



TAKING FESTIVAL EVENTS ONLINE

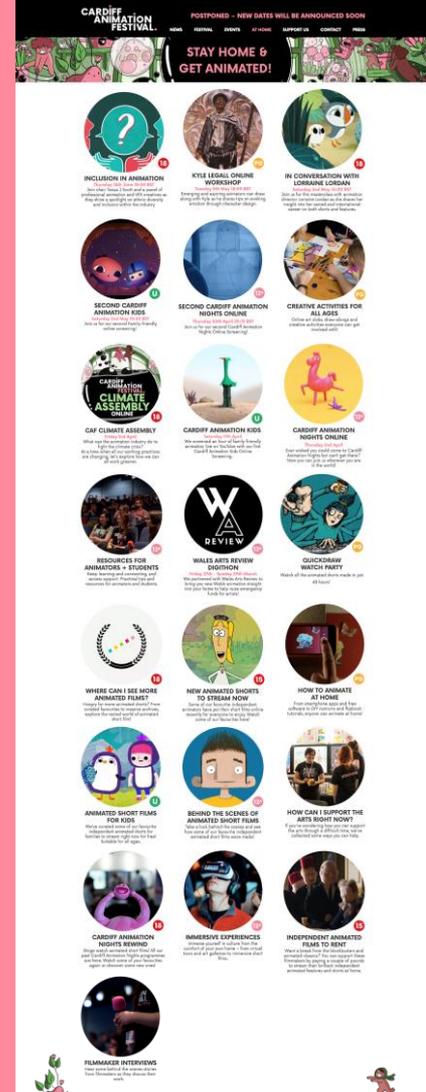
BY CARDIFF ANIMATION FESTIVAL

In March 2020, we made the difficult decision to postpone Cardiff Animation Festival (scheduled 2-5 April 2020), due to the Covid-19 pandemic, less than three weeks from our festival dates.

We are a small team – we have two full time staff supported by freelancers and volunteers. While we weren't able to take our full festival online in such a short timeframe with the infrastructure we had, we quickly developed a programme of online events our existing staff could run, working with existing staff already freelancers we had already contracted, between March-May 2020.

What we did:

- Live online **screenings** of short film programmes for adults
- Live online **screenings** of short film programmes for families
- Live online industry-focused set of **talks** followed by a **workshop**
- Live online **panel talk**
- Live online **masterclass**
- Live online drawing **workshop**
- Virtual **networking**
- Online 48-hour **anijam** (animated short filmmaking competition)
- Created and curated online **resources** accessible on demand

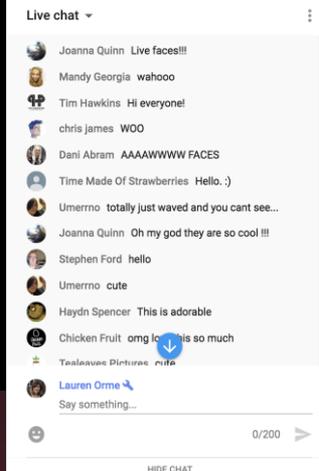


Short film screenings

Aims:

- Create a live short film screening event that everyone is watching at the same time (communal viewing)
- Create buzz and make it feel like an event
- Make sure the programme is only accessible at the set time and not after the event (preferable option for the filmmakers)
- Enable audience members to talk and share reactions to films (create a feeling of community)
- Make the programme appropriate for younger audiences now it's online rather than in a bar (advisory 12A)

