

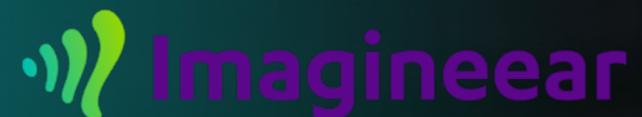
Best of Both: Combining arts and science to measure the benefits of online culture for mental health

Helen Adams - Digital Engagement Lead, GLAM

#OpenEngaged | October 2021



Gardens,
Libraries
& Museums



Aim

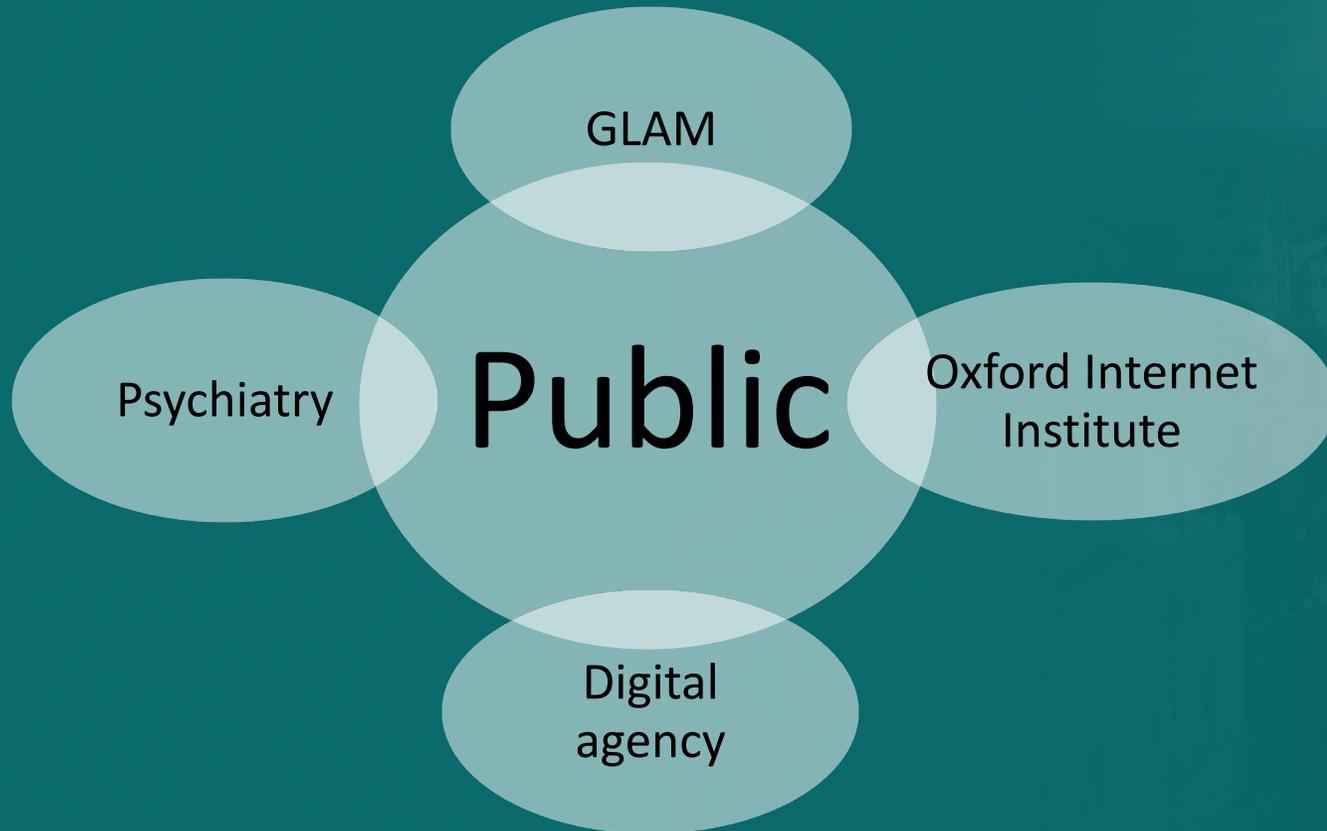
Research and test innovative approaches to improve mental health and wellbeing beyond medication and traditional therapies

