

Public Humanities

Public Humanities is an international open-access, cross-disciplinary, peer-reviewed journal at the intersection of humanities scholarship and public life.

Aims and Scope

Public Humanities is an open-access forum for research from around the world and across the disciplines, engaging with a wide range of issues, authors, and readers and demonstrating the breadth, depth, and value of the humanities in its varied contributions to public life.

The humanities study the things humans make—our art, writings, thoughts, religions, governments, histories, technologies, and societies—helping us understand who we are, what we do, how we do it, why, and with what consequences. Honouring the capacious diversity of the humanities, *Public Humanities* is open to all disciplines, geographies, periods, methodologies, authors, and audiences. The journal is a rendezvous for civically engaged humanities work from (though not limited to) the fields of Anthropology, Archaeology, Architecture, Classics, Cultural Studies, Disability Studies, Economics, Ethnic Studies, Gender Studies, Government, History, Law, Linguistics, Literary Studies, Performing Arts, Religious Studies, Philosophy, Postcolonial Studies, Queer Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Visual Arts, and Women's Studies.

The journal ranges from historical examples of the humanities at work in the world to theoretical debates about the field today, from governmental policy related to the humanities to scholarly interventions in on-going social problems. *Public Humanities* creates space for scholars, students, activists, policy-makers, professionals, practitioners, and non-specialists to explore our habits and histories, our art and ideas, our language and beliefs, our pasts, presents, and futures. The journal invites authors and readers to share humanities knowledge, apply it to our societies' most pressing issues as they arise, and demonstrate the value of the humanities in new and engaging ways.

Public Humanities publishes themed issues curated by guest editors and of-the-moment articles. Published digitally to enable speedy delivery to readers and maximum flexibility for authors, articles range from individual of-the-moment responses to roundtable discussions and full-length papers. Through active and rigorous commissioning and peer-review processes, a diverse and committed editorial collective, and a world-leading publishing team, *Public Humanities* offers a platform for scholarly exchange and exciting new applications of excellent humanities research.

Leadership

Editors-in-Chief

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Classics
University of Sydney

[Mary Rambaran-Olm](#)
Medieval Literature
Public Historian

[Sarah Nuttall](#)
Literary and Cultural Studies
Wits Institute for Social and Economic
Research

[Neil W. Williams](#)
Philosophy
University of Roehampton

[Ricardo Ortiz](#)
Latinx Literatures and Cultures

Mission and Values

Public Humanities is mission-driven and ethics-oriented to support impact and broader engagement across and outside the academy and to facilitate cross-disciplinary conversation. Making our mission, values, and policies explicit aids with goal-setting and decision-making.

Mission

The mission of *Public Humanities* is to create a venue for sharing knowledge about the intersections of humanities scholarship and public life.

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Truth: The greatest good at *Public Humanities* is the accurate representation and responsible interpretation of reality.

Justice: *Public Humanities* fights for the ethical use of power on all levels—by individuals, organisations, and governments.

Education: Sharing knowledge is central to *Public Humanities*, especially back and

Cambridge University Press

Sally Hoffmann
Executive Publisher

Georgia Priestley
Publisher

Publication Structure

An open-access, high-profile venue for publishing high-quality, cutting-edge humanities scholarship, *Public Humanities* appears quarterly in digital issues with of-the-moment pieces published as they are written and collected annually in a year-in-review issue.

Of-the-Moment Commentaries

Of-the-moment pieces addressing emerging topics are written by experts in an accessible style for wide audiences. With a three-week turn-around time from acceptance to publication, these 800-2,000 word commentaries are peer-reviewed yet still timely so as to be a live part of

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public debate and policy-making. Demonstrating the responsiveness of humanities research to current affairs, these smaller pieces appear as they are written on the website and are then collected annually in a year-in-review issue published in December.

