



SPARKS
BRISTOL

INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2026 IMPACT REPORT

6 JUNE
2026

This event was the launch event for Bristol Refugee Festival and organised by Global Goals Centre, Bristol's Community Champions, African Voices Forum and Black South West Network. It was supported by Bristol BID, Bristol Community Festival and National Lottery Reaching Communities.

AIMS OF THE FESTIVAL

1. SHOWCASE

the diverse range of cultures in Bristol that make it unique and a strong city of sanctuary to enable local people to learn about other cultures and foster understanding.

2. CELEBRATE

the positive impact made by migrants and refugees in Bristol.

3. SHARE

the creativity of Bristol's diverse communities and provide paid opportunities for them to trade and perform.





OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS

3,305

people attended
the festival

27

arts and crafts traders from
19 cultural backgrounds

10

food traders from 9
cultural backgrounds

40

hours
volunteered

VERY GOOD OR BRILLIANT

rating given by every participant

FESTIVAL FEEDBACK

SUPPORT
REPRESENTED
SPARKS
VARIETY
ORGANISED
COMMUNICATION
CULTURE
DIFFERENT
PEOPLE
WOMEN
DIVERSE
SMALL
ATMOSPHERE
LINK
SUPPORTIVE
PERFORMANCES
GOOD
INFORMATION
DIVERSITY
PUBLIC
FOOD
EVERYONE
BRISTOL
LOCATION
UNIQUE
TOGETHER
COMMUNITY
BUSINESS
WELCOMING
INCLUSION
EVENTS
ORGANISATION
ALTOGETHER
COMING
BUSTLING
EMBRACE
CULTURES
ATTRACTIVE
PERFORMERS





PERFORMANCES

Latin American dance
Bristol Refugee Festival poetry
African drumming
Solidarity in Sound choir
Fashion Show featuring outfits from Sudan, Nigeria,
Sierra Leone, India, Pakistan, Community Threads

WORKSHOPS

Face painting
Polish Folk Art Workshop
African drumming and dancing workshop
Chinese Calligraphy workshop
Essential Oils Workshop for health
and wellbeing
Sudanese Textiles Workshop
Flamenco workshop
Art and craft corner for kids

POSITIVE IMPACTS

1. Collaboration opportunities

The Festival offered an inclusive space for entrepreneurs, artists, and community leaders from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities to engage, get to know each other, and take actions for future cooperation.

2. Developing entrepreneurship

The event offered traders from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to engage with new customers and trial what sells well. 100% said they would like to participate in next year's Festival. Three traders have enquired about taking permanent trading space in Sparks, to develop their businesses.

