

Festival of Social Science 2024

programme report

Overview

The [Festival of Social Science](#) is an annual celebration of the role social science research plays in helping understand some of the big issues facing society and has been delivered by holders of the Economic and Social Research Council's Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) grants since 2002.

The 2024 Festival took place between Saturday 19 October to Saturday 9 November. Over this time the Public Engagement Unit supported six researcher-led in-person events, organised an outdoor exhibition, hosted a showcase exhibition and delivered three online events. The programme of activities was attended by 3,999 members of the public and involved 44 researchers from across the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science and the School of Management. The full details of the University of Bath Festival of Social Science programme can be found on the [Festival of Social Science 2024 announcement blog](#).

Programming approach

The Festival programme was managed by a Festival of Social Science steering group chaired by the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences' (HSS) Associate Dean (Research), Emma Carmel, and included members from the academic and Research Enabler community in HSS and the School of Management (SoM) and the Public Engagement Unit. A tiered approach was agreed by the Steering Group to mobilise colleagues from across HSS and the SoM to participate in the Festival. This involved:

- Direct invites to research entities to deliver any public events they are currently planning in the autumn to coincide with the Festival period
- Open call for events to academic colleagues with the offer of support from the Public Engagement Unit to develop their ideas and funding with a focus on those researchers outside structured research entities
- Delivering a training opportunity for doctoral students to support them in developing a public engagement activity to run during the Festival

In addition to this approach to developing a programme, the Public Engagement Unit would manage the Images of Research exhibition at Bath Spa railway station, *I'm a Social Scientist – Ask Me Anything!* online events, the Minerva Lecture, and the Research Assembly, a showcase event of partnerships and collaborations on the theme of children and young people.

University of Bath Festival of Social Science programme

The University's contribution consisted of 11 events. The programme consisted of six researcher-led in-person events, one outdoor exhibition, one showcase exhibition and three online events

Exhibition

Images of Research exhibition (Wed 16 Oct to Wed 6 Nov 2024)



The University's Images of Research exhibition at Bath Spa railway station covered whole of the the Festival of Social Science period and highlighted a range of social science research projects. The exhibition is estimated to have been visited by 3,306 people during this week and featured images submitted by 22 researchers from all departments across the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science.

Live in-person events

Remembering France: Gender and Football in the Red Wall of Wales (Wed 6 & Fri 8 Nov 2024)



Penny Miles (Politics, Languages & International Studies) presented her film exploring the experiences of female football fans during the Welsh men's international football campaign in the European Championship tournament in 2016. At two events Penny hosted panel discussions with a

range of new and established fans, former players and members of the Football Association Wales. In total 80 people attended the events in Cardiff's Grange Pavilion and Wrexham's Ty Pawb.

Should Prisons be Beautiful? – (Tues 5 Nov 2024)



Inspired by Yvonne Jewkes' (Social & Policy Sciences) research on rehabilitative prison design and coinciding with the publication of her book *An Architecture of Hope*, she and her collaborator Andy West hosted a creative discussion event asking, 'should prisons be beautiful?'. 32 people joined attended this event at Bristol's Hamilton House and engaged in lively discussion including people with lived experience of the justice system and current and former workers within the prison estate.

The Research Assembly – (Thurs 7 Nov 2024)



Hosted by the Percy Community Centre, The Research Assembly brought 12 researchers and their partners together to showcase their collaborations on the theme of children and young people. Among films, stalls and an exhibition, 97 people representing a range of third sector, community-based and statutory bodies such as Off the Record B&NES, Jamie's Farm, Youth Connect South West, Bath Area Play Project and Bath Rugby Foundation, came along to the event. Alongside the showcase we also hosted two masterclasses in measuring and evaluating social impact for community groups led by local social enterprise Octopus Impact attended by 30 people.

Tobacco Slave film screening & discussion (Thurs 7 Nov 2024)



Tobacco Slave is a film that explores labour exploitation in the global tobacco industry focusing on the experiences of farmers in Malawi and Kenya by Roy Maconachie (Department of Social & Policy Sciences) and Simon Wharf (Creative Services). The film was screened and followed by a panel discussion between Roy, Phil Chamberlain (Tobacco Control Research Group) and Pankhuri Agarwal (School of Management) chaired by Chrissie Giles (The Bureau of Investigative Journalism), to discuss how historical colonial practices and current business practices of the tobacco industry are intersecting. In total 55 people attended the event at the Little Theatre cinema.

