



**MIGRATION
MUSEUM**

People's Panel and Network Evaluation

*"I am persuaded that no one necessarily
needs to walk the walk of immigration alone."¹*

Louise Doherty

Goldsmiths, University of London

2023

¹ Quote from applicant to the People's Panel. All data is anonymised.

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Acknowledgements

This evaluation was supported by funding from Goldsmiths, University of London as part of their Civic Catalysts participatory research programme and made possible with the National Lottery Heritage Fund – thanks to National Lottery players.

Many thanks to Mona Jamil, Jason Page, everyone from the Migration Museum and the People's Panel and Network for their generosity of spirit and sharing the opportunity to reflect on such an inspiring and meaningful project via this evaluation.

All images are used with permission – thanks to Nancy Singh, Mona Jamil, and Jason Page.

Introduction

It can be intriguing, compelling even, to observe the rich diversity of any geographical area and how people live, work and/or simply exist in and around it. Spaces are often more than the physical, there are echoes of all those who went before, contributions seen and unseen, mingled with those who currently inhabit, briefly pause, or move through the space, not to mention who is given access to and who is excluded from it, (Massey 2005; de St Croix & Doherty 2023). The Migration Museum is one of those unique spaces that is hard to pin down. Whilst we can clearly locate it both geographically and intellectually - we can put a pin on a map at a specific set of coordinates, and we can imagine what a museum is or does or is meant to be; this space is something else, something more.

Little wonder that a conversation in 2003 started by founder Barbara Roche, about creating a 'permanent migration museum for the UK', (Lees & Ballinger, 2018:9) sparked an idea that has been journeying onward in its own unique way ever since. Securing its first funding in 2011, by 2013 it had appointed an education officer, a director and become a registered charity and over the last decade, expanded the staff team, worked with about 22,000 students from 600 schools, colleges, and universities, inhabited temporary spaces, displayed and toured numerous exhibitions. It has spent the last three years based in a retail unit in Lewisham Shopping Centre, where it has hosted 70,000 visitors a year from across London and beyond, and where it is set to remain until 2026 before moving to a permanent home in the City of London, close to Aldgate and the Tower of London (Migration Museum).

Despite the understandable desire for a long-term, permanent residence, there is nothing static or predictable about the Migration Museum, so it is perhaps appropriate that its current home, arguably the last place we might expect to find a museum, embodies the very ethos of a project established to foreground the value and contribution migration has made and continues to make to modern Britain - economically, socially and culturally. This evaluation² will explore one of the community engagement projects the Migration Museum has used to speak to this objective - the People's Panel and Network (PPN).

² The Migration Museum applied to and secured funding from Goldsmiths, University of London, Civic Catalyst Grant for an academic/researcher to support in- understanding feedback generated from workshops and surveys, support in developing the values with the PPN, develop a toolkit for community engagement and to write an evaluation report of the project. The Civic Catalyst Grant aims to bring researchers together with local partners and support them in developing partnerships, piloting ideas, and undertaking projects that will make a positive impact locally.

Background to the project

The People's Panel and Network (PPN) was developed by the Migration Museum (MM) with the aim of creating a grassroots community engagement strategy that centres the lived experiences of local people in shaping the community engagement practices of Migration Museum across a broad range of outputs and approaches.

Piloted in 2021 and led by the then Head of Public Engagement, who had initiated the project, there was at this stage, limited success due to Covid and lockdowns. In 2022, Mona Jamil (Museum Manager) and Jason Page (Operations Manager & Community Engagement Programmer) took over the project. Their intention was to develop a community of 'critical friends' who would work together in developing the 'values' of the Migration Museum and in progressing the commitment to co-created content and initiatives. Whilst this was planned as a stand-alone project, the museum intended to develop longer-term relationships with participants and use the learnings towards further initiatives.

In the PPN pre-planning stages Mona and Jason had joined the London Engagement Collaborative (LEC), a pan-London network supporting cross-sector community engagement work. Involvement with LEC shaped their approach to the project design, including: prioritising working ethically and creating non-hierarchical / non-judgemental spaces where participants felt listened to, valued and on an equal footing³. Below are some of the initial aims identified more broadly for the PPN:

- Using the Migration Museum's temporary venue in Lewisham as a testing ground for new forms of co-produced community engagement work
- Co-designing values and principles for the future of community engagement work at the Migration Museum
- Connecting with others within our communities
- Sharing own learnings and experiences with regards to present engagement work
- Using the space to share challenges and proactively address them
- Consider the areas for possible innovation and collaboration in engagement work
- Building on relationships and creating long-term partnerships

The People's Panel was to be a group of 15 people who could commit to attending 3, in-person, 2hr workshops at the Migration Museum between November 2022 and May 2023; and to completing 3 follow-up surveys (either online, over the phone, or in person). Consideration was given to accessibility in relation to methods of survey completion as well as acknowledging the time and energy taken to participate in workshops. Each participant was reimbursed £75 per session and follow-up survey.

The People's Network was intended to be a larger, virtual network of participants committed to completing three surveys – participants received a £10 voucher per completed survey. This two-tiered approach was taken to enable a broad and inclusive membership and to encourage a diverse group of people to get involved in developing the values and in influencing the overall approach in relation to co-produced community engagement.

³ Mona & Jason took part in [this short film](#) with LEC summarising their engagement.

Engaging participants

During the summer of 2022, with the support of a Goldsmiths placement student, a comprehensive mapping exercise⁴ was undertaken, identifying 116 local groups and organisations, based in Lewisham, and representing a broad range of community groups across the Borough. This mapping exercise revealed an extensive network of relevant, local organisations for the Migration Museum to engage with in developing the PPN. The Migration Museum also took part in Lewisham People's Day 2022, promoting the project amongst a cross-section of the community - this meant that the PPN publicity could reach people who were not necessarily involved in a formal community group but who nonetheless had a keen interest in local issues and initiatives. A flyer⁵ and registration form was created and distributed at the event and amongst the network⁶.

Along with information about the project such as, duration, commitment, main purpose and payment information on the flyer, the registration form collected more detailed information about participants in relation to reasons for joining, availability and demographic data⁷. In designing the registration form, Jason and Mona had worked closely with Ayesha Hameed (Migration Museum trustee and Greater London Authority Principal Community Engagement Officer) drawing on Ayesha's extensive expertise of person-centred approaches to policy and decision-making. This collaboration elicited questions that enabled a thorough awareness of the relevant circumstances of prospective participants. The registration forms were designed to be completed online but, similarly to the surveys (to be discussed later), the Migration Museum offered the option of printing out for people to complete a physical copy or of completing over the phone, depending on preference and to extend accessibility to those who did not have access to, or use, a computer.

Respondents were asked for preference in joining either the panel or the network or 'no preference' and 85% were 'most interested' in being part of the People's Panel. Whilst asking for greater time commitment, as well as face to face involvement, the People's Panel offered a £75 workshop attendance payment, and as one respondent commented, seemed "more in depth and we get paid better too". Given current economic circumstances - for example a recent report⁸ found that 1.7 million people in the UK are living in low income and food insecure households - the Migration Museum's commitment to recognising and valuing the contribution of PPN participants to the development of their community engagement strategy through considered and adequate funding for vouchers, refreshments, and remuneration is notable. Yet, whilst payment was perhaps a factor, only one person mentioned this in their response to, 'Q11. What makes you want to join the People's Panel/People's Network?'.

Most other responses reveal a direct connection to, not only the aims of the project, but also to actively participating in developing community in Lewisham more generally, as well as the Migration Museum itself and in contributing to dialogue around personal migration stories, as can be seen in the following selection of quotes:

"I want to help migrants' stories and experiences be elevated and understood within a broader socio-historic context. And also as part of Britain's social fabric. I think the museum is a fantastic idea and can play a strong role in building stronger social cohesion and as an

⁴ Mapping spreadsheet is available on request.

⁵ See Appendix I.

⁶ 40 registration forms were returned.

⁷ Demographic information collected on the 'registration form' included- age; gender; sexuality; ethnic origin; type of school(s) [attended] between the ages of 11 and 18 years old; Do you have a disability or impairment; religion. See Appendix 2 for extracted data.

⁸ Francis-Devine, B. (2023) Poverty in the UK: Statistics, House of Commons: Library.

educational resource for Lewisham's students. I've worked with refugee communities before and my family has experienced migration and displacement, so I relate on a personal level to issues of migration. I will bring excitement, ideas, organisational and leadership skills, and dedication to the People's Panel... I am really excited to be part of this!"

"I think migration is misunderstood in this country. It has shaped and helped to build the UK for centuries. Migration is weaponised to win votes to swing referendums to create division. As a child of a Polish father and an Irish mother I feel very strongly about migration, and I believe the museum can help to dispel myths."

"I am interested in seeing more African and Caribbean people engage with activities at the Migration Museum. I would like to see groups making use of any community space available. The Museum is in the heart of Lewisham and Lewisham is culturally rich and diverse in its make up. The use of community space would bring communities from across Lewisham into one central creative space."

"As a migrant from Hong Kong, I wish to contribute to the project. I know that there are lots of misunderstandings about migrants, but I can understand the feelings and emotions of leaving my hometown – I moved to the UK in 2021 due to the unstable political situation and the gradual loss of freedom and democracy in Hong Kong. Although I am lucky to move to the UK for a free and better life, I hope I can contribute to society by working for vulnerable groups, especially newcomers."

The process of careful project design and dissemination had encouraged not only a broad range of participants from a social and cultural perspective, but also in relation to the expertise participants would bring through the richness of community focused perspectives.

Who was involved?

All respondents were invited to an introductory workshop⁹ in October 2022 to meet the team, learn more about the aims of the PPN and consider some thematic areas for exploration throughout the PPN – 35 people attended¹⁰.

Ground rules¹¹ were discussed and agreed to ensure that everyone felt included in defining the type of space the PPN would be, how discussions would be managed and to try to facilitate a safe and welcoming environment, including considerations around listening and making space for everyone to be heard. Ice breakers were used including the ‘name game’¹², where participants shared something about their name and its meaning to them with the group.

This session was rooted in engagement with the Migration Museum as a space, its purpose, and the need for it as a place, as well as offering time for reflection on how it felt for participants to be there. During the workshop, using a process of large and smaller group work, opportunities for individual reflection and feedback, as well as collecting thoughts on post-it notes and flip chart paper, key questions were used to explore themes and build discussion points that would influence the future workshops and survey design:

- What does community mean to you?
- Where is home for you?
- What does tolerance mean to you?
- What does (meaningful) community engagement mean to you?
- How do you feel being in the Migration Museum at this moment?
- Why are you here?

