



# Refugee Week

**Event Organiser Pack 2021**

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# What is Refugee Week?

**Refugee Week is an annual festival celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees.**



Image: © Counterpoints Arts

Founded in 1998 and held every year around World Refugee Day on the 20 June, Refugee Week allows people from different backgrounds to connect beyond labels, as well as encouraging understanding of why people are displaced and the challenges they face when seeking safety. Refugee Week is a platform for people who have sought safety in the UK to share their experiences, perspectives and creative work on their own terms.

Refugee Week 2021 is 14-20 June, and you can take part by holding your own online or in person\* event or activity, inspired by the theme [‘We Cannot Walk Alone’](#).

Your event can be big or small, and you can get involved wherever you are in the UK or the world – see our [international page](#) for more.

Refugee Week is a movement of people from a range of different backgrounds who believe the world is a better place when we come together – and is often the starting point for collaborations that last long after the week is over. Join us!

Refugee Week is a partnership project coordinated by [Counterpoints Arts](#).

\*within Covid restrictions at the time of the event



Refugee Week is a space for a wide range of activities, united by these core beliefs:

## There is a Bigger Us

We are not the same. Our experiences are different and we do not have equal access to resources and power. But we are also interconnected and interdependent: part of a 'bigger us'. We believe that the safety of each of us matters to all of us, and strive to come together around shared values of fairness, mutual support, kindness and respect for universal rights.

## Open to All

Refugee Week is an open platform and welcomes a wide range of responses suited to many different contexts. As a movement, we aim to make our activities inclusive and remove barriers to participation.

## Celebrating Contributions

Refugee Week celebrates the contributions of refugees in order to challenge negative stereotypes and create a space where refugees can be seen and heard beyond their experience of displacement. We believe that everyone has a contribution to make, and reject the idea that people seeking safety should have to 'prove their worth' more than others in society.

## Arts and Culture Make Change

We believe that arts and culture can help us see migration and displacement differently: by creating connection across difference, taking the voices and experiences of refugees to new spaces and helping us imagine how we can live better together.



## A Space for Many Stories

Refugee Week aims to be an empowering platform where people who have experienced displacement can express themselves on their own terms. We recognise that no single narrative represents ‘the refugee experience’, and support diverse representations of people and experiences through arts and culture.

## Leadership Matters

We believe that, wherever possible, initiatives about refugee experiences should involve people with lived experience of displacement in their planning and leadership.

## Refugees are not a Single Group

We recognise that refugees and asylum seekers are not a single group and have different experiences, including because of race, class, gender, sexuality, age and immigration status.

## Reclaiming ‘Refugee’

We use the word ‘refugee’ because of its legal and historical significance, and because we believe it is important to reclaim it from negative uses. At the same time, we recognise the danger of labels and respect people’s right to decide how they define themselves.



# 2021 Theme: We Cannot Walk Alone

The theme of Refugee Week 2021, 'We Cannot Walk Alone', comes from a moment in Martin Luther King's historic 'I have a dream' speech when he turns his attention to the White people who have joined the movement for equal rights.

"They have come to realise that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom," he says. "We cannot walk alone."

Refugee Week 2021 is an invitation to extend your hand to someone new. Someone who is outside your current circle, has had an experience you haven't, or is fighting for a cause you aren't yet involved in.

Help us make Refugee Week 2021 a bold, collective act of reaching out; a space for us all to listen, to exchange and connect. To find out what we can learn from each other, and what we can build together.



Image © Marcia Chandra



# Facts + Figures

Use these resources to inform your planning, or share them at your event



Image © Marcia Chandra

Facts About Refugees, [Refugee Action](#)

Global Displacement Figures at a Glance, [UNHCR](#)

Traces timeline of refugee contributions to UK arts and culture, [Counterpoints Arts](#)

Timeline: 400 Years of Refugee Movement to the UK, [Refugee History](#)

Timeline: The History of British Immigration Policy (1905-2016), [Refugee History](#)





# Getting Started

Refugee Week events come in all shapes and sizes. Here are some suggested first steps

## Form an Organising Group

Decide who will organise the event with you, in order to get the mix of skills you need and help you reach your target audience.

Can you co-organise with someone from a different background, or partner with a group or person who has networks you wouldn't otherwise reach?

Find out what others in your local area are planning by getting in touch with [Refugee Week Key Contacts](#) in UK regions and nations, or [contact us](#).

You can also share ideas and questions with other event organisers through the Refugee Week and Platforma Google Group – sign up [here](#).



