

Screen Heritage Dashboard

A Closer Look at the BFI Film Audience Network's UK-wide Screen Heritage Programme, Changing Times (2018-2023)



December 2022

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INTRODUCTION

Changing Times

From 2018, Film Hub North (FHN) oversaw the multi-year screen heritage programme, Changing Times, for BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) supported by National Lottery funding.

Across four activity windows, Changing Times encouraged FAN member exhibitors to showcase the material held in the UK's National and Regional Film Archives through ambitious screenings and events. Framed as an exploration of over a century of social change, funding has been available to support FAN Members across the UK to develop creative screenings and events that introduce audiences to new stories and new ways of experiencing film history.

The BFI FAN Screen Heritage programme aimed to:

- Increase exhibitor confidence with screen heritage
- Enhance the links between the archive and exhibition sectors
- Nurture young (16-30) and underrepresented audiences for archive film.

Throughout the programme, the UK's thirteen Regional and National Film Archives have been strategic partners on activity and priority was given to projects that have engaged with their individual collections. The Regional and National Film Archives are:

- [BFI National Archive](#)
- [The Box](#)
- [East Anglian Film Archive](#)
- [London's Screen Archives](#)
- [Media Archive for Central England](#)
- [The National Library of Scotland Moving Image Archive](#)
- [The National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales](#)
- [North East Film Archive](#)
- [North West Film Archive](#)
- [Northern Ireland Screen](#)
- [Screen Archive South East](#)
- [Wessex Film and Sound Archive](#)
- [Yorkshire Film Archive](#)

TIMELINE

The Themes

Each year, the programme took a distinct thematic approach with the aim of discovering stories from the archive that can connect with contemporary conversations and highlight the many voices, hidden histories and forgotten records that make up our collective past.

The four active years of Changing Times have been:

Women's Histories | January to May 2019

Celebrating the inspiring advances made by generations of remarkable women who have transformed attitudes and changed our everyday lives.

Shifting Ground | August-December 2019

An exploration of people's changing relationship with their environment. Shifting Ground was a response to one of the most pressing issues facing society today and an invitation to FAN Members to develop projects that use archive film to contribute to contemporary debates around climate change, land use, and crises of industry and housing.

New Directions* | July-November 2021

Retracing the historic steps that have brought the UK to its current political and cultural crossroads. Strands included

the UK's geopolitical journey from the end of the Empire to Brexit, the human experiences behind major domestic projects such as the founding of the NHS, or stories of immigration and the UK's diverse communities.

Curious | July - November 2022

Exploring stories within the archives which are unfamiliar, under-appreciated or of particular importance to audiences today. These might be traditional ways of life long forgotten or alternative lifestyles, underrepresented experiences of UK communities and scientific discoveries and technological explorations that emerged from the human drive to answer the question 'what if?'

** The third year of Changing Times - New Directions - was paused in March 2020 due to Covid 19 and the majority of the activity budget redirected to the Cultural Recovery Fund to support venues. It was relaunched in March 2021.*

PARTICIPATION

BFI FAN Members Engagement

Within these themes and timeframes, FAN Members have been encouraged to propose activity to the Screen Heritage Engagement Fund - a wide-ranging fund to support a variety of screening projects, from one-off events to full film seasons to larger-scale commissions.

An ask between £500 - £15,000 (capped at £10,000 for the final year) was available for FAN Members to cover:

- Curation fees, rights clearances and editing costs relating to the materials in the Regional and National Archives
- Film rights and print transport
- Marketing and PR campaigns
- Speaker, talent or artist fees
- Staffing costs related to the delivery of the project - eg. curation or project management costs
- Venue hire and project-specific equipment costs

- Volunteer costs and evaluation expenses
- Outreach and community access costs - eg. providing transport for isolated audiences
- Event/wraparound activity costs
- Accessibility costs - eg. subtitling fees

THE DASHBOARD

An Overview

The Screen Heritage Dashboard provides a comprehensive assessment of the first three years of Changing Times activity: **Women's Histories**, **Shifting Ground** and **New Directions** (2019-2021). Effort will be made to draw analysis from the live **Curious** programme, with audience facing activity continuing up to November 2022. Curious projects data will be added to from January 2023 onwards.