Below are a few responses gathered from participants in response to some of these prompts:

What does community mean to you?

- “Identity, support, garden, organisation, growth, affirmation of self”
- “Love and hope. Cohesion. Celebration. Shared issues. Representation of different people. A voice for good. Helpful to each other”
- “‘Community’ means the people around you, who reflect back yourself in some aspect
- “I have more than one community and that feels like a privilege”

Where is home for you?

- “Being around my children and father, I have not found the country”
- “Brazil, adopted home: England. Where my ancestors were from near Amazon Basin, where I am going to return to”
- “Home is where I can be myself, on my own or with people I love”
- “London heart, Jamaica, sun/sea, warmth, family”

What does tolerance mean to you?

- “‘Agreeing to disagree’, respecting different views and cultural traditions”

⁹ The introductory workshop was delivered twice on two different days to encourage as many attendees as possible.

¹⁰ Attendees represented a broad range of community practices including, education, faith, healthcare, community gardening, music and performing arts.

¹¹ See Appendix 3.

¹² The ‘name game’ was later chosen to form part of the Toolkit for Community Engagement co-created with PPN participants as will be discussed later.

- "Tolerance can be just giving space and time to opposing different thoughts"
- "To put up with something"
- "'Tolerance' to me means that someone owns a place or values etc. and they are extending your permission to be as you are"
- "Uncomfortable with the term – would rather 'acceptance'. You can 'tolerate' but doesn't it necessarily mean 'acceptance'"
- "Kinda negative, if there is mutual respect why is tolerance needed? Imbalance of relationship"
- "Acknowledging that people's values and cultures and everything will not always match our own and as a community we have to respect that in a positive manner as long as their values are not causing any harm"

What does (meaningful) community engagement mean to you?

- "Meaningful community engagement means working together to make a community a better, healthier, stronger space for everyone in it, so each person can join in it"
- "Activism element, non-extractive, not profit driven, lots of time and space. Patient, long-term"
- "Equal partnerships"
- "Engagement where the quietest in the room find it a safe space and feel welcome"
- "Engaging [and] embracing different cultures, working together from the very young to old, those with disabilities, through strength"

How do you feel being in the Migration Museum at this moment?

- "Being in the Migration Museum, I feel part of a bigger picture and also excited to contribute to bringing the stories of migration into mainstream consciousness in the UK"
- "Accepted. Empowered, diversity and inclusiveness"
- "Feel at ease and at peace, comfortable and part of a community"
- "Part of something significant, part of a project that has purpose for Britain today"
- "Good, it feels like a hidden gem /in public. But also hidden away, like secret space - a room to think differently"
- "Visible, heard, respected, warm welcome environment, interactive instalments"
- "It's good to be in the museum, because you can get involved and have your say"
- "Good, I am here because we need a migrant museum in Britain to reflect what the UK is"

Why are you here?

- "I am here to share my experience to use my knowledge to help my community, to support my fellow immigrants and to help spread the word about the Migration Museum"
- "I'm here to get some perspective on community engagement and how it can interact with creativity and culture"
- "Try to contribute, take part in civil society"
- "I like history and learning about other people's journey"
- "I am here to learn more about MM and how I can be a part of its contribution. Wanted to meet people who are like minded"

From this first introductory session, it was clear that themes such as community, where home is, tolerance and feelings about being in the space, were to be treated with care and that group facilitation would be crucial not only to the success of the project overall but to the safety and wellbeing of those taking part, particularly in relation to discussions around difficult life stories or challenging views. This applied to the People's Panel in particular, as this was based on group workshops, and as facilitators, Mona and Jason embedded reflective and evaluative practices in their group work approach and session planning from the beginning.

PPN: timeline, workshops, surveys and process

The process for selecting PPN members involved considerations around:

- Diversity of community engagement experience
- Lived experience as a 1st, 2nd or 3rd generation migrant¹³
- Age and diversity

Group dynamics were also considered, with the final selection for the People's Panel including some participants who had been involved with the museum before¹⁴, along with others who were totally new to the space. At the start of the project in November 2022, there were 16 people on the People's Panel and 19 in the People's Network¹⁵. The project itself was designed to maximise the benefit of having both a face to face panel and a virtual network, and structured so that phases would incrementally influence and feed into the next, at each stage of the process, following the timeline below:

- November 2022 - People's Panel workshop 1¹⁶
- December 2022 - People's Panel survey 1 and People's Network survey 1
- February 2023 - People's Panel workshop 2¹⁷
- March 2023 - People's Panel survey 2 and People's Network survey 2
- May 2023 - People's Panel workshop 3¹⁸
- June 2023 - People's Panel survey 3 and People's Network survey 3

The Civic Catalyst Grant (see footnote 2) was awarded in January 2023, and I became involved with the project from that point onwards, attending People's Panel workshops¹⁹, collaborating in data analysis around the values and in developing the Toolkit for Community Engagement, as will be discussed later.

As the project had started without any academic involvement, we went through a process of ethical approval and ensured that participants were fully informed of my involvement, consented to anonymised data generated from workshops and surveys being used, and were aware they could withdraw consent at any time²⁰ without reason.

From my first involvement with the project, it was clear that the approach Mona and Jason had taken to reflecting on and analysing the information gathered from the first workshop and surveys (and the introductory sessions) was carefully considered. It was an iterative process and consistent with 'grounded theory' (Charmaz 2006) particularly in relation to thematic coding. Written materials generated from the workshop(s) were transcribed and manually coded, and then progressed to broader mapping exercises and discussions with the wider staff team to ensure that the development of the values would be fully representative and embedded. Themes then informed the survey design.

¹³ We refer to those that migrated to the UK as '1st generation', their children as '2nd generation', and grandchildren as '3rd generation'.

¹⁴ See Appendix 3.

¹⁵ Workshop attendance and survey completion for PP and PN varied throughout the project, however the PP retained a more consistent engagement across both the workshops and the surveys.

¹⁶ Primary themes engaged with PPN1 - barriers to engagement; wellbeing; living better together.

¹⁷ Primary themes engaged with PPN2 - values; representation and a sense of belonging; practical ways to support communities.

¹⁸ Primary themes engaged with PPN3 - values (grouping and discussion); values (ways to present and preserve our values).

¹⁹ Participant observation at PP2 & PP3 and various data analysis sessions throughout. PP3 was delivered twice on two different days to accommodate participants.

²⁰ Until and including 30th June 2023.

This was an approach that we continued throughout the project and that Mona and Jason brought to the workshop design, encouraging participant engagement with this process. The combination of surveys, and workshops, which also included creative methods (as will be discussed), allowed a broad engagement with themes identified as well as supporting the development of a cohesive set of values for the Migration Museum. Given the limitations of a relatively brief evaluation, in the next section, I will share and discuss some of the data that describes the narrative of the project, as well as some comparative analysis between the PP and PN responses to survey questions²¹.

²¹ PP surveys contained additional evaluative questions relating to workshops to inform and encourage community engagement with subsequent workshop design and content.

Reflecting on the data and the development of co-created values

The first workshop and surveys explored themes such as: barriers to engagement, wellbeing and living better together. When asked: "Is it the responsibility of a museum to create a place of safety and respite for people in the local area?", responses from PP included:

"I think ideally it is the responsibility of all spaces in a community to provide a place of safety and respite for people in the local area. I think that's one of the pillars of building a sense of community."

"It is an interesting question and a current question: I don't think it is the museum's responsibility, but as most places which used to offer a place of safety and respite [have shut], it may become increasingly a duty that the museum takes on board. For instance, the library recently closed down."

"I'm not sure, it's not necessarily the responsibility of the museum to create a place of safety and respite for people in the local area, but if the museum can provide it then that's awesome. It's all about impacting lives for the better. The people who find safety and respite in the local area through the help of the museum in the future may become those whose stories and lives may add to the richness and overall impact and I dare say longevity of the museum."

And in answer to the same question, PN responses included:

"Not necessarily a responsibility but factoring in the ideas of safety and respite in its conception and design would undoubtedly have wider positive effects."

"Yes definitely. Museums are a rare place where there is no expectation to pay to be there, unlike other places and services. It should definitely be a place of safety and respite."

There were 27 responses to that question across both surveys, with only one respondent answering "No", so the engagement with this question positively positioned the concept of Migration Museum as either being perceived as a space of safety and respite or as having the potential to offer those things. This linked to broader discussions around 'belonging' and 'representation' as this PN member discusses:

"Yes I do feel a sense of belonging at the museum because it shines light on difficult and sometimes uncomfortable truths that the wider public are not ready to accept and deal with. When I was at the museum, I didn't feel like a Black woman, I just felt like a woman, I felt seen and heard. Sometimes the emphasis on race and the challenges that migrants deal with for example the anxiety of potentially receiving unkind behaviour from other people, could take away the sense of just being a regular human being, rather than a Black person or European national."

And another PP participant in answer to the same question:

"I do. I relate very much to the sense of movement and displacement and adaptation to a new country, holding on to heritage even if the experience is not similar to mine, there is a pull."

Responses in relation feeling 'represented' at the Migration Museum:

"I feel welcome but I am not sure I am represented. It highlights much of the colonial past and the migration that came through via the ex colonies. Mine is different: it's one of the European Union now failed due to Brexit."

“Not really. I am first generation Arab American, and a recent immigrant to the UK. I haven't seen experiences like mine represented there, but I also haven't seen each exhibit.”

“I feel represented; the name of the museum alone speaks of representation for immigrants. Also, walking into the museum to see pictures of all kinds of people from diverse cultures on its own speaks 'welcome and representation'.”

“Yes, as I am a migrant. I saw the wall that allowing (sic) people [to] write their stories there, it was touching and make me reflect [on] my experience and my family experience.”

Whilst there was some nuance across the responses, overall PPN participants felt both a sense of belonging and that they were represented but still offer food for thought in relation to further growth and continued community engagement initiatives around extending what representation means, how it is understood and how it is experienced at both the individual and community level.

In response to “What should the Migration Museum's activities achieve?” As can be seen from the responses below, there was a broad consensus across both the PP and PN in relation to:

- to stimulate discussion
- to educate
- to bring people together

Along with:

- to contribute to collective wellbeing
- to help migrants overcome trauma

Also rating highly for participants.