Image © José Farinha





Image: © Marcia Chandra

### Decide Your Aim + Audience

Does your event aim to reach a particular group of people, or connect specific communities who wouldn't otherwise meet? Are you raising awareness of a particular issue, or aiming to raise funds?

Think about which platform or location you will choose and how you will publicise your event in order to achieve these aims and reach your target audience.

### Hold a Planning Meeting

Holding a planning meeting with others – e.g. in your town or city – can be a useful way to build useful networks and share ideas and resources. This [suggested agenda](#) can help you get started.

### Get in Touch

[Sign up to our newsletter](#) for Refugee Week updates, and if you'd like to chat through an idea, or need help finding an artist or collaborator, [get in touch](#).



# Your Event

## Things to Think About

### Further questions to consider as you start to plan

- **Audience:** Who is your target audience, and how will you reach them? Resource: [Reaching New Audiences](#)
- **Partners:** Who can you partner with that might bring new experiences, expertise or audiences?
- **Leadership:** Can someone with refugee experience help lead your event? Resource: [Who Decides?](#)
- **Storytelling:** If personal stories are being shared, how can this be done in a safe and empowering way? Resource: [\(Beyond\) Storytelling](#)
- **Fundraising:** How will you fund your event? You might apply for a grant, or offer 'pay as you feel tickets'. Resource: [Fundraising Tools + Tips](#)
- **Safeguarding:** How can you support people in vulnerable situations during your event? This could include volunteers, artists/ speakers, participants and audiences. A 'safeguarding risk assessment' can be as simple as thinking through possible scenarios, the risk they might pose and how you would respond.
- **Access:** How can you remove barriers to participation relating to disability, language, income, internet access and other factors?
- **Promotion:** How will people find out about your event? See [p17](#) for more
- **Evaluation:** How will you capture learning, to build on next time? See [p20](#) for more



Image © Marcia Chandra



# Online + Hybrid Events

Holding events remotely presents both challenges and opportunities. Here are some tips - for more guidance, [watch our workshop on running effective events in the age of Covid](#)

- Prepare to invest time and resources in engaging participants remotely - phone calls, home deliveries etc take time
- People without internet access can phone into Zoom
- Make your programme adaptable, so you can switch some or all of it to face to face when it's safe to do so
- Take advantage of fact you can go international with speakers, performers etc
- Make something together. Collective work has meaning and builds connection

## Safety for Online Events

- Never post a link to a Zoom or video call on a public website or social media page. If possible, require registration (e.g. on Eventbrite) before sending out the link
- Set security settings via your online Zoom account in advance. You can mute participants upon entry, disable share screen and disable chat
- Have a couple of members of your team on the call as 'co-hosts' to monitor the session and be prepared to eject troublemakers if needed



Image © Nottingham Refugee Week



## Simple Acts are everyday actions we can all do to stand with refugees and make new connections in our communities.

We founded the Simple Acts campaign in 2009, believing that if lots of us did one simple, everyday action, together we could begin to make lasting changes to the world around us.

Since then, thousands of people have taken part in Simple Acts – in schools, universities, museums, theatres, choirs, youth clubs, or at home (for inspiration, look no further than [these examples](#) from Refugee Week's 20th anniversary).

For Refugee Week 2021, we're inviting you to do one or more of our eight Simple Acts linked to the theme of 'We Cannot Walk Alone'.

You can build an event activity around one of the Simple Acts, tie them in to a Refugee Week activity you're already planning, or simply encourage your networks to get involved during Refugee Week itself.

