Academy's building during the festival run. Successful exhibitors will be expected to staff their displays (with support from two co-exhibitors) and explain their research to visitors in accessible terms. The exhibits should be interactive, and activities to accompany displays are welcomed and encouraged. Exhibitors should think carefully about social distancing and hygiene measures when designing their exhibit (the Events Team will also work with successful applicants to ensure government guidelines - as they stand at the time of the showcase - are adhered to). Members of the public, who will need to book in advance (in small groups of six maximum), will walk around the Academy's building to view the exhibits following a set route.

The online events

In addition to the in-person exhibits, we are looking for creative online events based on research funded by the British Academy (or the British International Research Institutes), taking place as part of the festival's online programme in the week before the in-person activity. Successful applicants will submit imaginative ideas which showcase and explain their research in accessible ways. Interactive elements and opportunities for online audiences to take part or contribute during the event are welcomed and encouraged.

When planning the festival, the Academy will of course prioritise the safety of its participants and attendees, with arrangements monitored and adjusted in line with government guidance.

In-person exhibit and online event examples

Examples of the eclectic mix of exhibits featured at the Summer Showcase in the past include:

- **Is 3D cinema only good for spectacle and novelty, or can it do more?**
An exhibit that explored 3D technology through VR headsets, 3D films and handling objects including a stereoscope.
- **What can our ancestors teach us about sleeping well?**
A museum-style display featuring a bed, sleep related props and scent jars. Visitors could also take part in a drop-in workshop to make their own scent bag to take home.
- **Can artists' books transform the way we think about health, wellbeing and illness?**
Featuring multisensory works by contemporary artists, this exhibit explored how book artists have used their craft to share stories about health and wellbeing. Visitors were able to take away a craft kit to make their own book at home.

Examples of creative online event formats include:

- **The digital dinner party [part of the Summer Showcase 2020]**
Dinner and conversation featured in this cook-along style event inspired by research into eighteenth century menus and eating habits.
- **Feminist whodunnit [led by LSE, part of the Being Human Festival 2020]**
An interactive Cluedo-style event which presents participants with a series of 'clues' to piece together the lives of feminist writers and activists.

Details of past Summer Showcases can be found here:

<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/events/summershowcase/>

What exhibits and events are we looking for in 2021?

We are looking for researchers who are passionate about their work and excited to share it with a non-specialist audience. The challenge is to take specialist knowledge in your subject area and to share this in ways that will be appealing and engaging to non-specialist audiences. You may also choose to use this opportunity to inform your research.

We are looking for a range of exhibits and online activity from across our disciplines, which preferably include interactive and/or hands-on elements. We appreciate that it may not be appropriate – or possible – for all research to be presented in this way, especially in the current climate, but we encourage proposers to suggest formats that lend themselves to their research while bearing in mind the needs of public audiences.

In-person formats might include:

- **An installation or set design** for visitors to interact with. *N.B. As the Academy is a listed building, we are keen to avoid complicated built stands. Smaller built displays, or larger installations that do not include complex builds would be welcomed.*
- **Props or interactive models** to visually showcase research.
- **Digital displays**, e.g. projections of film clips; listening booths to share audio; computer game stations; VR headsets to provide 3D imagery.
- **Professional photography displays**

Activities to accompany displays are welcomed and encouraged. These could range from pop-up performances, sensory experiences and voting boxes to experiments, drop-in workshops or hands-on activities.

Things to consider:

- Your exhibit must be Covid-safe. While the Events Team will work with you to ensure government guidelines (as they stand at the time of the showcase) are adhered to, please think about how you can stage your exhibit as safely as possible, while not compromising on interactivity. I.e.:
 - If you want to include samples for people to try or smell, you can use single-use and sealed items.
 - If you want to include a workshop activity, we can factor in cleaning schedules between tour groups. Or suggest single-use or take away kits for people to complete activities at home.
 - If you wanted to show 3D films or create audio booths, we could provide single-use 3D glasses or headphones.
 - If you wanted to create an interactive model or set design, you should intend for these to be large to ensure that there is space for social distancing (i.e. could a small group of people safely interact with your model?).
 - If you want to include handling objects, we could provide disposable gloves for visitors to wear.
 - You might consider an element that involves using visitors' own phones e.g. an online activity while they are at your exhibit.

Digital formats might include:

- **Play-along games or quizzes**, test your audience's knowledge or take votes.
- **Performances or storytelling**, you could include points at which the audience decide the future of the story.

- **Events with art and craft-making activities to do at home**, such as collage-making, sketching or draw-alongs.

Things to consider:

- To make activities as part of events accessible, think about what materials the audience are likely to have at home.
- Consider downloadable resources such as an activity kit that can be used at home alongside an event.
- How can you utilise online event functions like polls and Q&As to increase audience engagement? Think about how to include the audience beyond a Q&A section in your event.