Figure I PP responses

What should the Migration Museum's activities achieve? (15 responses)

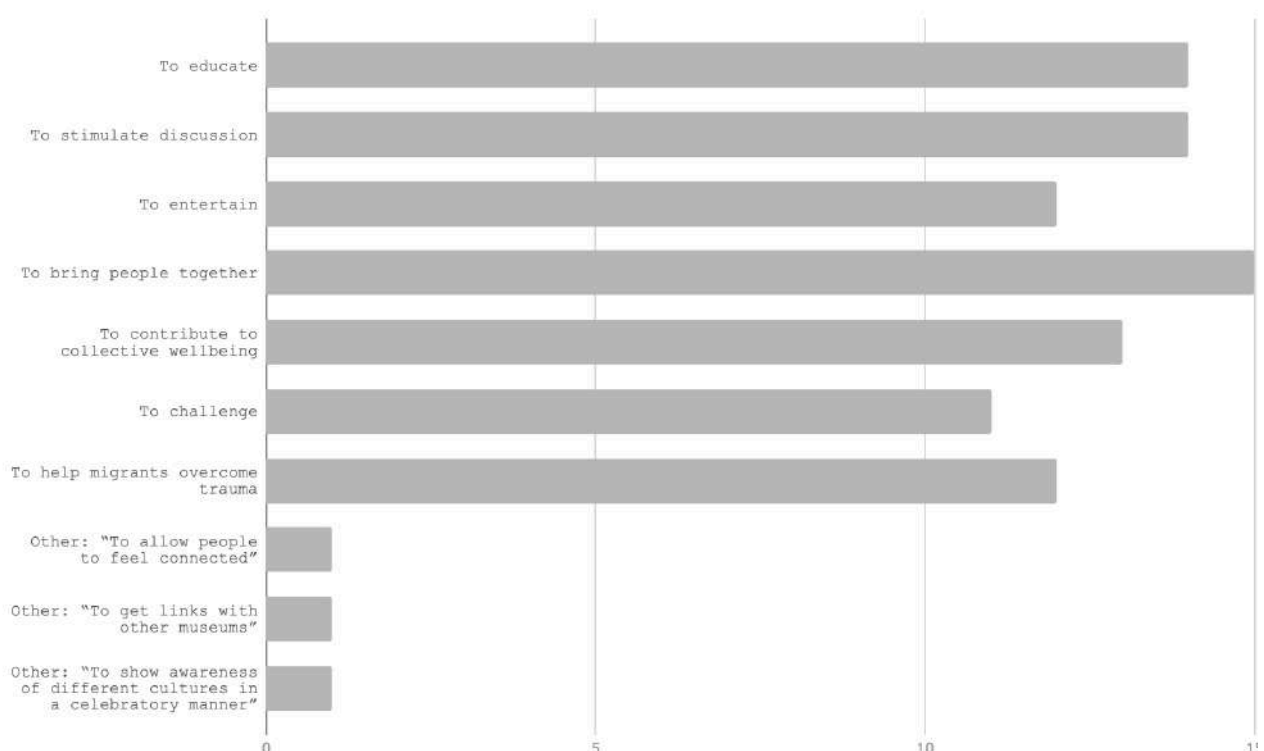
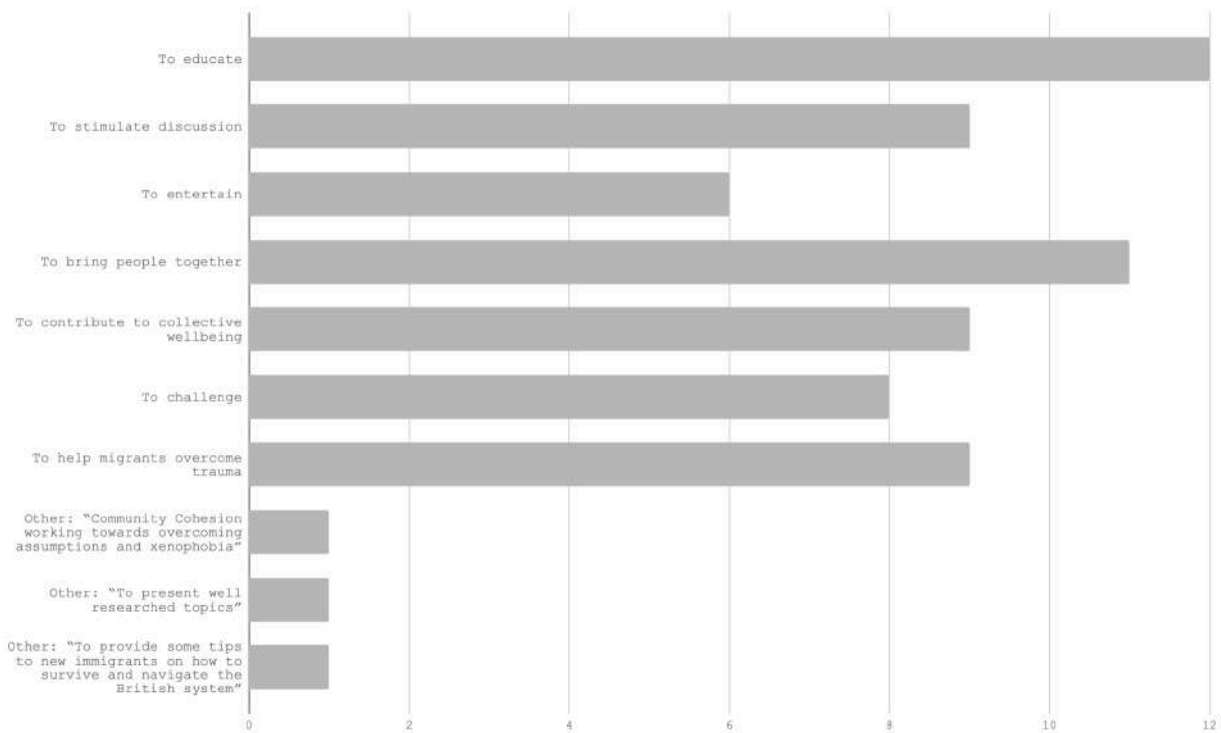


Figure 2 PN responses

What should the Migration Museum's activities achieve? (12 responses)



Based on discussions from the first workshop and surveys, the PPN identified the Migration Museum as a place of: safety, belonging, discussion, representation, education, support for migrant communities and bringing people together. These understandings innately linked to the subsequent discussions around 'values' that progressed into the next workshop and surveys.

The images below, from the second workshop, are some of the responses to PP discussions focused on- values, representation and a sense of belonging, and practical ways to support communities.



Post-its of PP individual reflections (left: answers around what the Migration Museum's community engagement values could be, and right: answers to how the Migration Museum could practically support communities)

During the workshop, the collaborative process of discussion, individual and group reflection, and collective thematic coding meant that participants were fully included in the ongoing, reflexive analysis process. Concepts of 'belonging' and what that meant to participants led to new and emerging ideas, as discussions touched on topics ranging from the nuances of language and differences in understandings of words and phrases, to conversations around loss and feelings of attachment participants had towards the Migration Museum²².

This elicited discussions around what it might mean for PPN and for individuals accessing the Migration Museum when it moves to its new permanent home in the City of London in 2026. I noted in field notes around this discussion a comment from a participant who asked, "why do you want to leave us?". This was asked with such warmth and depth, and it struck me as profoundly moving that a museum space and the PPN was having such an impact. The group work on 'belonging' offered a well-considered progression from personal experiences and feelings to what was needed institutionally to better engender a sense of belonging and how that might be expressed through its values. This discussion, as with all discussions around what were often complex or challenging topics, was explored with sensitivity and care by Mona and Jason, who took time to make room for this - in many ways embodying the values they were seeking to explore via the PPN. This is linked closely to participatory action research (PAR) approaches, (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000), allowing for fluid, responsive and intuitive interactions, and engagement. The workshop also asked participants to consider the question: 'What forms of practical support would be useful for you/your communities?'

²² Reflections from participant observation and field notes.

Participants had an intensive discussion around this²³. After a process of transcribing and reflecting on the workshop data, the follow-up survey was constructed following up the thematic discussions, including around 'belonging', as can be seen below in figures 3 & 4.

Figure 3 PP responses

In our last workshop, there was some debate over the use of the term 'sense of belonging' – should we instead only use the term 'belonging' instead? (13 responses)