#RefugeeWeek2021 #SimpleActs

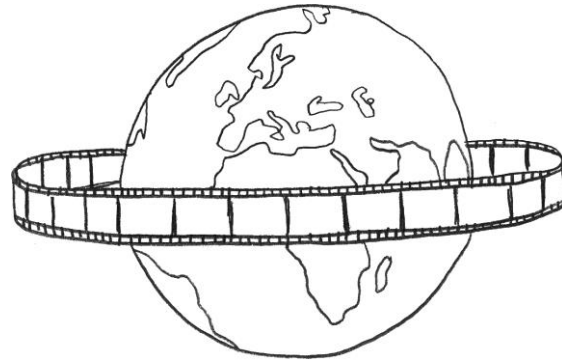


# Simple Acts



## 1. Sing a Song

Learn and share a song written in immigration detention



## 2. Watch a Film

Hold a 'watch party' or online Q&A. See [p15](#) for the Moving Worlds programme



## 3. Have a Chat

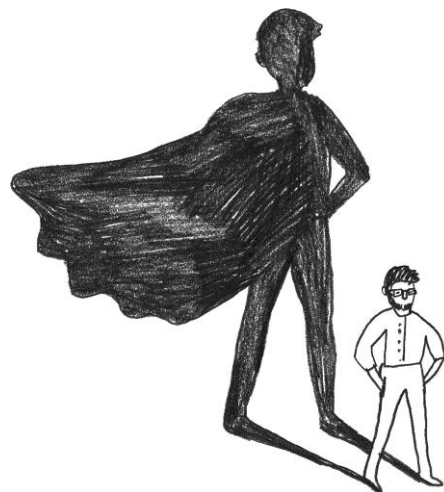
Start a positive conversation



## 4. Read a Book

Turn the pages and travel the world





## 5. Say it Loud

Stick a message of hope, unity or welcome somewhere it will be seen

## 6. Play a Game

Discover a video game that connects with refugee experiences

## 7. Walk Together

Join the 'Great Walk Together' on 20 June, a Refugee Week + The Great Get Together invitation

## 8. Join the Movement

Invite your networks to stay involved all year round



# Moving Worlds

Moving Worlds is a special selection of features and short films curated by Counterpoints Arts, responding to the theme 'We Cannot Walk Alone'. The films are available to watch at home during Refugee Week 2021, and each come with a post-screening discussion resource

Whether you hold a 'watch party' (invite viewers to watch at home while connecting online), or encourage your network to watch in their own time, the films are a great starting point for conversations, which you can encourage through a 'post-screening' discussion event.

Visit the Moving Worlds [website](#) for more information, and for more films for children and young people, see our [educational videos](#) page.

**Features:** Journeys Into Film, Mary Meets Mohammed, Pride, Tiny Souls, Thank You For The Rain

**Shorts:** Float, Green Fingers, Hotel U.S.A, Roots, Wind, 1000 Voices

Share your activity using #SimpleActs #WatchaFilm



Image: Thank You for the Rain





# NaTakallam: Refugee Voices

NaTakallam and Ben & Jerry's have teamed up again to give you the opportunity to host a free virtual 'Refugee Voices' session for Refugee Week 2021.



Image © NaTakallam

The sessions are open conversations with NaTakallam's professional refugee Conversation Partners living around the world, who share their personal stories, the context that forced them to leave and the challenges of rebuilding a life.

The recommended group size for these sessions is 10-15 people, and if you're hosting a session, we're inviting you to think about how you can use this unique opportunity to reach new people – for example, can five people in your network each invite a friend or relative who hasn't engaged in this issue before?

Spaces are limited and you need to allow a lead in time of around two weeks, so if you're interested, don't delay!

For more details and to apply, visit the [Refugee Week website](#).



# Promoting Your Event

Download the Refugee Week logo to use in your publicity [here](#)

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Some pointers to help your event get the attention it deserves



Image © Pål Hansen

1. Submit your event to the [Events Calendar](#) on the Refugee Week website
2. Send your event to listings platforms and apps listing online events, such as [TimeOut](#) and [The List](#). For local listings sites, search for 'listings' + your town/city
3. Write to organisations/ groups whose networks you'd like to reach, asking them to share your event via their newsletters or social media channels. Keep your email short and make it easy for them by including a suggested social media post. Offer to share something for them in return
4. Share your event on social media using #RefugeeWeek2021 and #WeCannotWalkAlone (and where relevant, #SimpleActs). Create a Facebook page for people to sign up and spread the word. Look out for the Refugee Week social media pack, which will have suggested posts and graphics for you to use



Top tips for getting your event seen online from our partners [IMIX](#), which supports communications in the refugee and migration sector and movement. [Watch](#) IMIX's Refugee Week webinar for more guidance, and if you'd like further support, [contact us](#).

- 1. Think of your audience:** Don't assume they have the same knowledge as you. They might be sympathetic but that doesn't mean they always know what you are talking about. Be clear.
- 2. Tell stories:** Help your audience to make that human and emotional connection.
- 3. Make it visual:** Images and videos always attract more engagement.
- 4. Keep it simple:** Don't say too much in one post, stay focused.
- 5. Make the audience feel part of what you are doing:** Use active verbs, calls to action, ask questions and encourage comments, e.g. Join us, take part, act now, write, email, tweet, share etc.
- 6. Connect with others:** Encourage the work of other groups and organisations, use tags, hashtags etc. #WeCannotWalkAlone #RefugeeWeek2021.
- 7. Be hopeful:** Refugee Week is a great time to celebrate. Audiences will connect with content which feels progressive and uplifting.
- 8. Experiment:** Post at different times of the day, publish different types of content – make changes according to what is and isn't working.
- 9. Look after yourself:** You could be on social media 24/7 so take time out, ignore trolls and stay positive.
- 10. Thank people & celebrate success!** Big up your volunteers, fundraisers, donors, those who come along to your events and support your work. Celebrate your amazing events and stories. Don't be shy!



