

ORAL HISTORY FESTIVAL 2024

Oral History Society in partnership with National Life Stories at the British Library

SATURDAY 6th JULY

The Knowledge Centre, The British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB

THIS FESTIVAL NEEDS YOU



CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR A DAY OF REFLECTION, LISTENING, CONVERSATIONS AND PARTICIPATORY SESSIONS WITH ORAL HISTORY COLLEAGUES

The FESTIVAL will give attendees the chance to spend a day exploring a diverse range of ideas within oral history. Each person will have the opportunity to reflect on their practice, discuss with others and – hopefully – gain new perspectives on oral history that they can apply to their work.

This festival needs you! We invite colleagues to work in groups of two or

more people and propose a 60 or 90 minute participatory session – see some initial ideas below. Each session should have participation at its core through reflection and discussion. The call to propose sessions is open to ALL: experienced practitioners and those new to oral history, people working as independent practitioners, community

historians, archive, museum and library professionals, those using oral history in schools, postgraduate students and academics.

If selected to run a session at the festival you and/or your group will be asked to facilitate the session, with mentoring and support as needed from a member of the festival's organising group.

WHAT TOPICS MIGHT BE COVERED?

These need to be broad enough to encourage reflection and discussion. We welcome submissions from all areas of oral history. Some examples might be:

- Listening session to reflect on audio clips on a theme
- Discussion session focussing on a practical or ethical challenge
- Reflections on the positives and pitfalls of partnership working
- Unpacking a theoretical or methodological issue: e.g. what does 'shared authority' mean today?
- Practical brainstorming: how do I publish my oral history work?
- Questions of representation: which voices are missing from our projects and archives?
- Creative showcase with time for discussion: poetry, podcasts, theatre, art...

HOW DO THESE SESSIONS DIFFER FROM A CONFERENCE?

These will be peer-learning sessions, where participants are asked to reflect and join in the discussion as much as they wish. Although there may be short presentations, each session should be planned to help everyone reflect on their own practice and contribute to a wider discussion. Methods to help achieve this might include:

- Small group working, with report-backs
- Planning dedicated time for individual reflection
- Contributing thoughts on flip charts or post-it notes
- Doodling or drawing responses to discussion points
- Group listening to audio or creative pieces and reflection

- Gathering responses through simple polls or votes

HOW DO I PROPOSE A SESSION?

If you and one or more colleagues have an idea for a session, please send an outline proposal of no more than 250 words to polly.owen@ohs.org.uk by 22 March 2024 – earlier if you can! Please give an outline of your ideas for the session, how you see the session running and the ways you hope to encourage participation

and reflection. We are looking for varied/innovative/ different and exciting ideas – so please send a proposal even if you have not run a participatory session before.

The organising group will review the proposals and then feedback to all those who have proposed a session by early April. Members of the organising group can then offer input, if necessary, to those sessions which are accepted, supporting the development of an exciting array of participatory sessions.

- The day will start at 9.30 (with registration from 9.00am) and finish at 6pm.
- Festival fees: £75 Standard, £60 Concessions, £50 OHS Members. Includes lunch and refreshments.

FESTIVAL ORGANISING GROUP

Alan Butler, Craig Fees, Rob Perks, Mary Stewart
and Amy Tooth Murphy. Conference Manager – Polly Owen:
polly.owen@ohs.org.uk www.ohs.org.uk/conferences/

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