4 days staff time per event

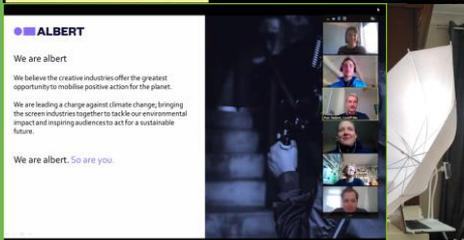
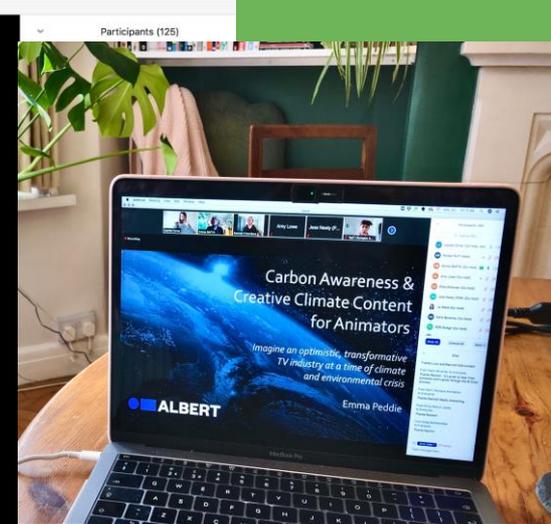
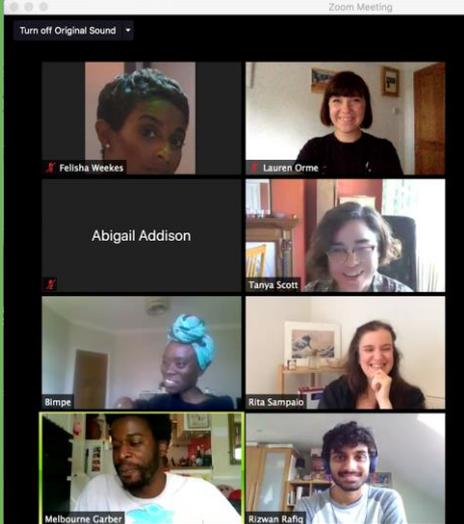


Talks + workshop

Aims:

- Create engaging masterclasses, panel talks, Q+As and workshops
- Allow speakers to share slides and clips from their screens
- Transition straight from talks (with whole audience) into a workshop (splitting into smaller groups)
- Use visual tools that participants could complete together to make the workshop more valuable

8-18 days
staff time
per event

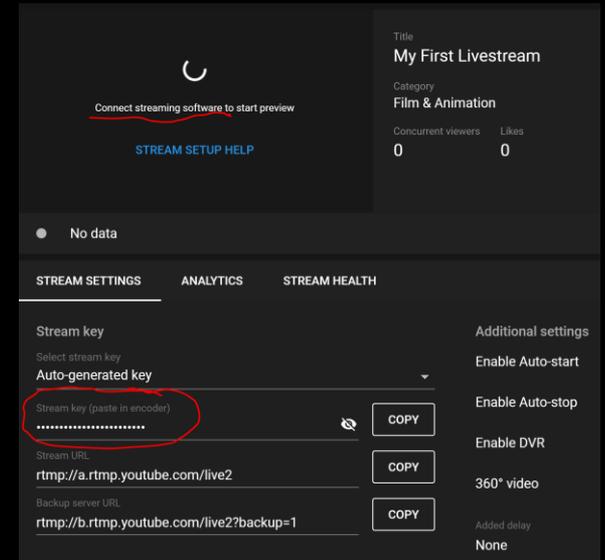
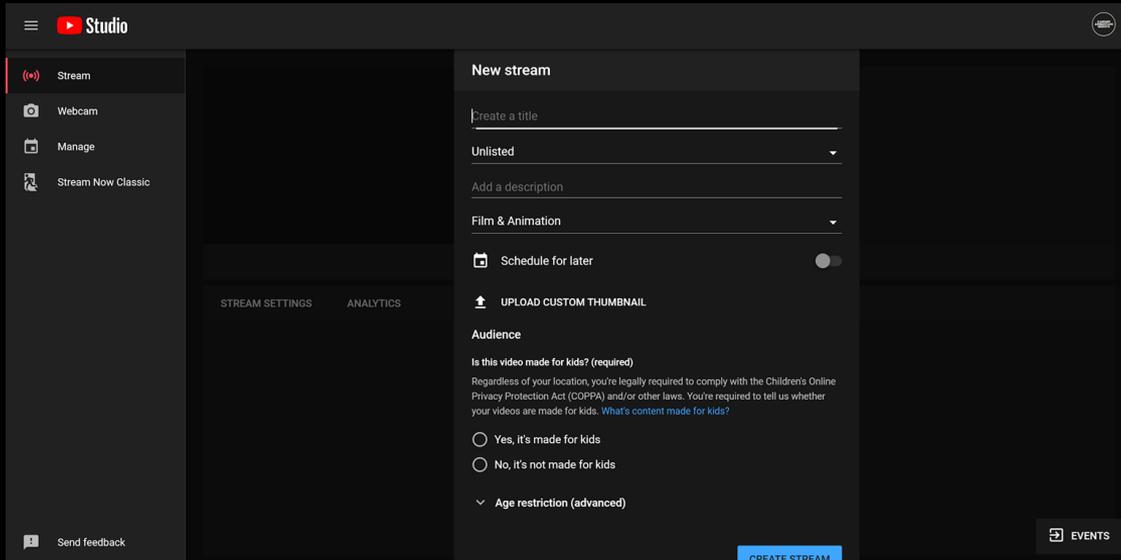
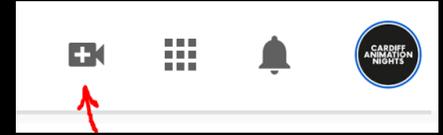


