

Events Toolkit: Case Study

Name and department: Siobhan Morris, History, Classics and Archaeology

Title of event: International London Walking Tours

- **Can you describe the event that you held? (e.g. detail the event, what did you do, attendee numbers, subject area, why did you do it)**

As part of the Being Human Festival 2016, the Reluctant Internationalists project led a series of walking tours around central London exploring the city as the home of international projects.

We conducted three tours: Wartime London (led by Jessica Reinisch), Epidemic London (led by Dora Vargha), and Communist London (led by Ana Antic & Johanna Conterio). Each tour took participants through the streets of central London to illuminate the stories, lives and organisations often hidden amid the contemporary bustle of the city. Throughout the walks, we aimed to present an alternative history of London, as a magnet for international ideas and collaborations.



Participants on the Epidemic London Walking Tour

- **What did you want to achieve by holding the event?**

The tours aimed to bring to life the Reluctant Internationalists project's research on the history of twentieth-century internationalism, by telling engaging stories about people, places and events. Anchoring these stories in the sites of contemporary London, allowed us

to engage the public with research and demonstrate how the history of international collaboration was shaped by and in turn helped to shape the city.

- **What worked well in the planning, design and delivery of the event?**

Organising three tours around separate themes helped to ensure the walks had a clear focus and allowed the tours' academic leads to draw on their research and specialist knowledge of the international history of London. The format of the walking tours also helped to open up the project's research to new audiences and created an excellent opportunity for academics to conduct public engagement with research in an accessible format.

- **What were the main challenges that you faced?**

For the event, registrations were managed via an online booking system. However, this proved challenging; attendance numbers were difficult to monitor and regulate, especially as the tours were free and open to all. Similarly, keeping the walking group together at times proved problematic due to the number of attendees.



A stop outside Queen's Hall during the Communist London Walking Tour

- **What top tips would you give to those considering running a similar event?**

Planning is vital. Walk the routes in advance, take consideration of access requirements and ensure that you have enough staff or volunteers to manage the size of the walking group. Utilise social media both for promotion and during the event - live tweeting the tours enabled us to create a visual record of each tour as well as engaging a wider audience. Also, make use of contacts across the College and speak to as many people as possible to gain advice and support.