The evidence presented has been drawn from the following sources:

- Project Log Reports
- Narrative feedback
- In-person and online audience surveys
- Qualitative 1-2-1s with FAN members

The Screen Heritage Dashboard measures:

- impact on reaching audiences viewing screen heritage material from the UK public film archives, with a particular focus on BFI FAN priority groups - young (16-30) and diverse audiences.
- impact on delivery partners e.g National and Regional Film Archives and Film Audience Network Members
- visibility and the geographic reach of the Changing Times Programme across the Film Audience Network Membership

THE DASHBOARD

At a Glance

Over four activity windows Film Hub North has committed **£341,437** across **61** projects achieving **24,700** in-venue admissions so far, with the total overall **Cost Per Head** figure at **£13.82**.

At the time of writing, **13** of the Curious projects are still in the process of delivering activity (ending November 2022).

Full reporting and evaluation will be complete by **January 2023** but FHN is projecting a final figure of **34,000** in-venue admissions resulting in a cost per head of approximately **£10** outright for the programme.

From the three fully reported windows (2019-2021), Changing Times supported FAN organisations have delivered **294 screenings** in **136 locations** throughout the UK

Across these screenings, FAN Members have sourced **251 titles** engaging approximately **95 partnerships** with the Regional and National Film Archives, and 157 of screenings were accessible - **53%**.

And the fund's key audience targets were achieved and exceeded:

- Young Audiences (16-30) **21%** (Target 19%)
- Ethnically Diverse - **17%** (Target 10%)
- Disabled Audiences - **23%** (Target 10%)
- LGBTQ+ - **33%** (Target 11%)

REFLECTIONS

FAN Members

In response to the FAN target audiences, Film Hub North positioned the UK-wide multi-year programme as a testing ground to present screen heritage material in new ways. While place and location were still integral to project creation, the overriding theme of social change offered programmers a huge range of programming opportunities available in the archive.

In an effort enhance core programming beyond the cycle of new releases and canonical classics, the funding opportunity was flagged heavily with FAN cinema programmers, however direct cinema venue participation with programmers acting as project leads across Changing Times was relatively low at **2%**.

Feedback indicated that cinema programmers required greater development time when preparing archive screenings. The time sensitive issues around sourcing archive material availability, clearing rights, and technical demands involved were cited as discouraging film programmers within the selected activity windows.

As a consequence, Film Hub North retained the five-month activity time-frames but released the yearly themes way

ahead of the formal funding guidelines announcement to afford FAN Members more project development time to collaborate with the Regional and National Film Archives.

Conducive to this set-up, the majority of proposals received were from FAN Members who could operate outside of the cinema schedules and therefore had the capacity to collaborate with the strategic partners on an ambitious scale.

Producer-led organisations (**28%**), multi-Arts venues (**27%**) film festivals (**27%**) were therefore prominent across the successful proposals.

Notably, cultivated by this specific partnership engagement, **44%** of projects across Changing Times were **experimental**, consisting of interactive and immersive events that go beyond the limits of traditional screenings, providing large-scale audiences with exploratory experiences of archive film.

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These approaches included:

- immersive events, including gallery-style installations where archive footage sits alongside other artforms or production elements, or is projection mapped onto a specific location.
- Outdoor / Pop-up booths and screens providing temporary public archives in unexpected or meaningful places.
- New contemporary live scores performed alongside newly edited material or existing work

Due to this commitment, the average financial ask per project rose from **£3,702** in Year 1 to **£7,692** in Year 4, demonstrating the readiness for large-scale experimental events and the growing levels of FAN Member confidence with presenting screening heritage material in the new ways.

Naturally, **Traditional** approaches - guest speakers, talks, intros, Q&As and panel discussions - still played an integral part, contributing to **42%** of the screenings and events.