Themed Issues

Public Humanities publishes four themed issues per year, each issue containing six to ten contributions. This structure empowers the expertise of appointed Guest Editors, who set an agenda and curate a collection of papers that address a key social question or topic of contemporary public relevance, broadly and boldly construed. Vibrant, rigorous, and cutting-edge contributions from a diverse group of authors ensure that each issue sparks a new conversation and demonstrates the value and impact of the humanities.

Editorial commissioning, alongside expert guest editing, ensures breadth and depth in representing the value of humanities research to public life. Authors are invited to participate in online workshops to develop writing in concert with other contributors, forging new connections and establishing impactful scholarly collections. This format not only encourages cross-disciplinary collaboration but also enhances the impact of humanities research by directly engaging with pressing global issues.

To represent the diversity of humanities research, guest editors have the freedom to select the issue and article formats best suited to their themes and to adapt these formats. Issues may take the form of or include, among other article types:

- **Roundtables:** pieces of around 4,000 words
- **Reflections:** pieces of around 1,000-3,000 words
- **Case Studies:** pieces of around 8,000 words

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- **Position Papers/Rejoinders/Debates:** around 4,000 words
- **Articles:** pieces of around 6,000-8,000 words

This flexibility acknowledges the diverse ways in which scholars contribute to dialogue and allows for exploration of emergent research methodologies, amplifying the journal's impact.

Articles appear online within their issue incrementally, as soon as they are ready. Once complete, each issue is promoted through all of the marketing channels available to the Press.

Submissions

Content is directed and commissioned by a world-leading editorial team whose goal is to respond to the diversity of the humanities across nations, periods, disciplines, and perspectives, underscoring its enduring public resonance. The Editorial Collective and Advisory Board (1) decide what topics need to be covered and seek out experts to address those topics, and (2) steer quality articles to the journal. Submissions for “of-the-moment” commentaries, proposals for themed issues, and calls for papers are open to all.

Peer Review

All writing for the journal balances academic rigour with accessibility to non-specialists. The editorial policy and activity (including peer review) ensure this standard is met, and in so doing the journal cultivates skills of public writing across the humanities.

All articles are peer reviewed by at least two experts. Articles are peer-reviewed for both content (quality of ideas) and style (accessibility of writing). For long-form articles in themed issues, content reviews come from qualified members of our extensive editorial team or

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outside experts; style reviews come from guest editors (who receive training and guidance on public-facing writing from the Editors-in-Chief). For short-form articles in our of-the-moment commentary section, content reviews come from members of our editorial collective and style reviews from an Editor-in-Chief.

Open Access

Public Humanities is fully open access, meaning its content is freely accessible online. It supports and is supported by Cambridge University Press's [transformative agreement](#) programme, adding a new title to the list that showcases the Press's commitment to the humanities, to experimenting with new models for journal publishing, and to broadening the group of authors publishing with the Press.

Audience

The audience for *Public Humanities* is broad and wide-ranging. The contemporary relevance and cohesion of special issues appeal to humanities scholars, students, and practitioners as well as those working in adjacent fields, such as media production, research and development (R&D), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), policy-making, and social innovation. The journal's format and emphasis on accessibility also appeal to interested and engaged non-specialists.

Rationale

Cambridge University Press is creating *Public Humanities* in response to the societal imperative for increased access to and awareness of humanities research in the twenty-first century. The journal is designed to address (1) the cross-disciplinary nature of societal

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challenges, (2) the evolving landscape of scholarly communication, (3) the demand to demonstrate the societal impact of humanities research, and (4) the rise of the field of public humanities. *Public Humanities* provides a much-needed space for those invested in the study of humankind to connect, communicate, and collaborate.

(1) The cross-disciplinary nature of societal challenges

Public Humanities showcases how the humanities are essential to addressing global problems that don't fit politely into disciplinary boundaries, such as climate change, poverty, and educational inequality. The journal introduces an innovative publishing paradigm that transcends traditional disciplinary and regional borders, offering a new and accessible approach to disseminating and catalysing humanities research. This platform not only facilitates scholarly exchange but also inspires innovative applications of humanities research, thereby promoting broader societal impact. The journal publishes research across all periods and methodologies, so long as authors convey the urgency and insight of their research.