Short film screening platforms

	YouTube Live		Vimeo Live		Twitch		Zoom	
	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Price	Free	-	-	Expensive (£70/mo billed annually)	Free (audiences can pay to remove ads)	Ads before joining livestreams/videos	Low cost - £11.99 + VAT per month	Small cost
Ticketing / restricting to paying audiences	Can send out the link to paying audiences only.	You have to trust audiences not to share the link	Can send out the link +password to paying audiences only.	You have to trust audiences not to share the link	Can send out the link to paying audiences only.	You have to trust audiences not to share the link	Can send out the link to paying audiences only.	You have to trust audiences not to share the link
Community / discussion	Chat function	Can't see people's faces (but some people prefer this)	Audience Chat Live Q&A and polls	Messages limited to 280 characters. Can't see faces.	Audience Chat, custom 'emotes'	Can't see people's faces	You can see people's faces + talk in the chat box	
Safeguarding	Various safeguarding tools (info here)		Possible to delete comments / ban user		Moderation tools (info here)		Possible to remove participants	
Audience building	YouTube channel was already set-up through using Gmail	We didn't have an existing YouTube audience	We already had some subscribers to our Vimeo channel			We didn't have an existing audience on Twitch		People need to sign up in advance to get the link
Playback quality	1080p, 60fps (some feedback about quality not being high enough)		Up to 1080p streaming		1080p, 60fps			Not recommended for screenings. Only higher cost plans get 1080p video.
Familiarity to audiences	Very widely used, everyone has heard of it		Quite widely used, most of our audience have heard of it	Not as widely used as YouTube		Less widely used, lots of people unfamiliar with it		Becoming familiar to some audiences by March but not others
Familiarity to team		We'd never used it before		We'd never used it before		We'd never used it before	We'd used it for one previous event	
Festival branding		Looks like YouTube	Possible to brand it up as your festival...	...but only if you pay £840 per year		Looks like Twitch		Looks like Zoom
Misc	Channel/video analytics. Easy to host on TV for big	Requires encoding software (ie: OBS) to livestream	Studio encoding software (inc. free Analytics)		Channel/video analytics	Made for game live streaming (streaming software)	Events can be recorded & chat log downloaded	

Shorts Screenings on YouTube Live – Step by Step

1. Set-up your YouTube page and enable live-streaming (this takes 24hrs to enable)
2. You need to [download OBS](#) streaming software to be able to stream on Youtube ([guide here](#))
3. Prepare your livestream by adding files to OBS
4. Set-up your livestream details on YouTube by clicking the camera icon and 'Go Live'
5. Copy the YouTube stream key to OBS/encoder to connect them
6. Once your stream appears in YouTube Studio - click GO LIVE.



Key Learnings – screenings on YouTube Live

What worked?

- Audiences were able to talk, get excited, network, and share reactions using the chat box
- The live element meant everyone was watching at the same time
- People were able to watch from anywhere in the world – attracted an international audience alongside our regular audience, including some of the filmmakers from around the world
- Marketing – #ShowUsYourSnacks encouraged people to post on social media and build buzz

What didn't?

- One or two complaints about quality on YouTube Live.
- Very low takeup of audience form – it was mainly our regulars who were prepared to take the time to fill this in.

What would we try next time?

- Investigate reasons for low playback quality for some people and possible ways round this (e.g. try other streaming platforms / make sure to optimise streaming settings to ensure highest quality)
- Incentivising completion of audience form
- We have found that our online screening events are reaching international audiences. We plan to programme more Welsh animation, to use the opportunity to platform Welsh animation on an international stage.
- Include more access provision (e.g. BSL, captions)
- Maybe make a guide for audiences explaining how to get YouTube onto your TV.