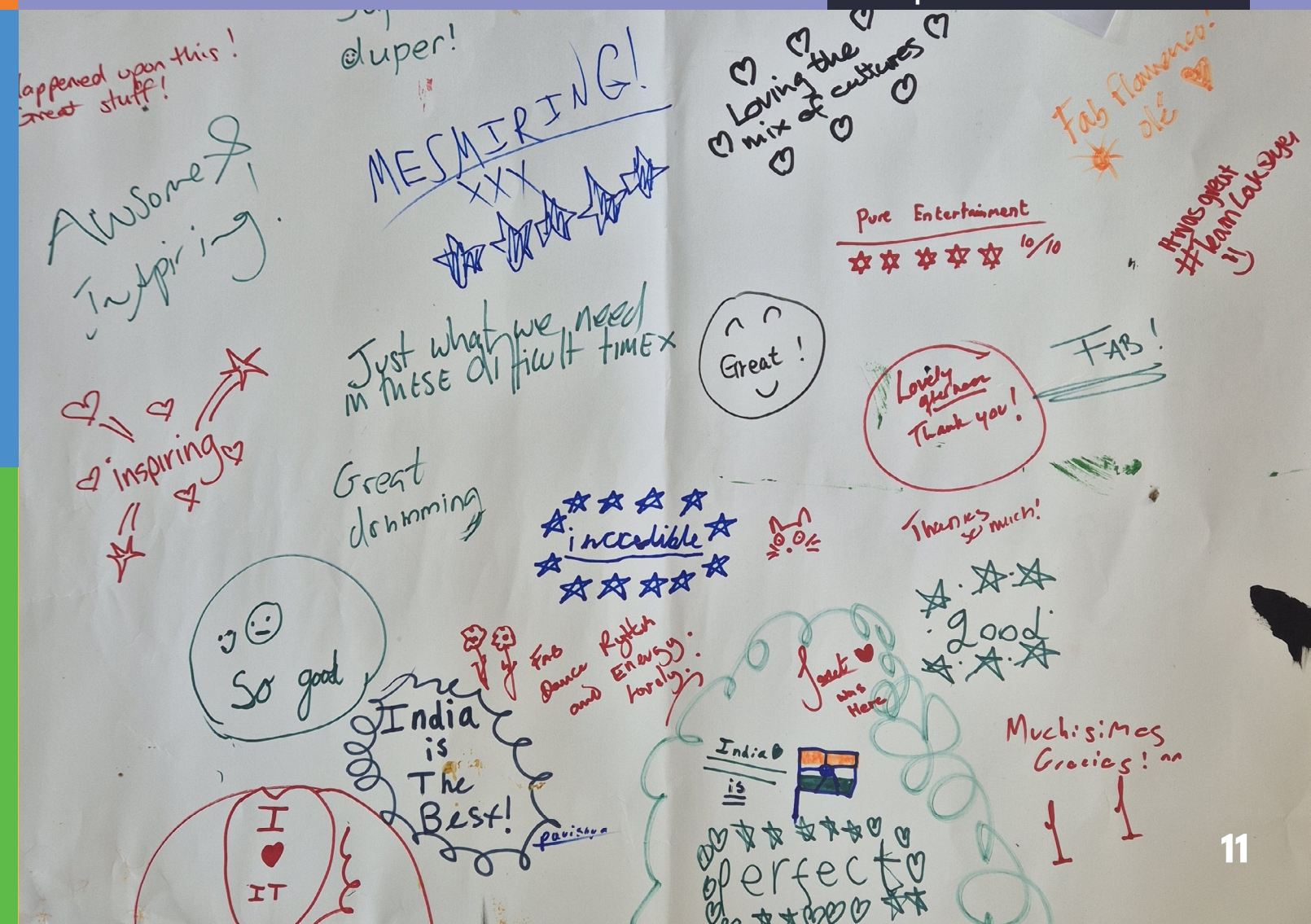
3. Mental wellbeing

A number of the participants expressed how the Festival helped their mental wellbeing by celebrating their culture and making them feel welcome and valued in the city.

4. Understanding different cultures

It enabled local people to experience different cultures through food, art, music and spoken word - many visitors and participants said they had tried new things during the Festival, and learnt so much about different cultures.

Our public feedback wall





5. Partnership with Bristol Refugee Festival

It was a great honour to launch Bristol Refugee Festival at the International Cultural Festival. We agree to continue this fruitful partnership, to increase reach and support each other's aims.

6. Adapting quickly

We successfully pivoted to move all activities that had been planned for taking place outside in Broadmead inside Sparks due to the severe weather warnings. Everyone worked well together to enable this to happen, and footfall was high despite the bad weather.

7. Building strong roots

Now we have hosted three 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!

8. Increasing participation

The Fashion Show was a wonderful addition to this year's Festival, enabling eight community groups and fashion traders to showcase their traditional clothing. 18 models took part and over 100 people watched the show. We aim to build on this success next year.





PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK



"Thank you all for your hard work in making this event happen. You gave us an amazing space to showcase our efforts, share our cultures, and perform for all to enjoy. I thoroughly enjoyed it!"

It wasn't just about being there, but the taking part that made it feel so special for everyone."

**Angie
Food Trader**

"I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Sparks for always giving us opportunities, supporting us continuously, and inspiring us with new ideas."

The event was amazing, the celebration was even more wonderful, and the organization was exceptionally well planned and executed."

Isra Ibrahim



"It provides an opportunity to meet new people, support local businesses and talented artists, and enjoy cultural activities with family and friends. It also helps create a sense of belonging."

Sana
Textiles workshop lead



"For me, the benefit of these events is seeing how much we can learn from one another."

Every culture brings something wonderful to the table, and together, we can build a much better, more connected world."

Flamenco performer



"This event brought us mental wellbeing and joy. This festival created lasting value by strengthening community identity, boosting the local economy, and enhancing emotional wellbeing."

Ukrainian trader



"This experience has genuinely given me so much more confidence in a public facing environment with such a diverse audience, and a genuine chance to meet so many talented and lovely people."

Thank you so much for organising and for Sparks to provide an umbrella for people to connect, especially in times of uncertainty."

Bonica
Youth Volunteer



All photos by @ShamphatProductions

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

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