# Contacting the Media

Reaching out to local and regional media can be a great way of getting publicity for your event.

IMIX's Refugee Week [webinar](#) is full of tips to help you reach engage local and regional media, and if you'd like further guidance, feel free to [contact us](#).

This [boilerplate](#) document has general information about Refugee Week 2021 for you to include in any press releases.

If you're a journalist interest in Refugee Week, please contact [media@refugeeweek.org.uk](mailto:media@refugeeweek.org.uk).

# METRO

**How refugees are leading the way in helping UK communities through the pandemic**



Refugee Week 2020 coverage in the Metro



# Evaluation



Image © Marcia Chandra

When your event is over, taking a moment to gather feedback will help you find out more about the impact it had, and reflect on how you can build on your success in future years. You might do this by:

1. Having a ‘wash up’ chat with others involved in delivering your event. What went well? What were the learning points? What would you do differently next time? Make a record for the future
2. Gathering feedback from people involved – this could include artists, speakers, organisers, volunteers, partners and attendees
3. Sending the Refugee Week 2021 online [attendee feedback form](#) to attendees/ participants, as soon as you can after your event. The form will ask their permission to share their feedback with the organisers of the event they attended, so we can pass their responses on to you
4. Telling us about your experience of holding a virtual Refugee Week event – we’ll send out an online form at the end of Refugee Week



# Checklist

Image © Marcia Chandra



- Form an organising group
- [Connect with others](#) involved in your area/ via the Refugee Week + Platforma [Google Group](#)
- Hold a [planning meeting](#)
- Decide your aim and audience
- Explore [Simple Acts](#), [Moving Worlds](#) and [further resources](#)
- Set a date and time
- Book performers/ speakers
- Choose your location or online platform
- Upload your event to the [Refugee Week website](#)
- [Publicise](#) through social media/ listings/ targeted emails/ local media – download the Refugee Week logo [here](#)
- Make a plan for [evaluation](#)
- [Sign up](#) to the Refugee Week newsletter for resources and updates
- Celebrate your successes!



# Case Studies

## 1. Phosphoros Theatre



Image © Phosphoros Theatre

### What did they do?

Phosphoros Theatre is a charity that makes performance by, with and for refugees and asylum seekers. For Refugee Week 2020, they ran a series public-facing events and workshops with refugees around the UK.

Their largest project was 'Strung Out'. a short film created under lockdown telling the story of a lost musical instrument and exploring friendship, identity and the trickiness of the label 'refugee'.

Phosphoros screened their show 'Pizza Shop Heroes' followed by a Q&A session at Migration Matters Festival, ran a workshop for artists about using autobiography and held a roundtable with Counterpoints Arts about challenging the hostile environment in the arts.

Eight online drama workshops exploring human rights fed into a recorded poem which Phosphoros shared online, and a film made with partners was presented to an online audience of councillors and community groups in Wandsworth.

### Why did they get involved?

To share their work and message more widely, and connect with young people from refugee backgrounds through talks and workshops.



**What was the process?**

Team members took responsibility for different projects, and a TV producer, film editor and director came on board to help produce the film 'Strung Out'. Company member Syed Haleem Najibi supported all aspects of the programme, from driving scripts across London and overseeing socially-distanced filming to delivering workshops and contributing to the roundtable. Phosphoros were supported by Arts Council's Emergency Grant and City Bridge Trust, via the London Community Response Fund.

**What impact did it have?**

Phosphoros Theatre's performances, events and workshops reached over 3,600 people, including viewers in 39 countries. Its performances helped raise awareness and understanding of refugee experiences, while its workshops provided a space for connection and creative expression by young people and women from refugee backgrounds.

Adapting to Covid also helped the company develop as it discovered the potential of online workshops to reach young people outside their existing networks, and branched into film for the first time.

**What advice do they have for people interested in taking part?**

Make sure local people from refugee backgrounds are able to engage with your activities. Consult grassroots organisations to learn how to make your programme accessible, inclusive and relevant and make sure you're not repeating what's already on offer. If you're not from a refugee background, build into your funding application a process of working in partnership with refugee artists, professionals and communities. Lastly, be wary about asking for free work from refugees, whether artistry, emotional labour or consultancy.