(2) The evolving landscape of scholarly communication

By adopting a peer-reviewed open-access model with flexible content formats, the journal balances the recognition of academic rigour and research with accessibility and inclusivity. This approach not only facilitates the democratisation of knowledge but also acknowledges the imperative for scholarly work to relate and resonate with a broader audience beyond academia.

(3) The demand to demonstrate the societal impact of humanities research

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Public Humanities stands as a testament to the enduring value of humanities research. By publishing work from all periods and methodologies, the project underscores that the contemporary relevance of research lies not only in its historical context but also in its potential to shape present-day discourse. This recognition serves as a bridge between the past and the future, emphasising the perpetual relevance of the humanities in navigating the complexities of the modern world. The journal not only bridges the gap between historical and contemporary contexts but also amplifies its role as a nexus for fostering diverse dialogues and advancing the broader understanding of humanities research's profound impact on society.

(4) *The rise of the field of public humanities*

Both the *humanities* and the *public humanities* mean different things to different people. Broadly speaking, there are two branches to the “public humanities”—public writing by scholars for non-specialists and community engagement programs and events. *Public Humanities* aims to support both branches, providing a venue for scholars, practitioners, activists, policy-makers, and citizens to access the most important humanities knowledge of the day and providing a platform for new research on socially engaged humanities activities. As the field of Public Humanities solidifies its institutional footprint—with graduate programs now established at schools like Brown, Georgetown, Sheffield, and Yale—there’s a need for a corresponding journal that offers scholarship for what society is thinking about.

The journal is a home for different global conceptions of the public humanities, beyond the quite specific definition the term has in the United States. We embrace the varied interpretations of the term “public humanities,” recognising the power of the phrase to convene discussions and its simplicity in signifying a comprehensive

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exploration of the intricate interplay between these two pivotal keywords. Our title is meant to be as capacious as possible, including and interrogating competing definitions, methods, and activities that might come under the auspices of the “public humanities.”

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Advisory Board

The following individuals have committed to serving on the journal's advisory board.

Hadeel Abdelhameed	Sarah Dillon
Rachel Adams	Emlyn Dodd
Ien Ang	Maya Dodd
Carol Atack	Danny Dorling
Caesar Alimsinya Atuire	Anders Engberg-Pedersen
Eleanor Rosamond Barraclough	John Nguyet Erni
Caroline Bassett	Aaron Fai
Jonathan Bate	Daniel Fisher-Livne
Herman Beavers	Jonathan Floyd
Joy Bivins	Mark Frost
Daisy Black	Regenia Gagnier
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Katherine Burton	Jennifer Guiliano
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Simon Critchley	Theodore Karamanski
Christopher Daley	Young Richard Kim
Will Davies	Erica Kohl-Arenas
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Darryl Dickson-Carr	David Lowe

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[Teresa Mangum](#)
[Diego Mantoan](#)
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[Erik Wade](#)
[Megan Ward](#)
[Rebecca Wingo](#)
[Brian Yothers](#)
[Donna Zuckerberg](#)

Calls for Submissions

Call for Pitches: Themed Issues

Public Humanities is a new international open-access, cross-disciplinary, peer-reviewed journal at the intersection of humanities scholarship and public life. The journal invites proposals for themed issues that pose urgent questions on contemporary public issues that require rigorous and relevant humanities knowledge.

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Developed by a Guest Editor(s), an issue brings together six to ten contributions dedicated to a specific theme, providing an in-depth engagement with the shared inquiry and agenda set by the Guest Editor(s). Each issue of *Public Humanities* should include multiple disciplinary and/or regional perspectives.

Proposals for themed issues should include a title, a 300-word description of the proposed topic, a list of potential article topics or titles, and a list of confirmed or potential authors.