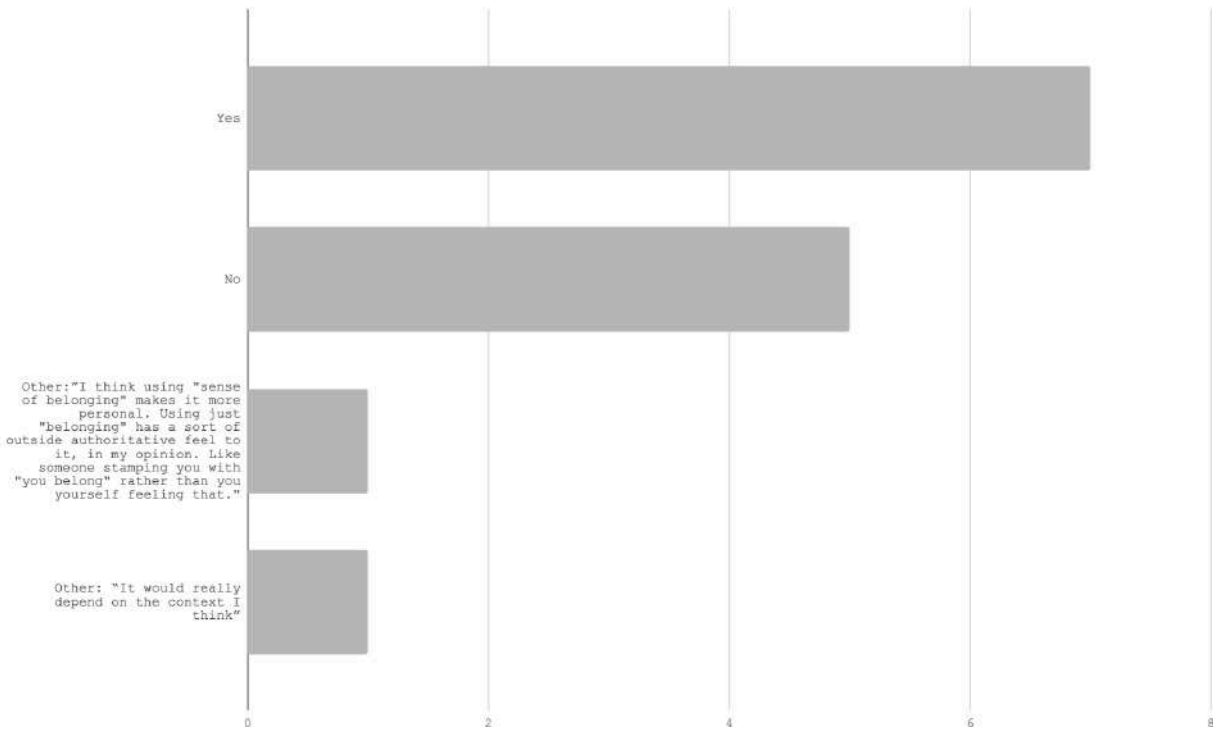
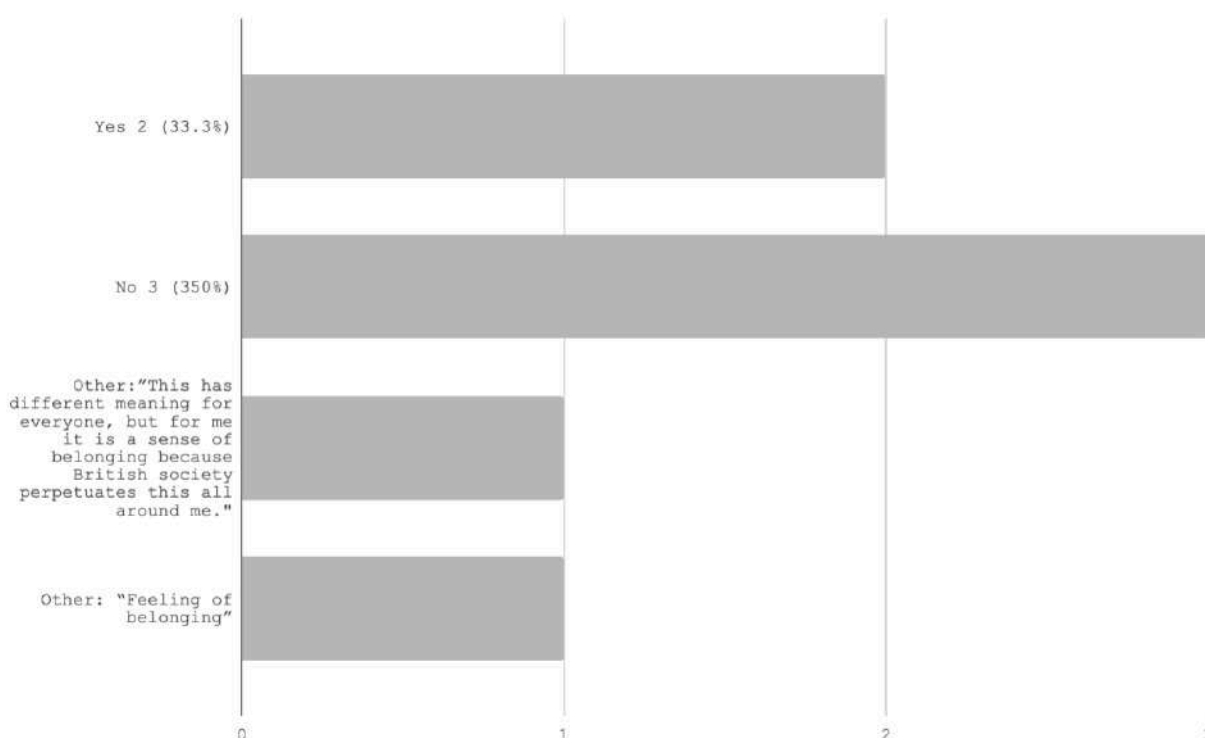


Figure 4 PN responses

In our last workshop, there was some debate over the use of the term 'sense of belonging' – should we instead only use the term 'belonging' instead? (6 responses)



Clearly there were some differences in interpretation between the PP and PN with 53.8% of the PP favouring the use of 'belonging' versus 33.3% of the PN, the majority of whom preferred 'sense of belonging'. In many ways this reflected the discussion that had taken place during the workshop, in that the language itself was experienced and understood differently individually and across the PP and PN, underlining the necessity for the detailed explorations that Mona and Jason and the Migration Museum team were having, and aspirations to find consensus and representation through the wording of the values.

Returning the focus back to the development of the 'values', whilst participants from the PP and PN were not interacting with each other by this point²⁴, as can be seen below in figures 5 & 6 there are interesting similarities in responses to the question: "Which three words feel most important and relevant to community engagement initiatives at the Migration Museum?"

Figure 5 People's Panel responses

Which three words feel most important and relevant to community engagement initiatives at the Migration Museum? (13 responses)



²⁴ All participants had met once during the introductory workshop in October 2022.

Figure 6 People's Network responses

Which three words feel most important and relevant to community engagement initiatives at the Migration Museum? (6 responses)



Participants unanimously cited 'inclusion' as a priority theme, with 'connection' also scoring highly for both groups, as did 'respect' and 'openness'. Interesting and perhaps understandable to note that 'collaboration' scored highly for the People's Panel, who were meeting face to face and working in a collaborative environment, and not rated for People's Network participants at this stage, who were all engaging remotely via surveys only, yet 'connection' does rate highly for the People's Network.

When asked "Why are these top 3 words the most important to you?", participants across the PPN responded:

"'Respect', 'openness', 'inclusion'...As they combine other words not on the list such as 'respect' is acceptance, support, connection. 'Openness' is transparency, curiosity, voice and learning. 'Inclusion' is support, transparency, collaboration, accessibility, space, voice and connection. They are also the 3 words that define people first and their integrity, and not just the physical environment."

"'Inclusion' as I feel it's important for everyone to feel included and an establishment like a Migration Museum to be available to all."

"'Connection' so people can feel connected even if not to their own heritage but that of their wider families and communities. To gain knowledge is so important and good connections will offer this."

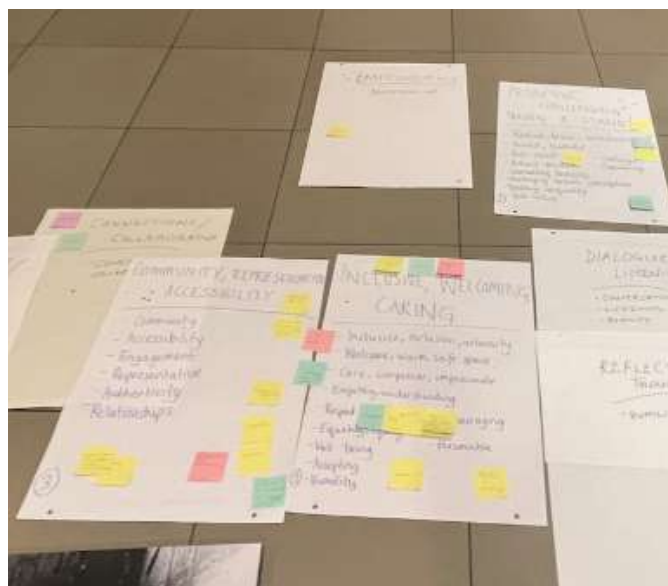
“‘Inclusion’ because everyone from society regardless of income/race/ gender/age is accepted and welcomed. ‘Learning’ because it is not something that stops once you’re done with school or have become a grownup. ‘Connection’ because hopefully initiatives help people connect with others they would usually not.”

Evaluative processes were embedded throughout the project with all surveys gathering feedback from participants at each stage. 100% of participants in both the People’s Panel and People’s Network responded ‘Yes’ when asked if they ‘felt heard/listened to’ in the last workshop and/or survey and if they were ‘looking forward’ to the next session/survey. So, despite the complexity of the discussions and the detail of the surveys, participants were overwhelmingly positive about their involvement in the project, as it progressed.

The final PP workshop took place in May 2023 and continued to develop the work around 'values' that was started in the previous workshop, building on information gathered from both sets of surveys as well as discussions with the broader Migration Museum staff team and data analysis sessions. As can be seen below, the workshop started with discussions around a sample definition of the values:



This was followed up by reflecting back on the progress so far and the discursive and analytical journey the PPN had taken to arrive at the list of values that had begun to form—including how these were engaged with by the MM team. The images below, (shown as part of the slideshow introduction to the final workshop), were shared with participants to show how the staff team had engaged with ideas generated from People's Panel workshop 2. Information gathered during that session was used as a springboard to engage staff in discussions around the organisational values and ensure that the important work done by the PPN would be organisationally impactful. This was also an important process in relation to accountability and PPN participants knowing that the work they were doing would have a direct influence on the organisation.



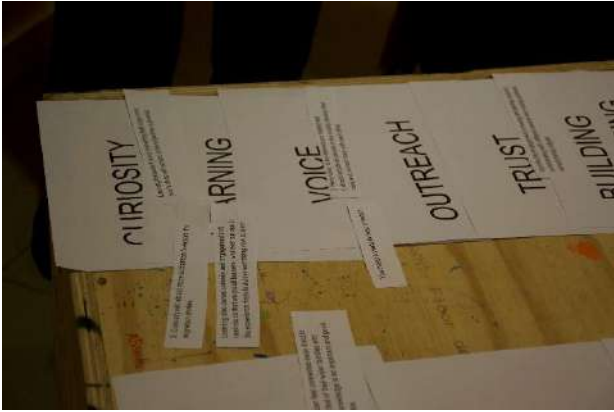
The workshop continued, focusing on further collaborative thematic coding with People's Panel via grouping and discussing the values, as well as ways to present and preserve the values. Key words were printed out and participants were guided through a process of selecting values that spoke to them as individuals before coming together to discuss why, as can be seen from images below:



The list of values-related words that were generated across the previous workshops, surveys, mapping exercises and analysis sessions.



This process continued as the People's Panel began to consider what words related to each other, highlighting those words that felt important in relation to the values and merging words that felt less important or were felt to be duplicated. This was followed by a process of further grouping of words. Participants then began to construct statements collaboratively in small groups to illustrate each grouping, also drawing on print outs from survey data, as can be seen in the images below.



Making connections, creating statements, and linking key concepts

Mona and Jason were keen to include creative methods as part of this workshop (Kara 2015), not only in a bid to engender different responses to the values but also in the continued aspiration to embed fully inclusive and diverse community engagement approaches by moving away from what could be perceived or experienced by some as limiting text-based approaches.