How did we measure success?

- Number of viewers
- Feedback in the chat / social media / audience form
- Data from audience form against our audience targets (although low takeup skews this to our regulars)

Talks + workshop: options

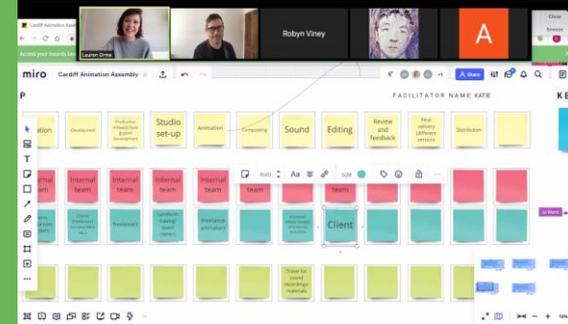
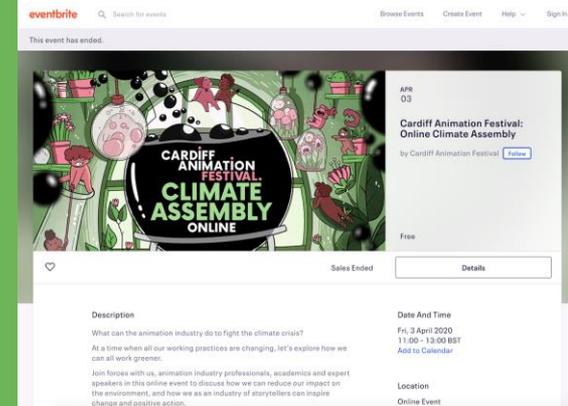
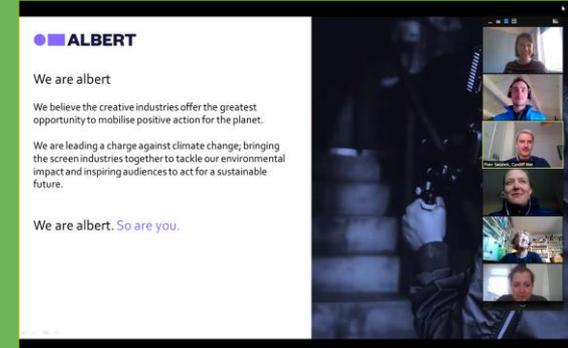
Only option we considered for these was Zoom.

Why?

- You can have several different speakers
- You can mute non-speakers and remove people if necessary
- Speakers can share slides and clips from their screens
- You can split participants into breakout rooms
- Participants can see each other's faces
- Easy to record the session through Zoom so it can be shared more widely after the event
- Participants need to sign up in advance to get the Zoom link (makes it easy to gather data and ask people if we can stay in touch)

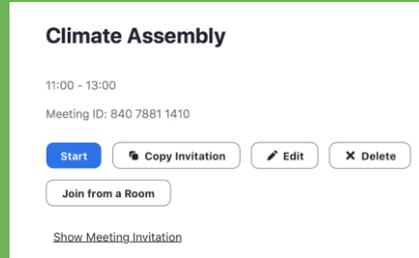
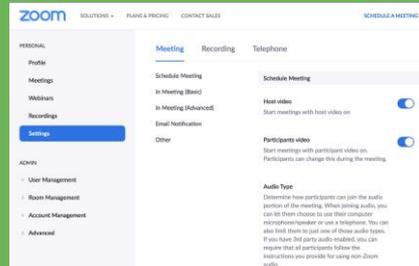
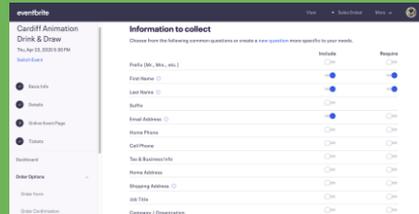
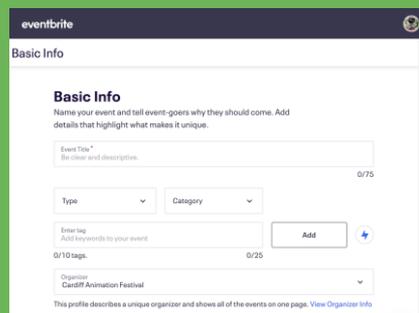
We used Zoom alongside...