Proposals will be evaluated based on their fit with the journal's remit, their original contribution to academic and policy discussions, the diversity of perspectives reflected in the proposed issue, and the feasibility of the issue being completed. We encourage submissions developed by or including scholarship from groups under-represented in academia and welcome the inclusion of early-career researchers.

All articles submitted for a selected themed issue will be subject to the standard peer-review process operated by the journal. We expect Guest Editors to ensure that articles are of suitably high quality before submission to the journal and reserve the right to reject, before or after peer review, any that are not.

Submissions can be completed via our [Issue Pitch Form](#).

Questions can be sent to the Editors-in-Chief of *Public Humanities*, Zoe Hope Bulaitis and Jeffrey R. Wilson, at publichumanities@cambridge.org.

Calls for Papers

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Public Humanities: The Manifesto Issue

Public Humanities is a new international open-access, cross-disciplinary, peer-reviewed journal at the intersection of humanities scholarship and public life. The journal invites submissions for its inaugural issue, called *The Manifesto Issue*, which is being edited by the journal's co-founders, Zoe Hope Bulaitis and Jeffrey R. Wilson.

The issue will be a rendezvous for thinkers and doers to address the status and stakes of public humanities today—however that term is understood. Authors will connect, share knowledge, and set an agenda for the future of an emerging field.

Possible questions authors can respond to include but are not limited to:

- What is public humanities?
- What are the social needs for public humanities?
- What is the evidence for the social value and impact of the humanities?
- Who are the individuals and agencies doing or working for public humanities?
- What critiques of public humanities are needed?
- What is the history of public humanities?
- What social histories are needed to understand the public humanities?
- What are the theoretical foundations of public humanities?
- What governmental policies are relevant to public humanities work?
- What are the politics of public humanities?
- How do we research and/or teach the public humanities?
- How do public humanities compare across different regions?
- How do public humanities work differently across the disciplines?
- How can academic institutions support public humanities?

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- What public policies are needed to support the humanities?
- What does the future hold for public humanities?

Submission formats and lengths are flexible—as short as one page, no more than 3,000 words. Possible formats include but are not limited to:

- **Manifestos** in response to one of the above questions
- **Essays** synthesising prior research for a broad readership across the humanities
- **Empirical reports** providing new quantitative data on the humanities in public life
- **Interviews** with practitioners, public figures, or leaders of public humanities initiatives
- **International or cross-disciplinary roundtables** showing multiple perspectives on a topic

Submissions should be written in accessible language for a wide readership across and beyond the humanities. Articles will be peer-reviewed for both content and style. Articles will appear digitally and open-access in the journal, which is published by Cambridge University Press.

To be considered for the issue, please submit a 300-word abstract and 100-word author bio to publichumanities@cambridge.org by 1 March 2024. Final pieces will be due June 2024.

Questions can be sent to the Editors-in-Chief of *Public Humanities*, Zoe Hope Bulaitis and Jeffrey R. Wilson, at publichumanities@cambridge.org.

Public Humanities: Of-the-Moment

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We are especially interested in:

- **Journalism** that shows the humanities at work in public life
- **Commentary articles** that use specialised humanities expertise to gloss current events or public holidays and anniversaries celebrated around the world
- **Interviews and profiles** that feature public figures who illustrate the societal value of the humanities
- **Brief reports of empirical data** related to the humanities and public life
- **Policy briefs** informed by humanities expertise for authorities who hold power

With a three-week turn-around time from acceptance to publication, these 800-2,000 word pieces are peer-reviewed yet still timely so as to be a live part of public debate and policy-making. Demonstrating the responsiveness of humanities research to current affairs, these pieces appear as they are written on the website and are then collected annually in a year-in-review issue of *Public Humanities* published in December.

Submissions should be written in accessible language for a wide readership across and beyond the humanities. Articles will be peer-reviewed for both content and style. Articles will appear digitally and open-access in the journal, which is published by Cambridge University Press.

The submission portal for of-the-moment pieces will open in Spring 2024. The first of-the-moment pieces will be published in Fall 2024.

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