



## **SUMMER SHOWCASE 2022 Guidelines**

Please read these guidelines carefully before completing your application

### **Introduction**

**We are seeking creative proposals to exhibit at the next Summer Showcase in 2022!**

Taking place on Friday 17 and Saturday 18 June (with a Private View on the evening of Thursday 16 June) the annual British Academy Summer Showcase celebrates the brightest minds and outstanding humanities and social sciences research shaping our world. We are looking for researchers who are passionate about their work and excited to share it with public audiences.

We are looking for up to 15 interactive exhibits, based on research funded by the British Academy (or the British International Research Institutes), which will be given a space in the Academy's building during the festival run. In addition, the Academy's Events Team will curate online activity to run alongside the festival.

Having staged the 2020 and 2021 Summer Showcase events online, we are planning a return to an in-person Summer Showcase in 2022, but will closely monitor the evolving situation and government COVID-19 guidelines to ensure the safety of all those involved.

**Deadline for applications: Wednesday 24 November 2021, 5PM GMT**

---

### **Who attends the Showcase?**

At our last in-person festival 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 delivered an online Summer Showcase, with over 850 watching events live, and over 4000 catching up on the content on-demand after the festival. Online events included talks, discussions and demonstrations, and in addition, the programme featured two socially-distanced in-person audio walks in London.

In 2022 we are looking to attract the following audiences:

**Thursday 16 June, 5-9pm:** Private View - this exclusive event will allow exhibitors to showcase their research to an invited audience ranging from parliamentarians and university vice-chancellors to senior staff working for cultural organisations and press.

**Friday 17 June, 10-4pm:** A 'schools friendly' day geared towards secondary school students (14+), particularly sixth form students, with a related programme of events developed with a guest curator.

**Friday 17 June, 6-9pm:** A social evening aimed at younger audiences in their 20s and 30s and a wider public.

**Saturday 18 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 exhibits

Up to 15 interactive 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.

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.

---

### Exhibit examples

Examples of the eclectic mix of exhibits selected for past Summer Showcases 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.*

We recommend you look at other past Summer Showcase exhibits, which can be found here: <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/events/summershowcase/>

---

## **What exhibits are we looking for in 2022?**

We are looking for a range of exhibits from across our disciplines, led by researchers who take specialist knowledge and communicate this in ways that will be appealing and engaging. You may also choose to use this opportunity to inform your research.

Visitors to the showcase particularly enjoy:

- **Interactions with researchers**, including high quality conversations with exhibitors who were enthusiastic about their research and passionate about sharing it with non-specialists.
- **Interactive exhibits**, where they can try activities and interact or engage with research in a practical way. Examples might include sensory experiences such as using smells or sounds; voting boxes or feedback cards; short drop-in activities such as puzzles and quizzes; or simple activities to try in person or kits to take home.
- **Strong, visual exhibits**, including those which have a connection to social or global issues. You should think about how you might make your display visually appealing.

Interactive elements to accompany displays are welcomed and encouraged. 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 you to suggest formats that lend themselves to your research while bearing in mind the need to appeal and be accessible to public audiences.

Exhibits might also feature:

- **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.
- **Pop-up performances** to bring elements of research to life.
- **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**

You should think carefully about hygiene measures when designing your exhibit. While the Events Team will work with you to ensure the government's COVID-19 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 short workshop activity, we can factor in cleaning schedules. 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 consider ventilation (if enclosed) and how to allow space for visitors to feel comfortable.
- If you want to include handling objects, we could provide disposable gloves for visitors to wear and/or wipes to sanitise items between use.
- You might consider an element that involves using visitors' own phones e.g. an online activity while they are at your exhibit.

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

---

### Co-exhibitors for exhibits

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?

- **The venue** – each exhibitor will be allocated a space 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.2-3, 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 exhibits will also have a designed panel/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 one award holder and team 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.
- **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 2022. 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 and set up their displays, manage the event 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 exhibits and will assist with the planning of displays in the lead up to the event.
- **Briefing session for exhibitors** will be provided in spring 2022. This will include information on planning & logistics, audiences and evaluation.

---

## Why should you apply?

- **Share your research** with different audiences, including younger audiences and lifelong learners. During the Private View, exhibitors will also present their research to 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 and over 200 school children attended. 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, reaching 1000s of people.
- **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 impact.
- **Get lasting benefits.** Build on your experience to develop your own public engagement activity 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 online event lead)

*'It was a real privilege to participate in the Summer Showcase and such a useful learning experience for me. I'm certainly hoping to get involved with more public engagement events in the future.'*  
(2021 online event lead)

## **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 based on the following:

- How well the exhibit 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 audiences?

- How well will the proposals translate to digital audiences and potentially generate interest from the media? (N.B. All researchers 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 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 24 November 2021, 5PM GMT:** apply through Flexi-Grant via the British Academy website.
- **Late November 2021:** Applications circulated to the working group for review.
- **Early-mid December 2021:** the working group meet to select the successful exhibits.
- **By end of December 2021:** Proposers to be informed of the outcome.

---

## 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 could consider how you can communicate your research and make your display visually appealing.

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

A. The Academy 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 hygiene measures in your proposal.

**Q. Does the showcase have a theme?**

A. No. The showcase evaluations have highlighted 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. Please note that we may not be able to accommodate additional co-exhibitors if social distancing measures are required either by our venue or by government regulations.

**Q. My 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 at a later date?**

A. Yes. Successful proposers will be expected to create an exhibit 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. Exhibitors are expected to be on hand to explain their research for the duration of the showcase, Thursday 16 June – Saturday 18 June 2022. 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](mailto: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.

---