

Supporting research in the humanities

School of Advanced Study – Public Engagement Strategy

Overview

The School of Advanced Study's ongoing commitment to public engagement and open access to research can be seen in its year-round calendar of public events, its publications, podcasts and digital platforms for research, its long term collaborative relationships with the [Bloomsbury Festival](#) and other cultural and community organisations, and its training provision both for internal and external staff and students. More recently, the school has initiated [Being Human](#): the UK's first national festival dedicated to public engagement with the humanities.

Context

As reflected in policy and funding priorities across the sector, there is a growing recognition of the need to integrate public engagement strategies in the training of academic staff, the dissemination of research outputs, and the management of libraries, collections and archives.

The [National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement's](#) (NCCPE) definition:

Public engagement describes the many ways in which higher education institutions and their staff and students can connect and share their work with the public. Done well, it generates mutual benefit, with all parties learning from each other through sharing knowledge, expertise and skills. In the process, it can build trust, understanding and collaboration, and increase the sector's relevance to, and impact on, civil society.

The School of Advanced Study is a signatory of the NCCPE's *Manifesto for Public Engagement*. As such it recognises a responsibility to contributing to society through public engagement, to learning from and evaluating this process and to allowing staff, students and fellows to benefit from public engagement by gaining new perspectives and insights on their work.

Public Engagement Strategy

The School of Advanced Study is uniquely placed to play a leading role in facilitating public engagement activity in the humanities on both local and national levels. As a national centre for supporting and promoting humanities research, it is able to take a leading role in embedding public engagement with humanities research both internally and within a broader research culture across the sector.

Reflecting its core mission to 'facilitate, promote and support research in the humanities', it is timely for the School to integrate public engagement with research conducted across its ten institutes and broader research networks on a central, strategic level.

In doing so it commits to:

- Making public engagement with research a core part of its national mission to ‘support, facilitate and promote research in the humanities and social sciences’.
- Facilitating public engagement with the work of SAS’s active research projects and academics.
- Facilitating public engagement with the school’s libraries, archives and collections.
- Offering training opportunities for staff and students to gain skills in public engagement.
- Offering support and forums for public engagement with humanities research, including coordinating the UK’s only national festival of the humanities: Being Human.

It will do so by means of the following core activities:

Being Human festival of the humanities:

The Being Human festival, led by SAS in partnership with the AHRC and British Academy is the School’s main forum for coordinating public engagement activity with humanities research on a national scale.

Bloomsbury Festival:

The Bloomsbury Festival, of which the School is a partner and funder, is the School’s main outlet for civic and cultural engagement.

Public Engagement Innovators Scheme:

Three grants of up to 2k are given throughout the year. These awards are designed to facilitate innovative public engagement activity with research in the humanities. Awards are judged by a cross-institute panel.

Public Outreach:

To facilitate cross-School collaborations with cultural and community partners. This would include, for example, collaborations with partner HEIS, cultural organisations, schools, colleges and community organisations.

Training & Grant Writing Support:

SAS provides basic introductory training in public engagement to research students in the humanities and social sciences. It also provides support to staff and fellows on integrating public engagement into grant proposals.

Contact:

Dr Michael Eades
Cultural and Public Engagement Research Fellow
T: +44 (0)20 7862 8693
E: michael.eades@sas.ac.uk