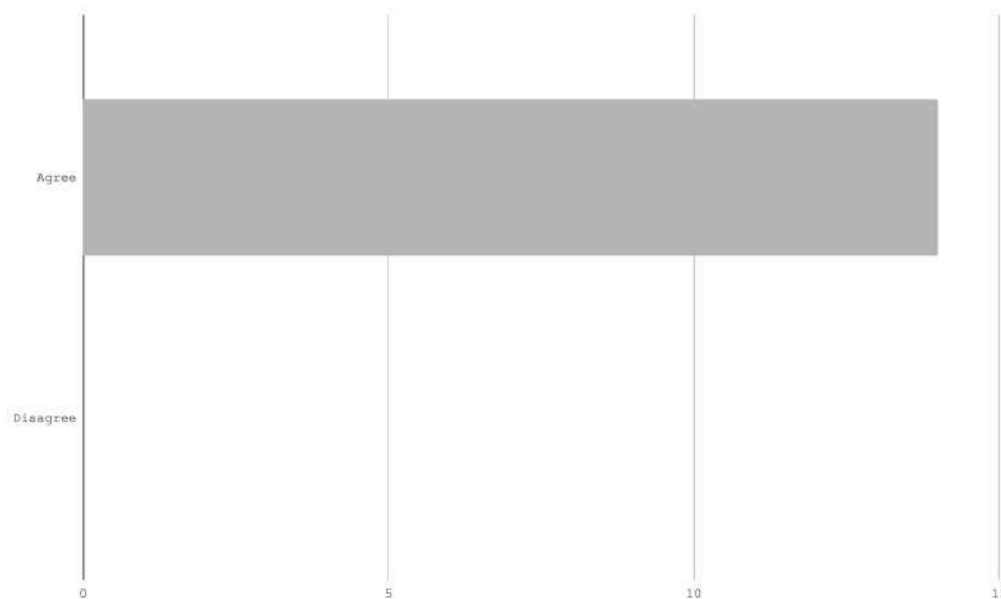
The workshop continued with exploration of responses to: “How should we present our values at the Migration Museum (and beyond?)”. The group were presented with a range of samples of other organisational approaches including the Peckham Peace Wall and the Dulwich Picture Gallery’s Community Action Research Map. Discussions here progressed to considering how the Migration Museum’s community engagement values could be presented through a range of different mediums, including audio recordings of spoken word or singing, as well as the use of the ‘self’ by physically displaying the values alongside a mirror at the museum for people to reflect on their position within the space. The group also spoke about sharing photographs of themselves, alongside their own migration stories.

There were also reflections on ‘migration’ as being more than country to country and how personal histories of movement might be represented too. In this last workshop there was also discussion around how people might be literally reflected in the Migration Museum values by having them printed on mirrors for people to engage with around the space. And this progressed to dialogue again around language and encouraging people to translate the values into their own language. However, as one participant commented, “there’s this whole notion that everyone can read- not everyone can read”²⁵. This extended the debate around the importance of the values being expressed in multiple ways to allow, not only a broad awareness of them, but to encourage authentic and meaningful interaction across a diverse community, including how children might experience them or if there were ways to dramatise them such as the use of forum theatre.

After a process of collating the data, the values were drafted, and the final surveys were constructed and distributed in order to get a consensus on wording across the PPN. As detailed below for the first values statement, there was broad consensus in agreement of the wording across the PPN.

Figure 7 People’s Panel responses

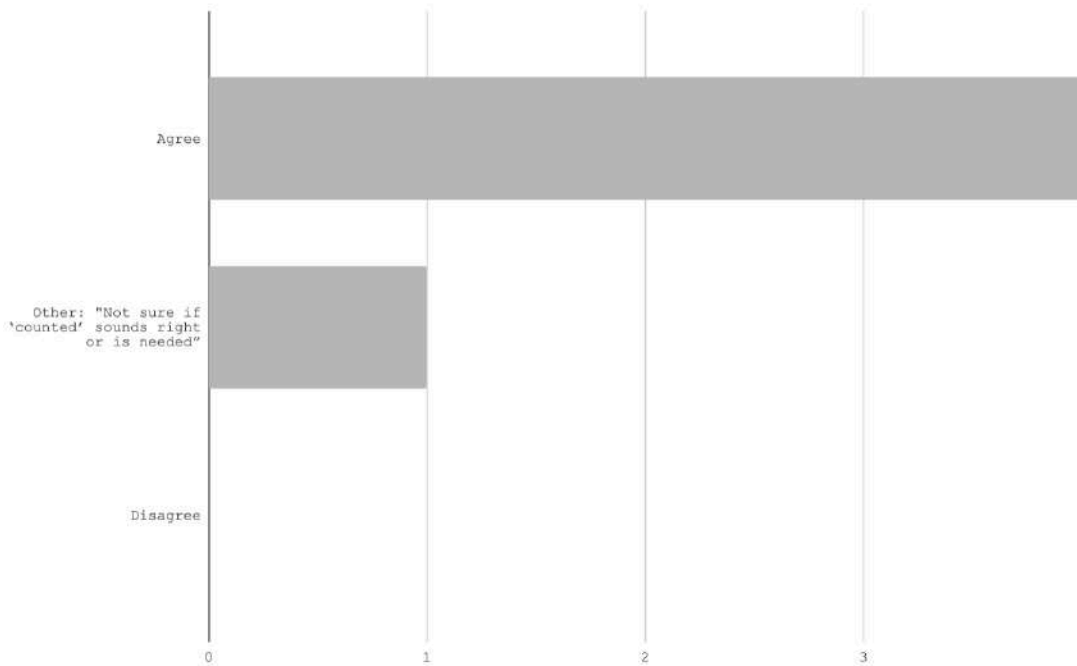
The Migration Museum is... A space to celebrate legacies and forge networks – where everyone is valued, welcome, counted and present. (14 responses)



²⁵ field note.

Figure 8 People's Network responses

The Migration Museum is... A space to celebrate legacies and forge networks – where everyone is valued, welcome, counted and present. (4 responses)



For the second statement there was still overall agreement, however as detailed below, there was further contention around the use of the word 'marginalised' and how this was experienced and perceived.

Figure 9 People's Panel responses

The Migration Museum is... Providing space for marginalised voices to be heard – inviting discussions around the intersectionality and complexities of migrant experiences. (14 responses)

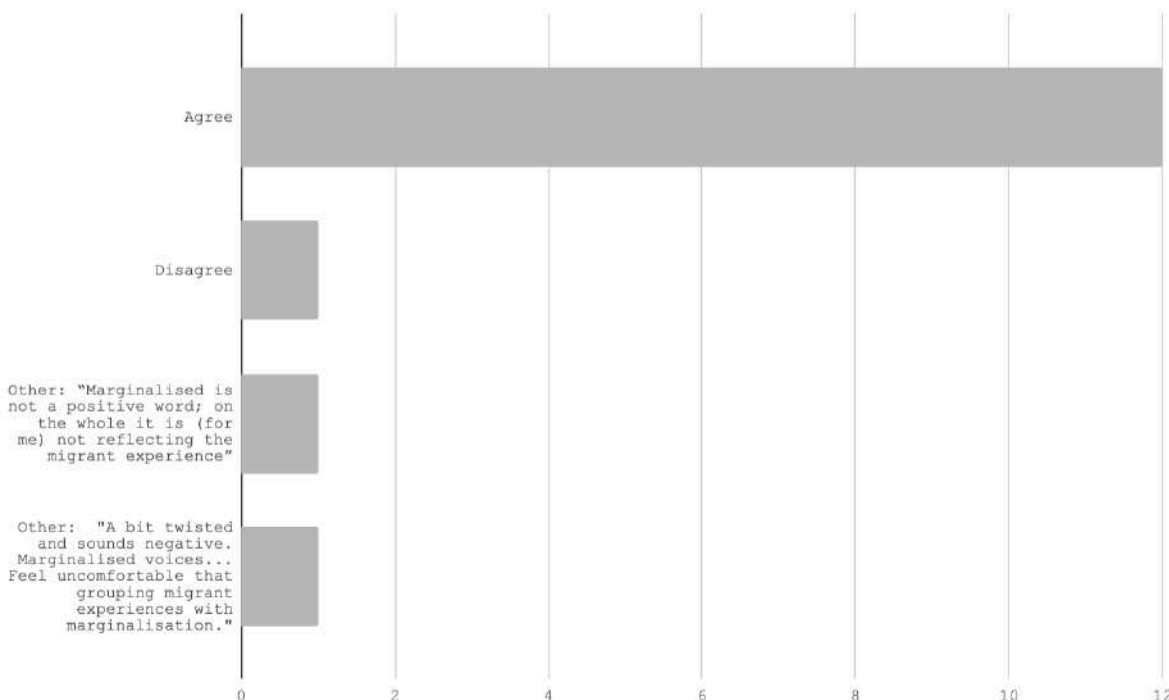
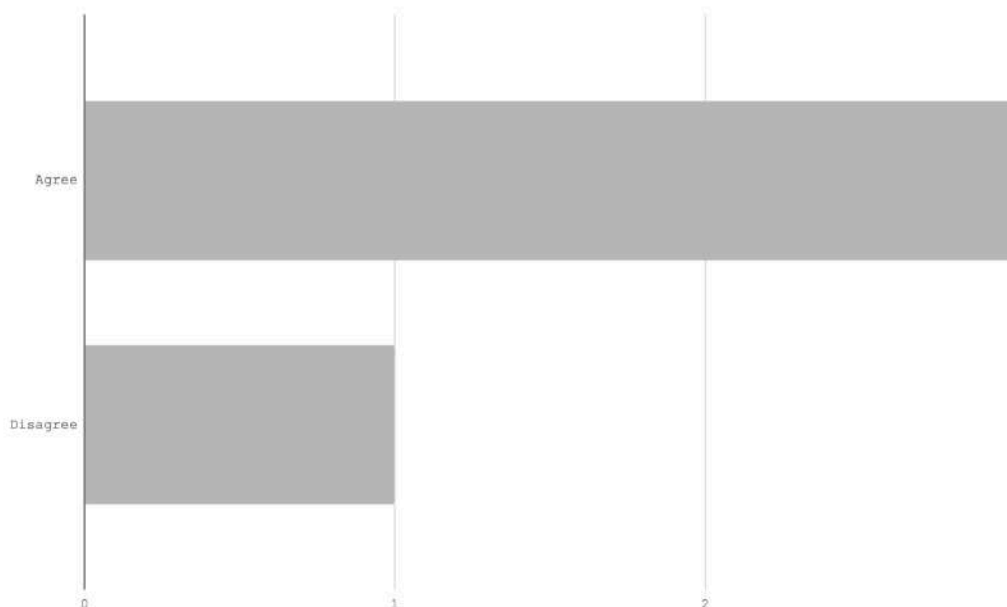


Figure 10 People's Network responses

The Migration Museum is...Providing space for marginalised voices to be heard – inviting discussions around the intersectionality and complexities of migrant experiences. (4 responses)



Notably only 2 participants disagreed with the statement across the PPN, although, along with the other comments from the People's Panel survey (figure 9), this exemplifies the complexity, (as is expressed in the statement itself) of taking a co-created approach and the need for detailed consideration and sensitivity around language, and the feelings it evokes based on personal perceptions, understanding and experience of migration. Arguably the entire process was managed by Mona and Jason in ways that sought to do exactly this- bringing these discussions to the foreground and encouraging careful debate amongst the PPN and the museum team.