COVID-19 circumstances:

- Closure of museums and increase in online content
- Worsening mental health impact and reduction in services

Background

University of Oxford COVID-19 Research Response Fund (April 2020)



Process

	What	#
Phase 1	Systematic Review	13,000 studies
	Sector Scrape	10 case studies
	Baseline Survey	1,056
	<u>Follow-on Survey</u>	176
	<u>1-2-1 Interviews</u>	13
Phase 2	PD Focus Groups	31
	RCT Experiment	413

} Core components



Headline results: ASHMOLEAN WEBSITE SURVEY

- **Established arts lovers used OCC more during COVID-19** and see greater MH benefits.
- Young people 16-24 smallest respondent group but:

	Young people	Rest of sample
Non-white	26%	9%
Diagnosed MH issue/treatment	25%	16%
Self-diagnosed MH issue (K10)	77%	44%
Ashmolean web first-timers	48%	33%

PLEASE WEAR A
FACE COVERING



Headline results: INTERVIEWS and FOCUS GROUPS

1. **Immersion** helps shift attention away from self.
2. Sought comfort and strength in **human connections**, shared experiences and **stories of resilience**.
3. **Importance of flipping the narrative**, giving a platform for those who didn't fit in or marginalized by history:

“I find it difficult to look at Western art and only see people who look like me in the background or not even there.”

4. **Wanted to hear other people's perspectives** to encourage empathy and reduce black-and-white thinking.





<https://youtu.be/mQLFL4Tm-v8>

Gwen - examples of UGC perspectives

"I think Gwen's story is a very human one; the way she loved so devotedly yet struggled with loneliness, at times a cause of feeling so deeply. Ultimately it is one I can feel connected to."

"I think that Gwen is an intense, passionate woman who threw herself into whatever she was invested in. This resilience as a queer, orphaned woman is an example of triumph and survival."



Reflections

Here are some viewpoints from other users. If you would like to, please tell us your viewpoint on the art or stories you see here—did it help give perspective? Did you feel connected or reflected? Were you inspired?

Just click the comment icon  at the bottom left corner.

"The story of Gwen and her brother struck a chord with me. They both lived lives with their fair share of hardships, but the bond they shared shines through as testament to how vital relationships with those we love are."
—Participant

"As someone who regularly fears failure the phrase 'do not be depressed by the idea of falling short' speaks to me. Gwen reminds us that we can do the things we set our minds to. To not be saddened by the thought we may not succeed. We should persevere and eventually we will succeed."
—Participant

"Gwen's feelings of never being enough compared to a man resonate so strongly."
—Participant