Online events

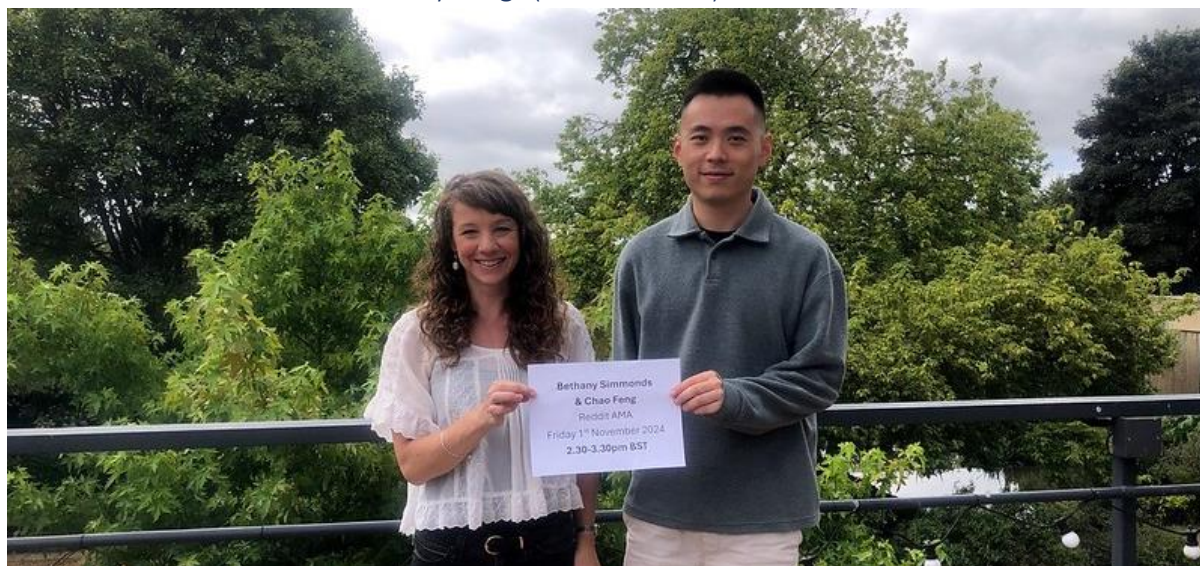
Minerva Lecture - Ecological Loss and Grieving the non-human (Wed 13 Nov 2024)



Kate Woodthorpe (Social & Policy Sciences), Co-Director of the Centre for Death & Society chaired a panel discussion broadcast live from the University of Bath's TV studio exploring what it means to grieve for ecological, environmental and political systems. Kate was joined by Darcy Harris (King's Western University, Canada), Caroline Hickman (Education), and campaigners and activists Emily Malik and Caleb Parkin to discuss how we make sense of non-human loss and what it means for our

understanding of being human. The event was broadcast to an audience of 70 people from UK and internationally.

I'm a Social Scientist – Ask Me Anything! (various dates)



Four researchers: Bethany Simmonds and Chao Fang (Visiting Fellows at the Centre for Death & Society), Ed Keogh and Ian Taverner (Psychology) invited users of social news website Reddit to ask them anything about their work. Each logged into Reddit and spent an hour in a chat-based discussion on the platform answering questions posed to them about their research. These events proved popular with a total of 359 active engagements with users (this includes questions, shares and up-votes of the topic).

Rescheduled events

Two events programmed for the Festival unfortunately had to be rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances. These were:

Change the Game - Preventing injuries in Community Sport – (Wed 6 Nov 2024)

Led by Keith Stokes and Carly McKay (Health), this aimed to bring researchers from the Centre for Health, and Injury and Illness Prevention in Sport (Chi2PS) together with community and grass-roots sports clubs to discuss their experiences of improving safety for players in community sports and help shape the research priorities for Chi2PS.

Festival of Girls' Football - Players Tournament (Mon 21 Oct 2024)

Responding to the calls from girls' football teams, researchers from the Department for Health, teams at Sport@Bath, Bath and North East Somerset council and eight local schools developed a player-led tournament hosted at the University of Bath's Sports Training Village to celebrate girl's participation in the game.

The funding allocated to both these events will be honoured as partners are engaged in the delivery of this work and venues have been secured. Both these events will be delivered in spring 2025.

Festival of Social Science 2025

The Festival Steering Group agreed that the 2025 approach to programming should include:

- An open call for event contributions to departments in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science and divisions in the School of Management
- Research entities being asked to schedule any public-facing events they are planning in autumn 2025 to the Festival of Social Science period

- A collaboration with the Holburne Museum as part of their Up Late event. Hands-on interactive activities will be delivered by early career researchers as an output from a festivals training programme that will be offered to a cohort of researchers
- A Research Assembly showcase on a new theme (to be confirmed in spring 2025)
- Delivery of programmes managed by the Public Engagement Unit - Minerva Lecture and Reddit Ask Me Anythings

Dean Veall (Deputy Head of Public Engagement)

December 2024