The rest of the values statements shared via the surveys, gathered broad and in most cases unanimous consensus across the PPN, resulting in the following, co-created values:

The Migration Museum is...

- **A space to celebrate legacies and forge networks – where everyone is valued, welcome, counted and present.**
- **Providing space for marginalised voices to be heard – inviting discussions around the intersectionality and complexities of migrant experiences.**
- **Promoting learning and curiosity by sharing all our stories – inspiring us to be more unified with the people around us.**
- **Generating meaningful connections through cultural exchange – allowing us to respect and elevate one another.**
- **Accessible, transparent, and open to change – we ensure that our values are in line with key priorities of the diverse communities that we serve.**
- **Making room for self-reflection and acceptance – we invite everyone to join us on this journey.**

Although the purpose and aims of this project were focused on developing the museum's community engagement initiatives, there were some surprising and positive unintended outcomes through this process. Over 40% of participants in the People's Panel and 50% of the People's Network, felt 'more positive' about their own migration story or family history through being part of the project as noted by some participants:

"I keep remembering all the different migration stories I read on the walls of the museum, and I have kept a picture of myself in my head, where someday, someone including my children will read about the impact I have made because I am an immigrant, and how I made the most of what life and the country the UK has served me as an immigrant and get challenged to do so, just like I have been motivated by the stories of others."

"My family are all living in China. I came this country by my own. I have not thought that UK would be the space of settling down. However, after this project, I feel less anxiety of living far away of my families."

Similarly, over 70% of PPN felt their involvement in the project had changed how they felt about the Migration Museum:

"Through this project, I discovered the Museum and its mission. Now I am absolutely dedicated to ensuring people know more about the space!"

"I feel more knowledgeable and part of something relevant."

"An amazing space for dialogues"

"If the migration museum continues to follow the path it is already on, and take into account the panel, then in the new area/building it will survive another 10yrs and beyond."

And over 75% of PPN across both surveys agreed the project has changed the way they felt about Lewisham:

"I am glad Lewisham has something so vibrant to shout about."

"Lewisham is a multicultural borough. Makes Lewisham more inspiring. I love my Lewisham."

Developing the Toolkit for Co-created Community Engagement Projects

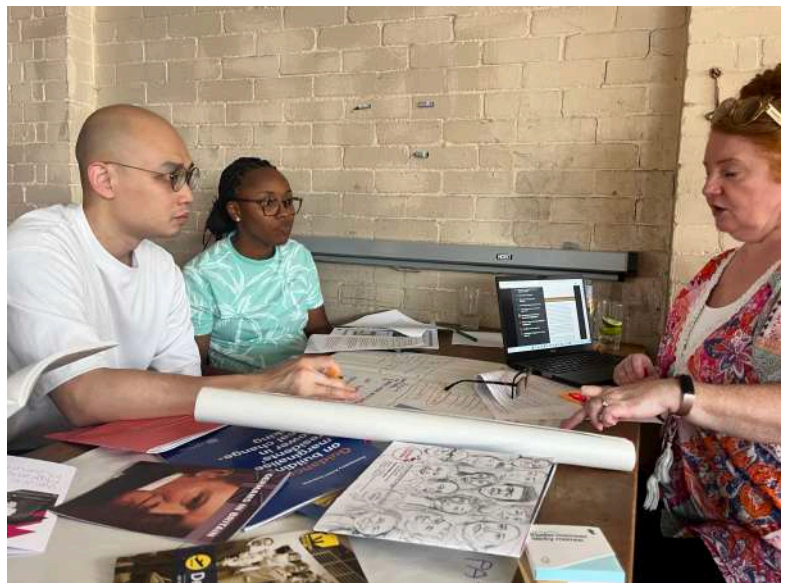
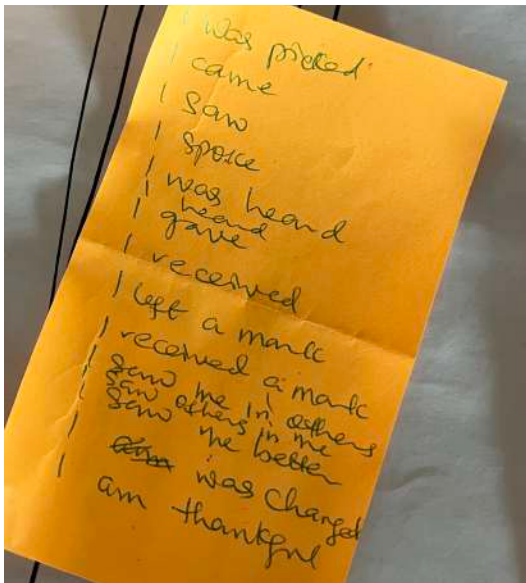
Before moving on to give some concluding reflections and recommendations it is important to highlight the 'toolkit' project that evolved out of the PPN, with acknowledgement again of the Civic Catalyst Grant enabling academic input into the project.

Through discussions around the workshops and working together analysing the data it was agreed that inviting members of the PPN to join a working group who would produce the planned toolkit for co-created community engagement, based on shared learning, would be the most authentic way to move forward.

The Migration Museum continued in its commitment to recognising contributors' time and a small budget was made available- it was agreed that each participant would receive £15 per hour for their involvement in co-creating the toolkit. An expression of interest was shared with all PPN participants and 3 respondents were invited to join the toolkit project²⁶.

The toolkit evolved over a period of 5 months, with 2 face to face workshops and 2 online workshops, as well as shared documents for group input and collaboration. Discussion also took place via email to ensure as much PPN input was captured as possible.

The resulting toolkit was fully co-produced with participants in the PPN and offers a selection of 'top tips' and learning from the PPN, as well as templates to inspire and support others in their community engagement work. The toolkit will be available as an open access resource to support co-created community engagement projects across the Borough and beyond.



²⁶ 2 people from the PP and 1 from the PN.

Concluding reflections and recommendations

When I first became involved in the project, I was struck by the integrity of its overall ethos and the commitment to working in ways that speak so intimately to community engagement principles, (Blake et al 2008) and higher-level participatory practices, (Arnstein 1969). Although not designed as a participatory action research project, PPN has the potential to evolve into this. The project has engaged a diverse section of the Lewisham community very successfully – a community that has revealed itself to be acutely positioned to participate in developing its own research identity and peer researcher heritage. And here it feels appropriate to reflect on the Migration Museum as a potential peer researcher hub. The People’s Panel and Network project exposed an appetite and commitment to working together, (across a diverse range of community members), not only in terms of co-creating the Museum’s values, but also through deeper level engagement, (through workshops, discussions, and surveys), with the lived experience of the Migration Museum as a space, and its intrinsic value as a resource to the people of Lewisham more broadly.

“I am persuaded that no one necessarily needs to walk the walk of immigration alone.”²⁷

This quote from a participant, used as a prefix title to this evaluation, very poignantly (for me) signals both what could be an experience of, and an invitation to, the continued development of meaningful community engagement practices. Practices that the Migration Museum embodies, not only through the co-creation of its values but through its people, processes and conceptualisation of place and space. In closing I offer some recommendations for consideration:

- Continue to develop the PPN with a view to growing peer research within the community: this could involve light touch training in- methods (including creative and non text-based methods such as ‘photo voice’), ethics, analysis and creating research driven outputs such as collaborative or co-created articles.
- Consider streamlining the approach to vouchers and methods of remuneration: for example a flexible policy developed with members of the PPN exploring the current breadth of volunteer and community involvement initiatives and how these are differentiated and recognised.
- Ensure that the commitment to sharing the research outcomes of the project is met and that members of the PPN are kept updated on future plans and both encouraged and enabled to influence them.
- There was more participant drop off in relation to the People’s Network than the People’s Panel - as suggested in People’s Network survey 3, online sessions for the network may have helped and it is worth considering this blended approach.
- Continue widening the reach of community-facing initiatives and respond to survey comments relating to less represented communities and groups in the PPN, such as: younger people, people with disabilities, young Black women and young men, better representation from other diverse populations living in Lewisham such as those of Hispanic, Eastern European, Vietnamese or other African communities. Whilst capacity issues need to be considered, one survey respondent suggested conducting outreach to these communities in Lewisham. So, perhaps further development of the organisational mapping exercise already undertaken, with a focus on mapping communities.
- In the next phase of the project, ensure that the PPN develops and feeds into plans for the Migration Museum’s permanent home in the City of London by continuing relationships with PPN members in Lewisham and widening engagement to those neighbouring the museum’s new location.

²⁷ Quote from applicant to the People’s Panel. All data is anonymised.

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Shamrova, D.P. and Cummings, C.E. (2017) 'Participatory action research (PAR) with children and youth: An integrative review of methodology and PAR outcomes for participants, organizations, and communities', *Children and youth services review*, 81, pp. 400–412.

Websites and other sources

Dulwich Picture Gallery: <https://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/>

London Engagement Collaborative (LEC): <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/community-engagement/london-engagement-collaborative>

Peckham Platform: Peckham Peace Wall, <https://www.peckhamplatform.com/all-exhibitions/peckham-peace-wall/>

Short film- LEC + People's Panel and Network (Migrants in Culture), <https://drive.google.com/file/d/Imis7eOMhGINnHQXxCXD2jIPiVSPahIPk/view>

Shortwork, The Past for the Present: Community Action Research at Dulwich Picture Gallery, <https://www.shortwork.org.uk/projects/the-past-for-the-present%3A-community-action-research-at-dulwich-picture-gallery>

Join

PEOPLE'S
PANEL &
PEOPLE'S
NETWORK

Tell us what you want
to see from the
Migration Museum

The Migration Museum is looking for people to be part of our People's Panel and Network, helping to establish our community engagement values and practices in Lewisham and beyond.