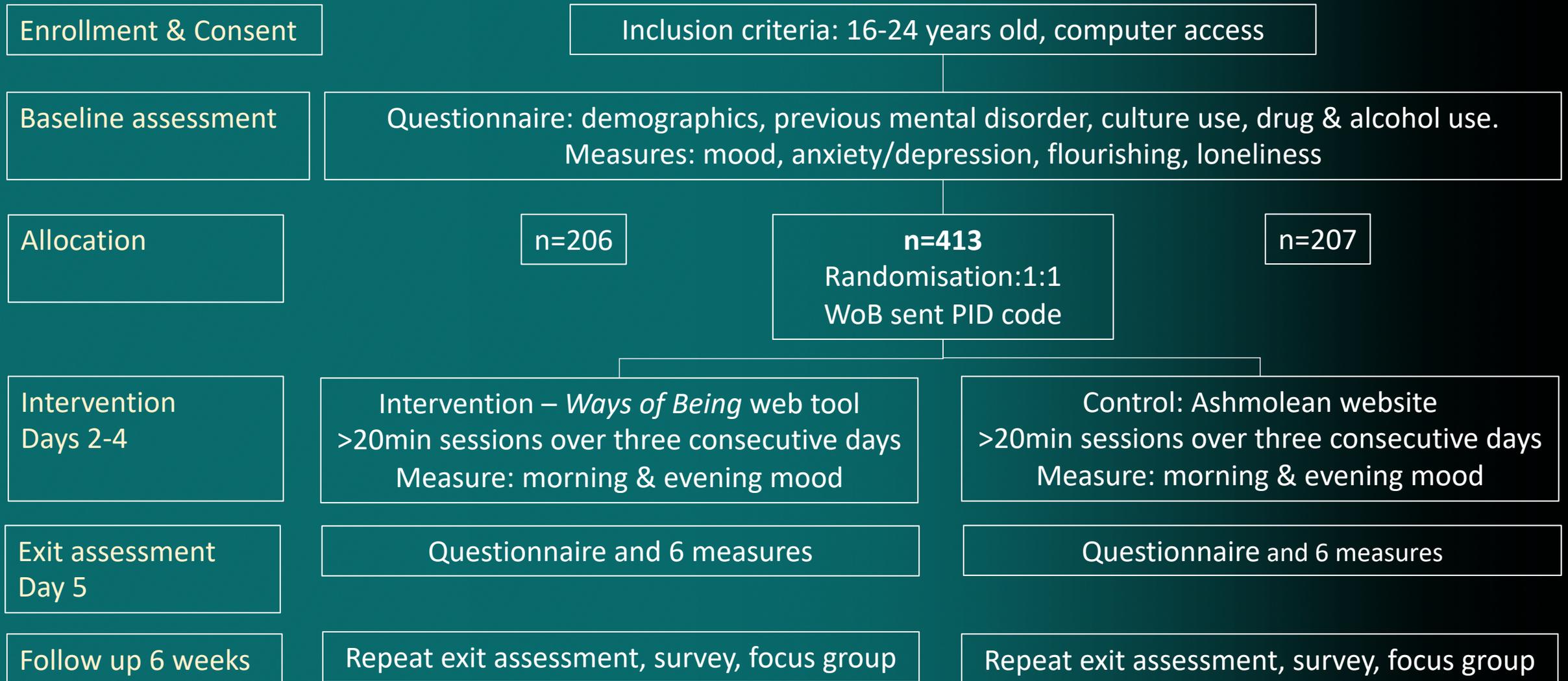
"In the phrase 'every moment is holy' Gwen reminds us to make the most of every moment, don't squander your time on earth."
—Participant

"I think Gwen's story is a very human one; the way she loved so devotedly yet struggled with loneliness, at times a cause of feeling so deeply. Ultimately it is one I can feel connected to."
—Participant

"10 years is a long time to have such an obsession with a person who does not want anything to do with you. I can't imagine how she could have lived life for so long with such an all-encompassing urge for someone else's love."
—Participant

"I think Gwen struggled to hold down a relationship, under the surface she felt as tearful as her mother, but hid it with her independence and strong amorous personality. Not growing up with a mother, or any parental figure can lead to insecurity and instability as there is nobody to help guide you through life and assist with emotional regulation. You could argue the emotional instability is shown by her apparent

RCT participant flow chart



Impact 1: Psychometric measures

Mood:

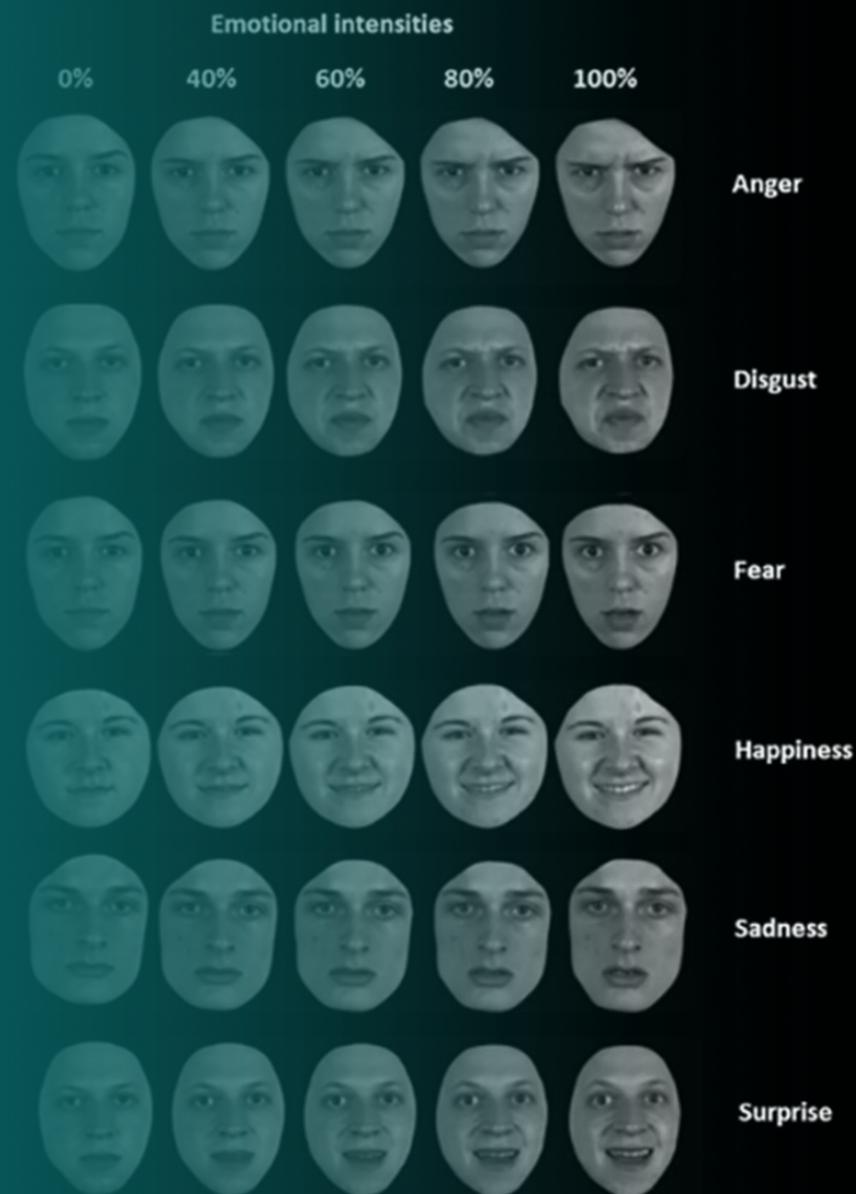
- Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS)
- Kessler Distress Scale (K10)

Online cognitive tasks:

- Facial expression recognition task (FERT)
- Probabilistic Incentive Learning Task (PILT)

Secondary outcomes:

- Flourishing
- Loneliness



Impact 2: Self-discovery

“I found that the nights that I engaged with the art right before bed, I slept better.”

“Through this experience I became more and more confident, willing to go out of my own inner world, feel the world is a better place.”

“It was noticeable that I felt more inspired to go and do things and more motivated for a few hours after engaging with the content.”