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And encouragingly, **Co-curation** delivery, working with external partners such as expert, young programmers or community groups to select films was a smaller but significant development at **13%** of projects.

Audience

Together, all three screening approaches - experimental, traditional and co-curation - cultivated an average of **57%** of **new audiences** to venues, accounting for approximately **14,000** in-venue admissions across the UK. This was a key outcome of the programme overall, demonstrating that archive film can engage new communities, and expand venue audiences for the long-term development.

Gaining interest from young audiences however with archive events still remains a challenge. There is still a persistent perception that archive film screenings are small, quaint events, attracting a niche but traditionally older audience. However, there was a keen interest from **young audiences (16-30)** with **21%** share.

And despite there being a limit in our publicly funded film collections in reflecting the full ethnic diversity of the UK,

the thematic positioning of the Changing Times programme encouraged open and inclusive programme possibilities bringing new stories in the archive to the screen, in an effort to re-address Black, Asian and ethnically diverse under-representation.

While the key audience targets were matched with **Ethnically Diverse** (17%), plus **d/Deaf and disabled** (23%) and **LGBTQ+** (33%) audiences, more research is needed to identify organisations both inside and outside of FAN who may be interested in delivering under-represented stories to audiences.

Furthermore, greater visibility of specialist and independent collections that would complement the Regional and National Film Archives should be highlighted for potential partnerships with FAN Members to nurture greater representation on screen.

In terms of geographic reach and visibility, as one of the largest Hub areas of the UK, the North received a 40% share of audiences (approximately 10,000 admissions) across 16 funded projects from the first three activity windows.

Throughout the nations and regions of BFI FAN, audience

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share was evenly distributed - Northern Ireland (15%, 2 projects), Midlands (11%, 5 projects), South West (10%, 3 projects), Scotland (9%, 9 projects) and South East (9%, 8 projects)

There was low engagement with Welsh audiences (4%, 1 project), and London was the lowest (3%, 4 projects), however, with New Directions, the initial activity window directly after the lockdowns, was the first year that activity was supported in all nations and regions of the network.

And while Curious supported activity directly to organisations in 6 of the hubs, screenings and events reached venues in all nations and regions through touring delivery.



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Lost Connections

Furthermore, [Lost Connections](#), the FOCAL award winning short film made through a unique collaboration involving 12 of the Regional and National Film Archives achieved 1035 in-venue admissions in 32 venue locations across the UK since August 2021.

Supported by Film Hub North to support exhibitors to include archive film material in their reopening programmes, the short was completely free to book - for online and in-venue screenings.

The short film brought together over 200 works spanning almost a century of film history, capturing the changing national mood throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

It has been viewed online (BFI Player / YouTube) - 7506 - and won the FOCAL award for Focal International 2022 award for Best Use Of Footage In Short Film Production.



GET IN TOUCH

Contact us

If you have any questions about this Changing Times programme and / or the data dashboard, do get in touch with the Film Hub North team: info@filmhubnorth.org.uk.

The BFI Film Audience Network

Supported by National Lottery funding, the [BFI Film Audience Network \(FAN\)](#) is central to the BFI's aim to ensure the greatest choice of film is available for everyone.

Established in 2012 to build wider and more diverse UK cinema audiences for British and international film, FAN is a unique, UK-wide collaboration made up of 8 Hubs managed by leading film organisations and venues strategically placed around the country.

To get involved with CURIOUS and other FAN opportunities, join your local film hub. The eight Film Hubs are:

- [Film Hub London](#)
- [Film Hub Midlands](#)
- [Film Hub North](#)
- [Film Hub Northern Ireland](#)
- [Film Hub Scotland](#)
- [Film Hub South West](#)
- [Film Hub South East](#)
- [Film Hub Wales](#)

Images: Side Cinema (Carl Joyce), Yorkshire Silent Film Festival's Echoes of the North: Four Chapters in Time (Timm Cleasby), Belfast Film Festival - 100 Years of Happiness (Filly Campbell), Side Cinema (Paul Alexander Knox), and Lost Connections.