We suggest that you liaise with your university’s public engagement team before submitting your proposal.

Co-exhibitors for in-person exhibits

In-person exhibits should have two co-exhibitors with them for the duration of the showcase as visitors expect to interact with the academics behind the research and ask them questions about their work. This set-up will also allow exhibitors to take breaks. Co-exhibitors can be award co-applicants, colleagues, charity partners, students etc. Proposers must secure the permission of any individuals listed as a potential co-exhibitor on their application form.

What does the British Academy provide?

- **For in-person exhibits:**
 - **The venue** – each exhibitor will be allocated a space (with ample room for social distancing) in our building during the showcase
 - **The exhibits** - a small fund will be set aside for each exhibit. For the exhibits and events mentioned on p.2, the Academy covered all costs associated with these as follows:
 - A built wall to display 3D posters; the hire of 5 VR headsets, the hire of a 3D TV to show films; the hire of benches to view films. All other equipment (including handling objects) was brought by the exhibitor.
 - The purchase of a bed as the lead prop; Tudor sleep props and scent jars for audiences to smell; the hire of a TV to show a film. Materials for a drop-in workshop.
 - The take-home kits for the audience to make their own artists’ books, as well as materials that formed the activity station at the exhibit.
 - All in-person exhibits will also have a designed panel and information boards, providing visitors with an overview of the display.

N.B. while we have a limited budget for each exhibit, proposers can still be ambitious in their application forms. We therefore encourage

applicants to suggest a core idea, and then add details or a wish list that would further enhance the exhibit.

- **Two nights' accommodation and standard UK travel for each exhibitor and their two co-exhibitors.** N.B. Three nights' accommodation will be offered to some exhibitors, dependant on their location.
- **A small travel fund has also been set aside to support the participation of up to one award holder based outside of the UK.** This will allow a scholar and their team based overseas to participate in the event. Three nights' accommodation will also be provided.
- **Food and drink for exhibitors** will be provided at the Academy during the showcase.
- **For digital events:**
 - **A technical team to provide support.** This will include pre-event testing to make sure the event runs smoothly and to troubleshoot issues.
 - **Digital events platform** e.g. Zoom Webinar, with interactive features including polls and audience Q&A
 - **Audience management**, including booking and promotion in the lead up to the event, troubleshooting technical questions from the audience or connection issues and fielding audience questions during the event.
 - **An established digital audience**, with a chance to share your research with a large audience across the UK and internationally.

All award holders, regardless of whether they take part in-person or online, will also benefit from:

- **An extensive promotional campaign** to attract visitors, to reach those who cannot attend the showcase, and to widely promote the event, the research on show and the academics behind the projects will start in Spring 2021. All exhibitors will be invited to help further the reach of the festival through a variety of digital channels, such as blog posts and curated digital content. The Academy's media team will also be proactive in seeking profile and feature opportunities.
- **British Academy staff time and expertise** – the Events Team will help exhibitors to create their displays, manage the events to ensure everything runs smoothly, and will be on hand at the showcase to support the exhibitors. AV staff will be available on each day of the showcase for the in-person exhibits and will assist with the planning of displays in the lead up to the event. Advice, technical and planning support will be available for the online events.

- **Public engagement training for exhibitors** will be provided as a free masterclass in Spring 2021. This event will include sessions on planning & logistics, audiences and evaluation (including a brief session on impact).
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Why should you apply?

- **Share your research with different audiences**, including younger audiences and lifelong learners. During the private view tours, exhibitors will also get to present their research and network with influencers, funders, policy makers, senior staff working for cultural organisations, politicians, senior government figures and press.
- **Inspire the next generation.** In 2019, 38% of our visitors were under 35. The showcase is therefore ideal for reaching a younger audience.
- **Raise your profile.** The showcase will be promoted widely through digital channels and in the media - successful online or in-person exhibitors will reach thousands more people than just those who attend the festival.
- **Get public opinions.** Find out what people think about your research and gain valuable feedback. We also share with you the results of our public evaluation, making it easy to see your immediate impact.
- **Get lasting benefits.** We provide expert public engagement training for exhibitors that you can take back to your research team and/or use when taking part in other in-person events in the future.
- **Our help at every stage.** Using our experience, we support and advise you from start to finish, from planning and bringing your exhibit or event to life to IT support and logistics.