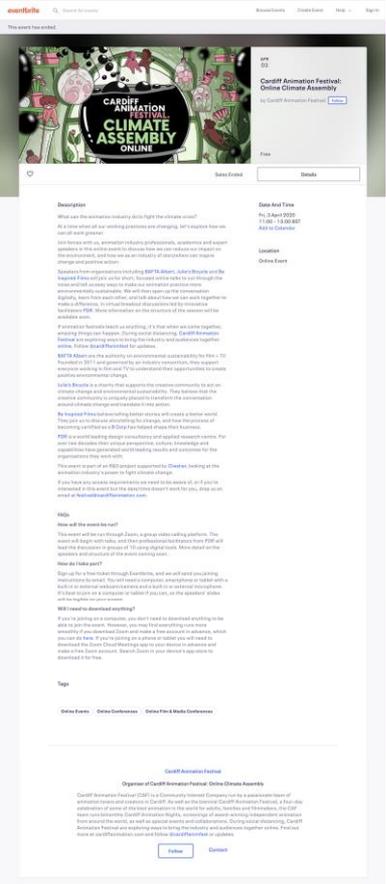
- **Eventbrite** for registration
- **Miro** as a workshop visual tool – a facilitator in each breakout room shared their screen and completed the Miro board



Talks + workshops using Zoom (+ Eventbrite + Miro) – Step by Step

1. Make an Eventbrite page for your event. Consider the questions you'll want to ask people who sign up. Make sure you're GDPR compliant – tell attendees you'll use the email address they sign up with to send out the Zoom link to them.
2. Make a Zoom Pro account. Double check all your Settings on Zoom.us – some options (e.g. breakout rooms) need to be turned on there.
3. Do a Zoom practice run with all speakers and facilitators. Test everything you'll use during the event (screen sharing, breakout rooms, chat function, muting participants etc) make sure everyone knows what they're doing. (You can find our Zoom guide for speakers at our events [here](#)).
4. If using Miro collaborative whiteboard tools, create a free Miro account at [miro.com](#), set up your miro boards in advance and ensure facilitators have access.
5. Schedule the Zoom meeting, make sure all speakers and facilitators have the link.
6. On the day of the event – send out the Zoom link and joining instructions to all attendees using the email address provided through Eventbrite.
7. It's good practice to arrange to meet all speakers and facilitators 15-30 minutes prior to the event via the event's Zoom link to check everything is working well.





Add-ons and plug-ins

Eventbrite

What it is:

- Event ticketing platform

What we used it for:

- Ticketing / event signup
- Marketing
- Gathering audience data
- Contacting attendees

Cost

- Free for free events (Eventbrite takes a cut for paid events)

Miro

What it is:

- Virtual collaborative whiteboard platform

What we used it for:

- Group work in workshops
- Facilitators led the conversation with participants, and wrote and arranged virtual post-its to visualise the points raised

Cost

- Free – paid version available with additional features for \$16 / \$320 per month

Cardiff Animation Festival & Ffilm Cymru Wales



Key Learnings – talks & workshops on Zoom

What worked?

- Seeing people's faces
- Splitting people into smaller breakout rooms of different sizes
- People needing to sign up to access the Zoom link meant we could ask audience questions during signup process.
- This also helps avoid safeguarding issues such as 'Zoom bombing'
- Zoom allows you to remove attendees e.g. if they are being abusive.
- Producing a guide for speakers taking part in our Zoom events helped people imagine what they were signing up for and helped improve events

What didn't?

- We like to screen work during talks and Zoom isn't great for screening video.
- Having to sign up in advance potentially lowers audience takeup – some people who plan to attend but haven't realised signup is necessary find themselves unable to join at the last minute.

What would we try next time?

- Include more access provision (e.g. BSL, captions)

How did we measure success?

- Number of attendees
- Feedback in the chat / social media / audience form
- Data from signup form in Eventbrite / Google Forms + data from audience form against our audience targets.