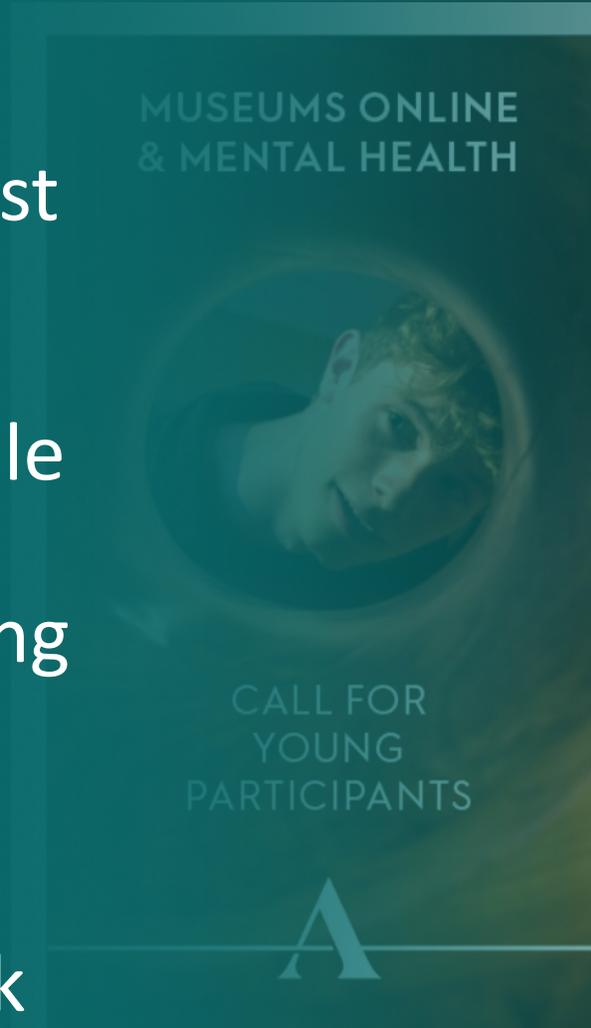


Impact 3: Response rates

Conversion: rate was 57%. For most online surveys, this is 10-15%

Recruitment: recruited 400+ people in one week. Importance of budgeting for paid social advertising and remuneration.

Retention: 315 out of the 413 participants completed the 6-week follow up measures and survey



Impact 4: A positive research experience

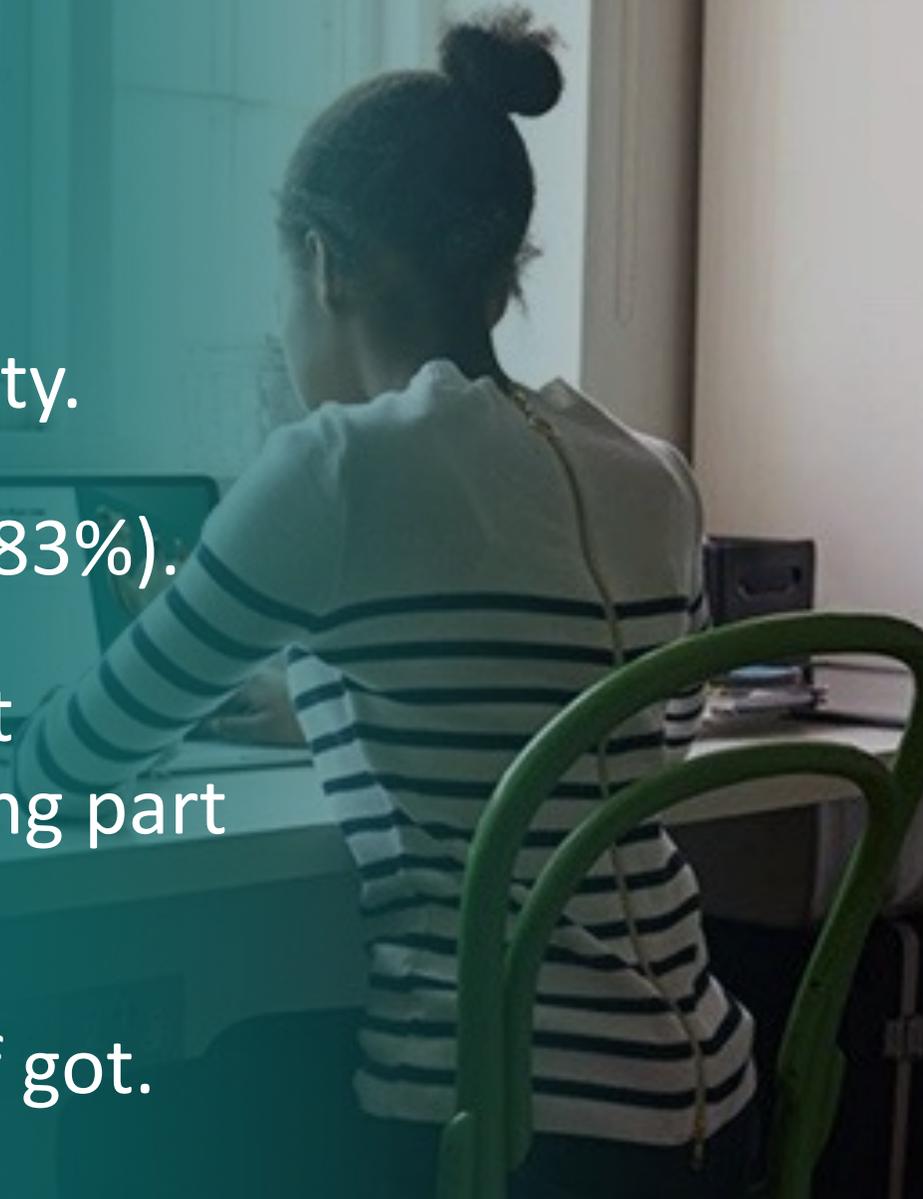
Importance of ethical standards and consent procedures.