If you want to join, you have two options:

People's Panel – the core feedback group committed to attending 3 workshops at the Migration Museum and completing 3 follow-up surveys (either online, over the phone, or in person). These will take place between November 2022 and November 2023. Participants will receive £75 per workshop for their time.

People's Network – a virtual network of participants committed to completing 3 surveys (either online, over the phone or in person). These will take place between November 2022 and November 2023. Participants will receive a £10 high street voucher per survey.

If you're interested in taking part, please contact us by:

- Sending an email to info@migrationmuseum.org with the subject line as 'People's Panel and Network'
- Calling and leaving a message on 020 3488 4508 – someone will call you back
- Coming into the museum and speaking to a member of staff – our opening hours are Weds–Sat 11am–5.30pm and Sun 11am–5pm

Migration Museum

Lewisham Shopping Centre (entrance in Central Square) London SE13 7HB

📷 @migrationmuseumuk

📘 @migrationmuseumuk

🐦 @migrationuk

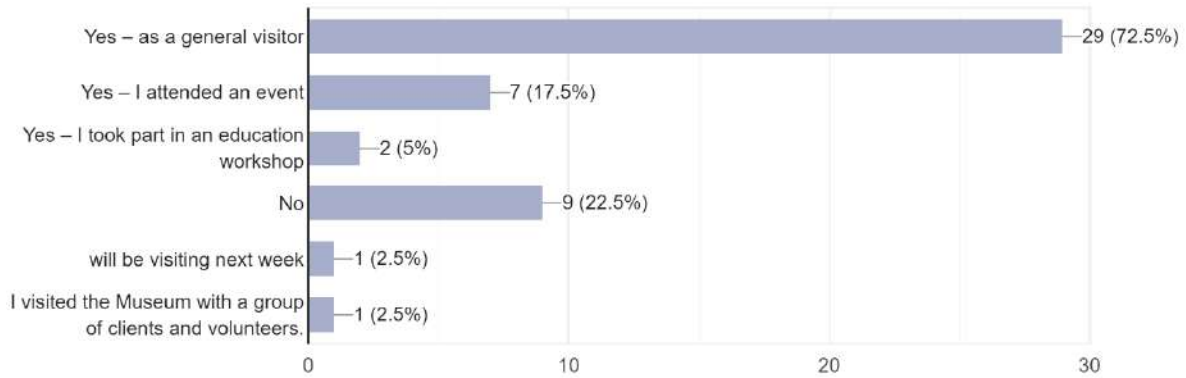
www.migrationmuseum.org



Appendix 2: PPN registration form extract

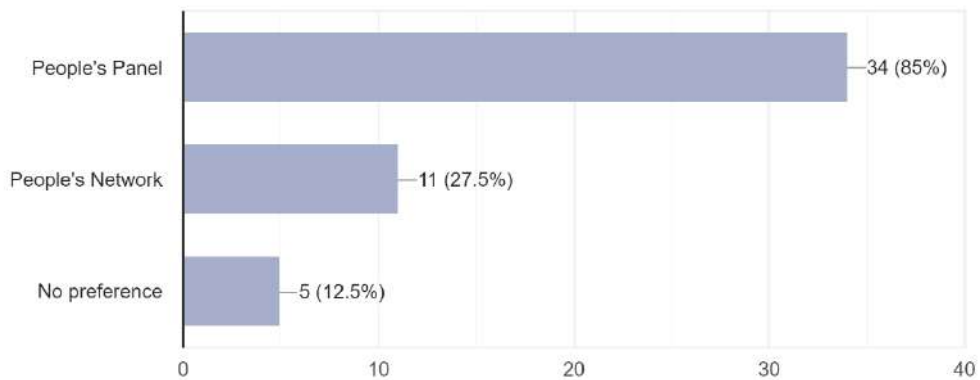
Have you visited Migration Museum before?

40 responses



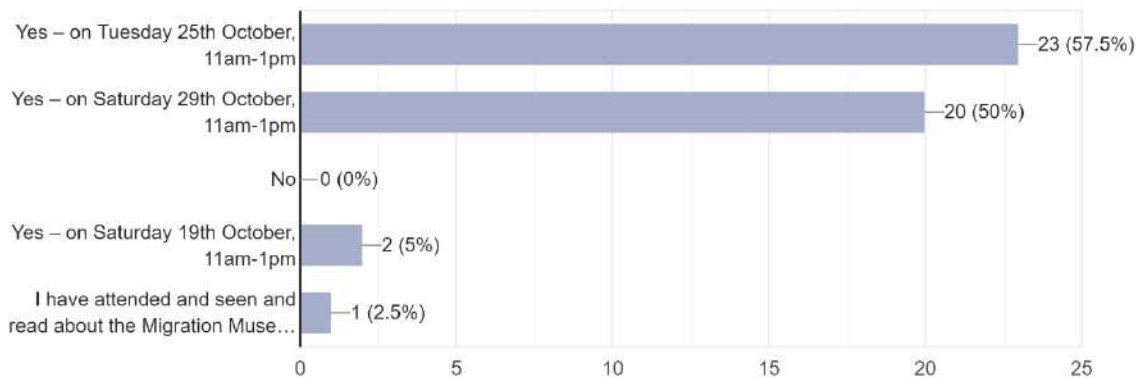
Are you most interested in joining the People's Panel OR the People's Network?

40 responses



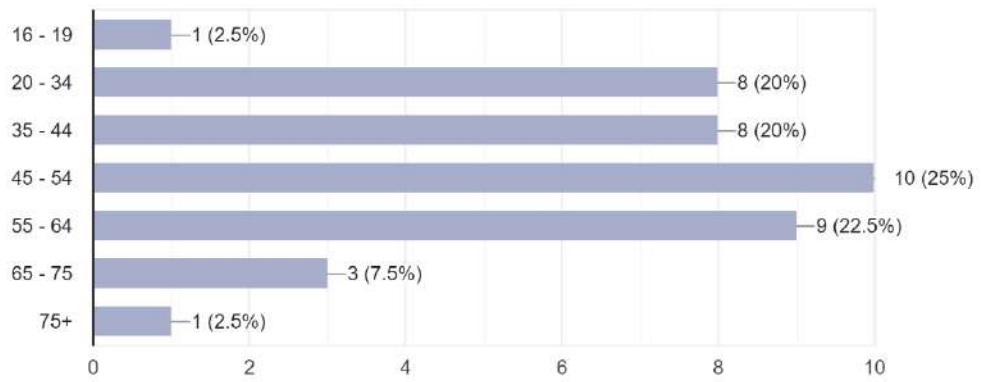
Would you be available to attend an introductory session at the Migration Museum?