## 2. Brighton + Hove Libraries

### What did they do?

Ran online storytime sessions for children on the Refugee Week 2020 theme of Imagine and a shoebox-house making craft session inspired by the Giant Dolls House project. They also ran a Flash Fiction competition for children and adults on the theme of 'Imagine', judged by writers Onjali Q Raúf, Umit Ozturk and Sharon Duggal, which received 122 entries from across the UK and the world, in six languages.

The library linked their regular activities - such as Baby Boogie music - to the Refugee Week Simple Acts and asked customers and staff to share their favourite books about refugees, which they posted on social media. Customers could also download a selection of books by and about refugees for free during the week.

The library's involvement stretched beyond Refugee Week, with staff receiving information about refugee issues and services, and the library announcing its new status as a Library of Sanctuary on 15 June.

### Why did they get involved?

It's part of their commitment making their libraries welcoming places for refugees. The Refugee Week Conferences have provided the library with ideas, networks and inspiration.

### What was the process?

They took part in a meeting with others organising Refugee Week activities in Brighton & Hove, to avoid clashes and promote each other's events. Events were delivered by library staff, and partners helped to promote Flash Fiction competition on social media and in their newsletters.

### What impact did it have?

It raised awareness of Brighton & Hove Libraries as a service that is welcoming and inclusive of refugees and asylum seekers, and brought enjoyment and awareness to the wide range of people who took part. While working digitally was a challenge, it enabled activities to have a wider reach - their story time sessions had an average of 1,200 hits (10-20 people would usually attend in person).

### What advice to they have for people interested in taking part?

Do it! Go to the Refugee Week conferences/ Zoom meetings and sign up for newsletter. Find partners to work with. Consult your community to see what they would like to see and encourage them to get involved by delivering, promoting and taking part.

**To find out about becoming a Library of Sanctuary, visit [www.libraries.cityofsanctuary.org](http://www.libraries.cityofsanctuary.org).**



## 3. Migration Matters Festival

### What did they do?

Sheffield's Migration Matters Festival went digital for the first time in 2020, with a programme of 45 online events including an immersive children's theatre adventure, an online exhibition, dance, writing and theatre workshops, a podcast series, talks by university academics, a global hip-hop and music event, a spoken word double bill and a set by a Uganda-based DJ.

### Why did they get involved?

The Festival was founded in 2015 in response to growing concern about the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in Sheffield and the UK.

### What was the process?

The Festival is run by a small team in partnership with arts venues and organisations in Sheffield, and works closely with refugee and asylum support organisations to make sure that it is accessible to newly-arrived people. Migration Matters is funded by the Arts Council and also received funding from the University of Sheffield, Evan Cornish Foundation, Lush Ltd, Sheffield Town Trust and other local initiatives and businesses.

The team were preparing to announce the Migration Matters 2020 programme when the Covid-19 outbreak hit, leading to some soul-searching: could a digital edition of the festival inspire audiences, and what were the safety implications of running events online?

Ultimately, the team decided that at a time when arts and cultural activities under threat they had a duty to go ahead, and began the hard work of shifting their programme online, turning the festival website into a platform for digital events.

### What impact did it have?

Migration Matters brought together people from different backgrounds to celebrate the range of cultures that exist in Sheffield and the UK, and. Moving online meant that for the first time, Sheffield locals were joined by audience members and participants from 95 countries including Canada, Singapore, Taiwan and Palestine.

### What advice to they have for people interested in taking part in Refugee Week?

Things never go 100% to plan, but hiccups are an opportunity for learning and growth. Don't scare yourself into inaction - if you have an idea, find out how best to resource it and pursue it.



# Resources Index

## About Refugee Week

[How to Get Involved in Refugee Week 2021](#)

[ما هو أسبوع اللاجئين؟ About Refugee Week in Arabic](#)

[Refugee Week Theory of Change](#)

[Refugee Week 2020 Overview and Highlights](#)

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## Communities

[Refugee Week in your Faith Community](#)

[Football and Refugees: Learning from Refugee Week and Beyond](#)

[Schools Resources](#)

## Further Resources

[Platforma Manifesto: A guide to good practice for the arts, refugees & migration, Counterpoints Arts](#)

[Sanctuary in the Arts Resource Pack, City of Sanctuary](#)

[Refugee Action Good Practice for refugee, migrant and asylum organisations](#)



# Thank you!

Image: Rainbow Pilgrims exhibition © Marcia Chandra



Every Refugee Week, people across globe connect with the experiences of refugees and stand together for a better world.

It happens because of the creativity, generosity and dedication of people like you.

Thank you.



# Partners



Refugee Week is coordinated by **COUNTERPOINTS.**