Low barriers to participation increased diversity.

Participants felt valued (83%) and respected (83%).

For 63% of the participants, this was their first research project but 88% would consider taking part in research again.

Each half wanted to know what the other half got.



Outputs/Outcomes

New web tool 'Ways of Being'. 11 collections stories, 50,000 words – to be made public soon.



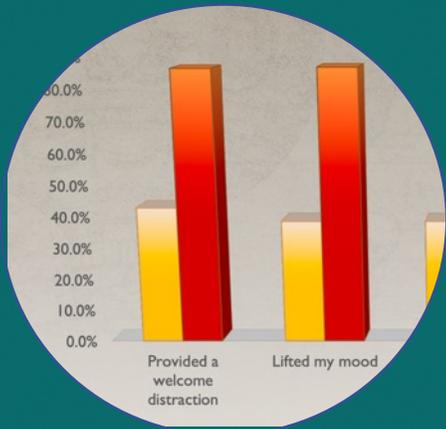
4 peer-reviewed papers in open-access psychiatry journals



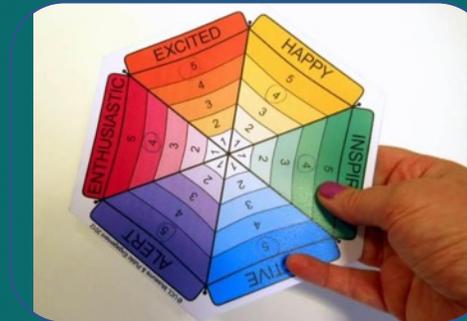
'Wellbeing' adopted as pillar of GLAM Strategy 2021-23



Sector awareness: GLAM, UCL, MuseWeb MW21, Kids in Museums, Centre for Creative Brain, University Museums Group <https://vimeo.com/5294259>



Rich data: 1200 surveys 30 hrs interviews, focus groups and user testing



Rise of wellbeing measures to evaluate impact of participatory cultural activities (e.g. SWELS). UCL measure is available: <https://bit.ly/3nwUGoO>



Co-producers want to be part of follow-on study

Thank you

helen.adams@glam.ox.ac.uk
[@HeAdams](https://www.instagram.com/HeAdams)

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