The feedback from previous exhibitors has been excellent, with comments as follows:

Both the responses of guests and conversations with other exhibitors have given me ideas for developing this research and for other projects. (2018 exhibitor)

'The level of audience engagement, interest and enthusiasm was surprisingly high. It made for a really productive, two-way experience. The range of exhibits, activities, talks etc. was amazing and also a real strength of the showcase.' (2019 exhibitor)

'Thank you so much for the opportunity to be part of the Summer Showcase... It was a stretching and wonderful learning opportunity... The research participants who have watched it and those whose poems I included have also expressed gratitude and pride in having been part of the research presented.' (2020 exhibitor)

Selection criteria

Submitted applications will be passed to the Summer Showcase working group, chaired by the British Academy's Vice-President of Public Engagement, for review. The working group are looking for current award holders whose work is sufficiently advanced, or past award holders still in the process of disseminating their research findings. They will select the exhibits and events, based on the following:

- How well the exhibit – or online event - has been conceived.
- The accessibility of the research featured. Will the subject matter be of interest to broad audiences? Is there potential for interactive elements, which are favoured by the intended audiences?
- How well will the proposals translate to digital audiences and potentially generate interest from the media? (N.B. All researchers, whether they are staging an in-person exhibit or online event, will be asked to help further the reach of the festival through a variety of digital channels, such as blog posts and curated digital content).
- Subject spread and diversity. The British Academy is committed to showcasing a diverse community of scholars across the humanities and social sciences. The working group will be looking for a mix of exhibits which stem from different funding streams and span different subject areas. The showcase also seeks to include researchers at different career stages and from different universities across the UK (with scope to include one scholar from overseas).

Ahead of the working group's meeting in December, members will grade the applications based on the above. In their meeting, they will decide which proposals are successful, with the outcome conveyed to applicants in mid-late December.

Regrettably we are not able to offer feedback on unsuccessful applications for the Summer Showcase scheme, and the Academy is unable to enter into correspondence regarding the decisions of the working group.

Timeline

- **Deadline: Wednesday 25 November 2020:** apply through FlexiGrant via the British Academy website.
 - **Late November:** Applications circulated to the working group for review.
 - **Early-mid December 2020:** the working group meet to select the successful exhibits.
 - **By end of December:** Proposers to be informed of the outcome.
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Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I am not funded by the British Academy (BA) or one of the British International Research Institutes (BIRI), can I apply?

A. No, all proposers must have received funding from the BA or BIRI.

Q. My research doesn't lend itself to an interactive/hands on display. Should I still apply?

A. Yes. We appreciate that it is not appropriate for all exhibits to be interactive. We ask all proposers to suggest displays that suit their research while bearing in mind the needs of public audiences. You might like to consider if your research will translate well through an interactive online event instead.

Q. How can I make sure my exhibit idea is COVID-safe?

A. The Academy would like to support exhibits which feature interactive elements and the Events Team will work with you to ensure government guidelines (as they stand at the time of the showcase) are adhered to. You may wish to refer to current government guidance and consider social distancing and hygiene in your proposal.

Q. Does the showcase have a theme?

A. No. The showcase highlights how much audiences enjoyed the eclectic nature of research on display.

Q. I don't have any co-exhibitors in mind, can you help?

A. Yes. We understand that some researchers won't have co-researchers, charity partners, or students who could assist during the showcase. Your proposal will not be affected by the omission of co-exhibitors, and if successful the Academy will help you to secure support ahead of the event.

Q. I have more than two co-exhibitors. If I am successful, can I bring them to the showcase?

A. The Academy can only support the travel and accommodation costs of two co-exhibitors per display. You are welcome to mention more support staff if you (or your university) can cover these costs. However, due to social distancing, we may not be able to accommodate this request.

Q. My in-person exhibit is going to be costly. Is it worth applying?

Yes. While we only have a small funding pot for each exhibit we are keen to receive proposals for ambitious and innovative displays. The working group may decide to include fewer exhibits to help fund a costly proposal, or we may be able to free up funds if other exhibits are less costly. If your university can help cover the cost of your display, we can of course credit them on the display panel and related marketing literature.

Q. If my proposal is successful, can I make changes to the exhibit or online event at a later date?

A. Yes. Successful proposers will be expected to create an exhibit or online event similar to what the working group approved. However, changes are acceptable, and the Academy's Events Team will work with you to develop your proposal and suggest ways to enhance it (where appropriate).

Q. I am not available for the duration of the showcase, can I still apply?

A. No. In-person exhibitors are expected to be on hand to explain their research for the duration of the showcase, Thursday 17 June – Saturday 19 June 2021.

The Academy is committed to supporting academics who may be unable to present across the whole three days due to medical reasons, childcare arrangements etc. and we can liaise with you to ensure that your display is covered by co-exhibitors during the times you are not available. However, those who are unable to present due to reasons such as conflicting diary engagements will not be considered.

Q. What should I do if I have a query about the application process?

A. Email your query to summershowcase@thebritishacademy.ac.uk

Q. If I am not successful, can the working group offer feedback?

A. Regrettably we are not able to offer feedback on unsuccessful applications for the Summer Showcase scheme, and the Academy is unable to enter into correspondence regarding the decisions of the working group.