40 responses



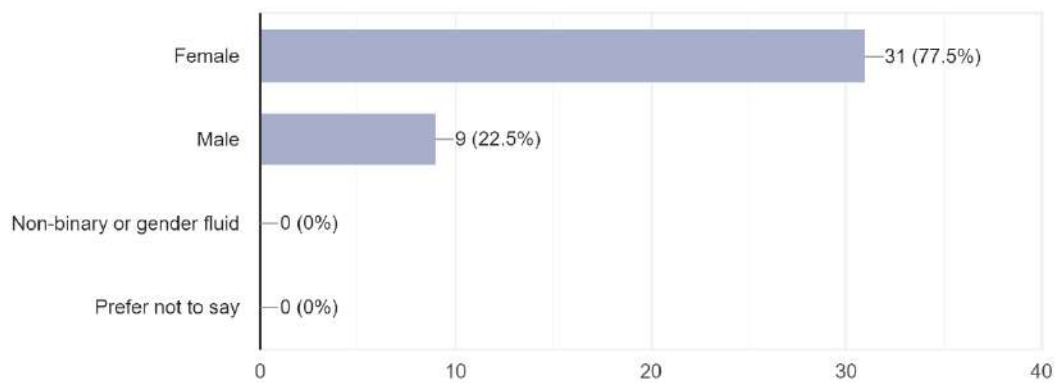
Age

40 responses



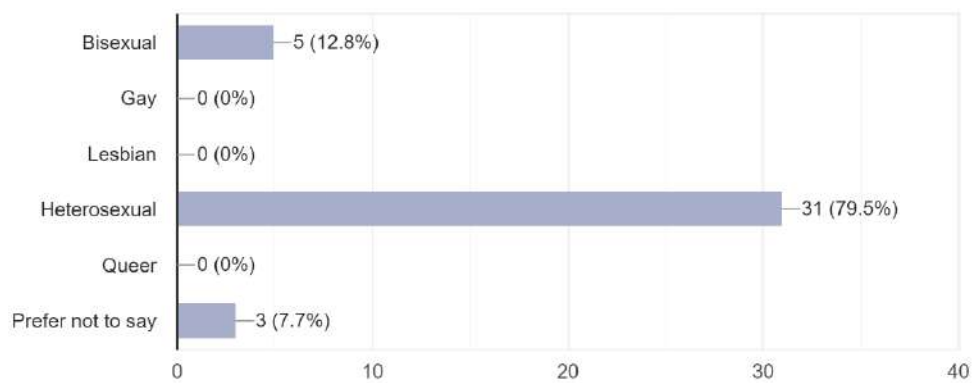
Gender

40 responses



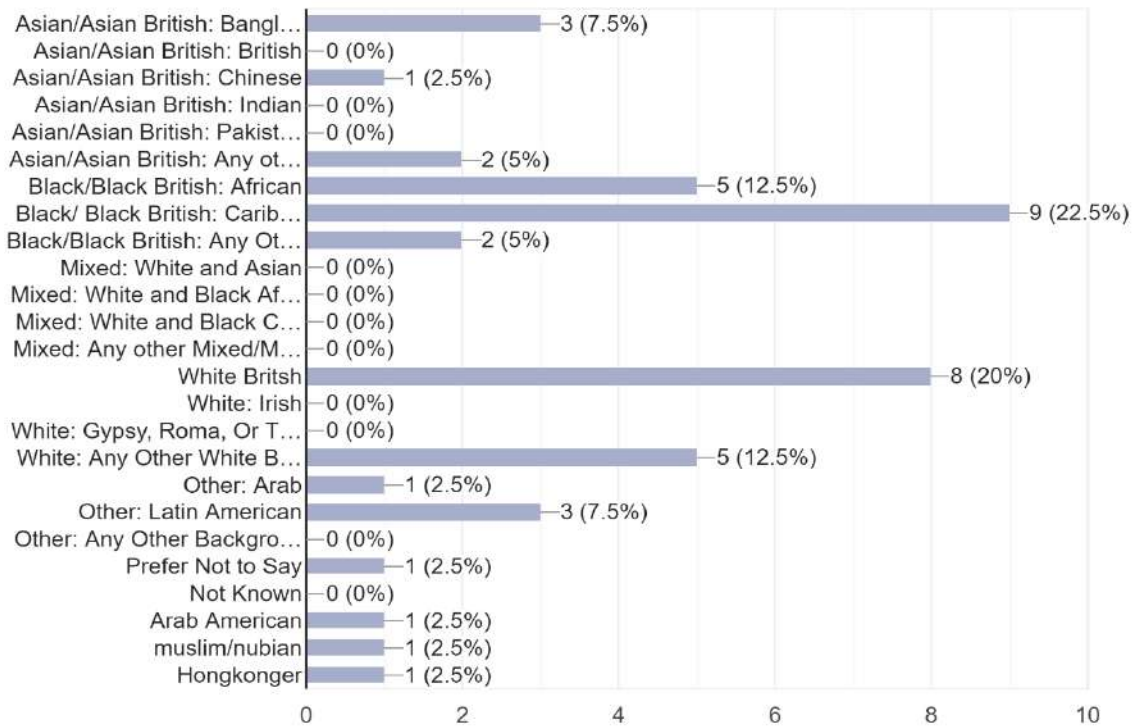
Sexuality

39 responses



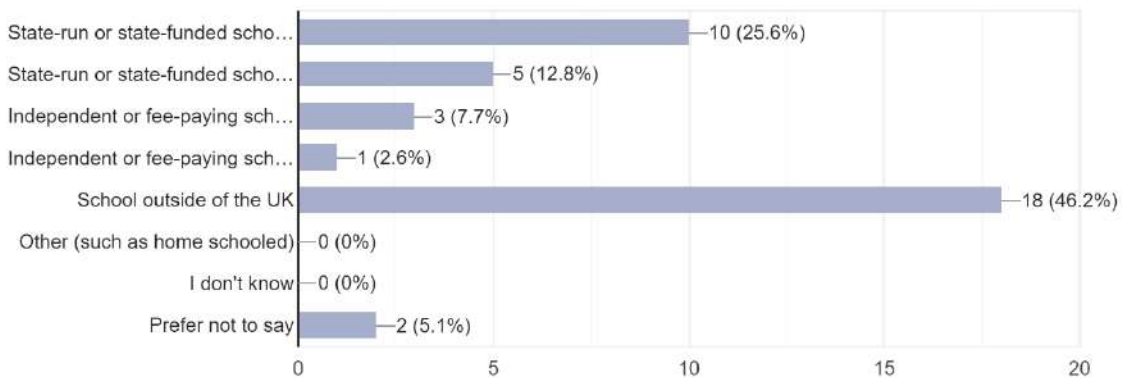
Ethnic Origin

40 responses



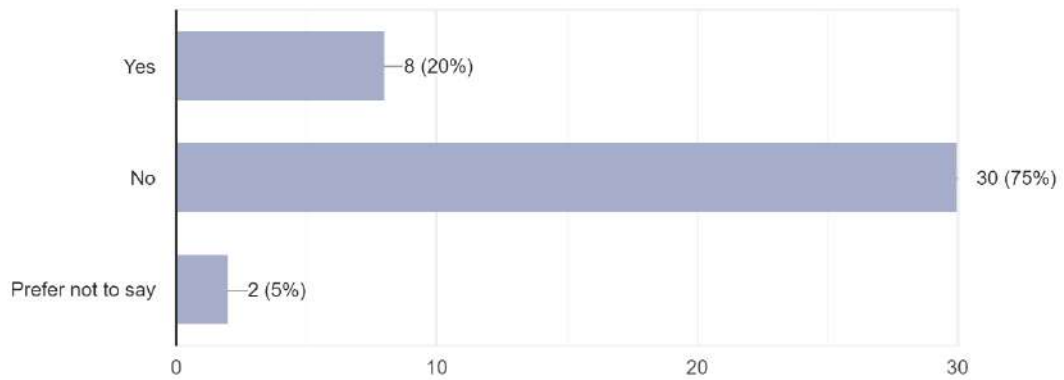
What type of school(s) did you mainly attend between the ages of 11 and 18 years old?

39 responses



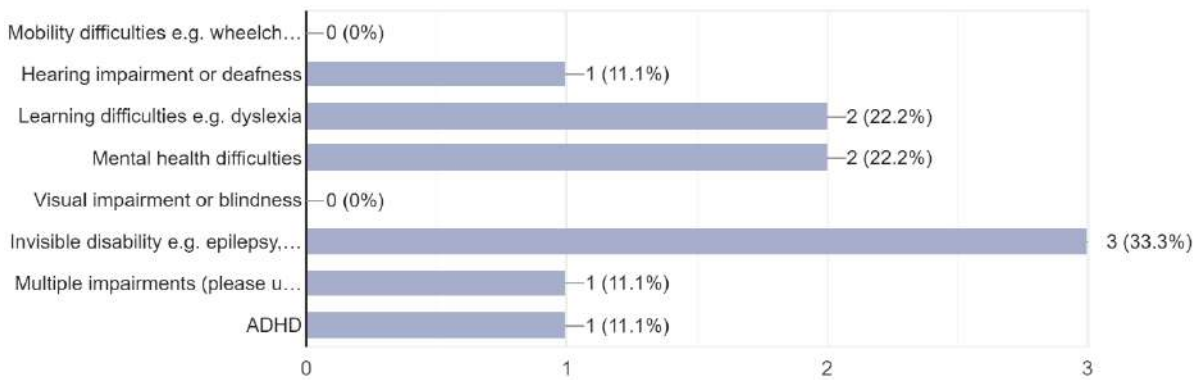
Do you have a disability or impairment?

40 responses



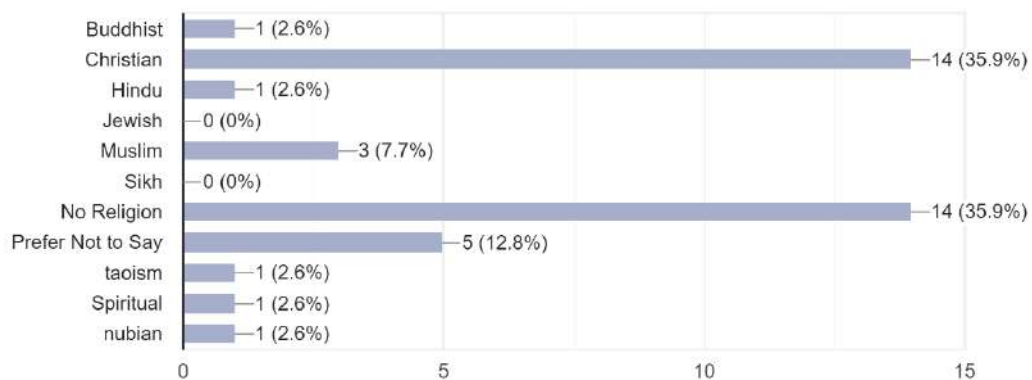
If you selected 'Yes' in the question above, please tell us more

9 responses



Religion

39 responses



Appendix 3: Migration Museum People's Panel and Network Ground rules for each session

"We will pose a set agenda at the beginning of each session for you to think about. This agenda will be promoted throughout the conversations during the session, helping to steer the direction of each meeting. Although the questions will form a structure, we very much value your input too. If there is something you'd like to speak about in the session that is not covered by our agenda at the beginning, please feel free to voice this with us at the very start. We'll try to weave this into the session (time dependent) or follow-up with you about it afterwards.

Always raise your hand before speaking. We will chair and facilitate conversation to ensure that everyone is able to speak and be heard. Please remember to give enough space for others to feed in and be mindful of others who may require more time to communicate their thoughts. Be respectful of differing opinions and allow others to finish communicating before expressing disagreement. The Migration Museum will help navigate difficult conversations and ensure that participants are protected from harm. If any conversation becomes dangerous, then the Migration Museum team has the right to remove participants from the session.

Do not make any presumptions over people's lived experiences – race, gender/pronouns, sexuality, migration status, (dis)ability, language, academic background, class/socio-economic background, religion etc. Be especially aware of sensitivities around discussions around migration.

Your individual thoughts are valued – we do not expect you to 'represent' a certain group or agenda, and there is no pressure for you to have all the answers. Don't be afraid to provide an answer that isn't detailed or offers a full picture – we're not here to test you!"

SPEAKING



**WANT
TO TALK**



**DIRECT
RESPONSE**



CLARIFY



**POINT OF
ORDER**

FEELING



AGREE



**DON'T
AGREE**



OPPOSE



BLOCK

Appendix 4: PP Workshop 2 - Transcription of written feedback gathered from participants.

What forms of practical support would be useful for you/your communities? (e.g. immigration advice, youth services, ESOL classes?)

"Interpreting (both language and of artwork)"

"Ongoing peoples panel to continue to develop ways of supporting the museum, practically and strategically."

"Collaborative breakfast debates about key issues that affects people / signposting to relevant services (NHS / CCG)"

"Use your space as a therapeutic space. Get a volunteer therapist to come talk and listen to people using the talking cure."

"Heritage walks"

"Research workshops, archiving open days."

"'Fabric of Society' wellbeing workshop about 'scarfs' - bring your own, global multi-use"

"Talk / workshop on understanding education system (after school clubs, scholarships etc)"

"Information - pointing them in the right direction eg claiming what they are entitled to; visiting them in their various clubs/meeting and informing them"

"Budgeting and cooking for university / life skills."

"Mindfulness exercises i.e., migration colouring sheets, arts and crafts workshops"

"Youth advice - where to engage."

"Youth services to connect young generation."

"Supporting youth voice by offering different platforms to engage with the museum"

"Youth clubs (1) heritage classes for young people (2)"

"Youth services, know your culture, places of interest."

"Inviting more young people to take part in the peoples panel (25 and under)"

"Free meeting space"

"ESOL classes"

"Online classes - short videos platform"

"Language hours where people can come meet others who speak their non-English language"

"Use your space to help and host community events eg ESOL classes, food (bank) collection spots"

"Pop ups etc"

"Immigration advice"

"Mental health services - some people are still illegal to live in this country, they meet housing employment difficulties more than we expect. Mental health services would help."

"Employment services - tax, pension, application, self-employment. The system of the uk is unfamiliar. Introduce and support."