

BRISTOL  
REFUGEE  
FESTIVAL



# SPARKS BRISTOL INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL

14 JUNE  
2025

This event was part of Bristol Refugee Festival and organised by Global Goals Centre, Bristol's Community Champions and African Voices Forum. It was supported by Broadmead Bristol BID and National Lottery Reaching Communities.



# AIMS OF THE FESTIVAL

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## SHOWCASE

the diverse range of cultures and customs in Bristol that make it unique and a strong city of sanctuary

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## CELEBRATE

the positive impact made by migrants & refugees in Bristol

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## EXHIBIT

sustainability initiatives from around the world and in diverse communities

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## DEVELOP

and build on the impacts of the 2024 Cultural Festival





# OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS

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**2,987**  
**PEOPLE**

came to the festival, approx.  
1,200 more than a usual Saturday

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**34**  
**STALLHOLDERS**

from 21 different cultural  
backgrounds

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**23**  
**PERFORMANCES**

and workshops were held

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**55**  
**HOURS**

volunteered

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## FUNDING

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We are so grateful to National Lottery and our local Broadmead BID team for supporting the Festival this year so that we could pay even more performers and workshop leaders for their time and skills.





# PERFORMANCES

06

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN DRUMMING

JAMAICAN FOLKLORE

FLAMENCO DANCE

DOMINICAN FOLK DANCING & MUSIC.

SENEGALESE DRUMMING

LATIN AMERICAN DANCE

SUDANESE DANCE

SOLIDARITY & SOUND CHOIR

CHINESE CHILDREN MUSIC PERFORMANCE

CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS DISPLAY

JAMAICAN MUSIC

BENGALI DANCE

SOMALI HERITAGE PERFORMANCE



# WORKSHOPS

07



CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY

BRISTOL REFUGEE RIGHTS EXHIBITION & WORKSHOP

CRAFT WORKSHOP

SUDANESE FABRIC & ACCESSORIES WORKSHOP

SOMALI HERITAGE WORKSHOP

TRADITIONAL POLISH PAPER CUT-OUTS

ZEN HEALING SOUNDS WORKSHOP

AFRICAN COSTUME & CUISINE

We were also delighted to screen the film 'Dance for Peace' in partnership with Bristol Link with Beira, to mark 50 years of Mozambican independence. This was followed by a fascinating Q&A with the film's Director, Simon White.



“  
THIS YEAR IT IS GREAT  
TO HAVE MANY  
VISITORS TALKING TO  
ME AND LOOKING  
FOR MY PRODUCTS. I  
LOVE THE DIVERSITY.

Gyunay, Pakistani Welfare  
Organisation

# FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The Festival was opened by Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor of Bristol, Cllr **Henry Michallat**. This is what he shared with us: “People from so many different countries and backgrounds call Bristol home—and they don’t just live here, they contribute. They bring new ideas, fresh energy, rich heritage, and valuable skills. It’s inspiring to see local traders proudly sharing their crafts, foods, and products, enriching the community and creating connections across cultures. Diversity is not just something we acknowledge—it’s something we celebrate, because it is at the heart of what makes Bristol thrive. **Together, we build a stronger, more inclusive city**—one that we can all be proud of. This is a truly wonderful occasion.”

We were also honoured to have **Mya-Rose Craig, ‘Birdgirl’** deliver a keynote speech in which she expressed her joy at being part of such a multicultural event that truly reflects our city.

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I LOVE THE  
DIVERSITY  
AND FEELING  
I BELONG.

Sudanese trader





# REFLECTIONS FROM VISITORS

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Amazing event, great for families

A great event! Thank you for bringing people together #RefugeeWeek

Epic drummers!

A great space to showcase different cultures, thank you!

Gert lush





# SUCCESS STORIES FROM STALLHOLDERS

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I started a small business about a year ago, there was a lot of ups and downs as it was quite stressful doing all of it online by myself as a 15 year old. However I started doing small online selling my bakery and treats around Bristol but the Sparks International Cultural Festival in particular really helped me understand there's more to business than online trading and I can do the same thing in the real world. **The Sparks International Festival improved my knowledge and skills to a greater extent. I met a lot of people who talked to me about what I can do to improve my business and advice which can help me achieve more in the future, it also built my confidence.**

**Awad Elmubarak, Sudanese Community**



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Sparks International Cultural Festival was truly inspiring. **I met a lot of friends. I liked the atmosphere and vibe of the festival.** It was a great opportunity to sell my handmade products and had a lot of fun communicating with different people. I was also interested in seeing other handmade products from other cultures and craftsmen, which is very important for me as an artist.

**Svitlana Trygub,  
Ukrainian Community**



It was a pleasure to take part and represent my creative work in such a vibrant and diverse environment. **I truly valued the chance to engage directly with people from different backgrounds, hear their thoughts on my designs, and connect with other artists and makers.** The festival also gave me useful insights into how people interact with handmade products in a festival setting – from pricing and display to storytelling. This will definitely help me improve how I present my work in future events. Thanks again for creating such a welcoming and inclusive space. I look forward to seeing how the festival continues to grow in the coming years.

**Sevilay Kaya, Turkish Community**



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# POSITIVE IMPACTS

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The Festival offered an

## INCLUSIVE ATMOSPHERE

for entrepreneurs, artists, and community leaders from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities to engage, get to know each other, and take actions for future cooperation.

The event offered traders from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to

## ENGAGE WITH NEW CUSTOMERS

and trial what sells well.

It enabled local people to

## EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT CULTURES

through food, art, music and spoken word - many visitors said they had tried new things during the Festival, and learnt so much about different cultures.

Now we have hosted 2 International Cultural Festivals in Sparks, we have a wonderfully diverse range of artists, performers and food providers to

## ENGAGE IN FUTURE PROJECTS

and to be part of next year's Festival!







All photos by Shamphat. Sparks Bristol is a collaborative project led by Global Goals Centre (registered charity no. 1187048) and Artspace Lifespace (registered charity no. 1168150).

**SPARKS**  
BRISTOL