Workshop

7.5 days
staff time
for first
event

Aims:

- Create a high quality workshop that is easy to follow
- Make participants feel connected with each other and with the facilitator (communal experience)
- Enable participants to share work with the facilitator and ask for feedback
- Enable facilitator to reply to participants in real time

	Pre-record + release on YouTube Live		Live on Zoom		Live on Facebook / Instagram Live	
	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Pre-recorded / live	Can show a pre-record live – lower pressure for facilitator, frees them up to respond to participants			Can't really show a pre-record – truly live, higher pressure for facilitator		Can't really show a pre-record on these platforms – truly live, higher pressure for facilitator
Participants sharing work	Encouraged work sharing on social media	Participants can't show work	Participants can show work			Participants can't show work
Community / discussion	Live chat, facilitator could take part too	Can't see people's faces	Can see people's faces		Live chat + emoji reactions	Can't see people's faces
Audience building		New YouTube audience of 100 subscribers	Can build a mailing list through signup		Existing Facebook / Instagram audience	
Familiarity to audiences	Very widely used, everyone has heard of it			Now familiar to some audiences but not others		Both widely used but you need an account
Familiarity to team	Already using it for screenings		Already using it for talks + workshops			We'd never used it before
Safeguarding	Various safeguarding tools (info here)		Abie to remove participants if necessary			Moderation tools not currently widely available
Misc	Channel/video analytics. Easy to 'cast' to TV for big screen viewing	Requires encoding software (ie: OBS) to livestream	Events can be recorded & chat log downloaded			

Workshop on YouTube Live – Step by Step

1. Prepare YouTube Live as you would for a livestream screening (see p6).
2. Ask the workshop leader to pre-record the workshop and send it as a video file.
3. Ask the workshop leader to include information in the workshop video about how they will interact with participants (e.g. in the Youtube Live chat & on social media)
4. Put the workshop video on YouTube Live as you would for a livestream screening (see p6).



Key Learnings – workshop on YouTube Live

What worked?

- Participants were able to talk, get excited, network, and share reactions using the chat box
- The live element meant everyone was taking part at the same time
- People were able to take part from anywhere in the world
- We were able to leave the workshop video up after the livestream so it is now an on demand resource on our site.
- Pre-recording the workshop meant technical issues were less likely and freed the workshop leader up to respond to questions and comments in the chat from attendees while they were taking part.

What didn't?

- Workshop video could have been higher quality (in terms of codecs etc).

What would we try next time?

- Might produce a guide for people filming their own workshop videos (similar to our Zoom guide), or walk workshop leaders through this more
- Include more access provision (e.g. BSL, captions)

How did we measure success?

- Number of viewers
- feedback in the chat / social media / audience form
- Data from audience form against our audience targets (although low takeup skews this to our regulars)

Networking – Drink & Draw

Aims:

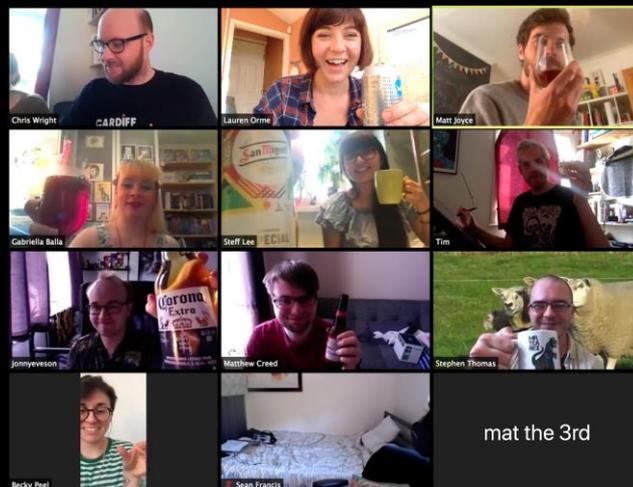
- Create a networking event allowing animation industry entrants and professionals to make new connections
- Enable participants to feel relaxed and comfortable
- Encourage drawing to take the pressure off networking
- Avoid participants feeling unable to talk in too large a Zoom room
- Change groups regularly to allow participants to meet more people.

Only option we considered for this was **Zoom**.

Why?

- You can send people into different breakout rooms on the fly.
- Participants need to sign up in advance to get the Zoom link (makes it easy to gather data and ask people if we can stay in touch).

We used Zoom alongside **Eventbrite** for registration.



3.5 days
staff time
for first
event



Key Learnings – networking on Zoom

What worked?

- Seeing people's faces.
- Splitting people into smaller breakout rooms is a great tool.
- Being able to change up these groups and make them any size is great too.
- People needing to sign up to access the Zoom link means we can ask audience questions during signup process.
- This also helps avoid safeguarding issues such as 'Zoom bombing'. We haven't had this issue but know others have. Zoom allows you to remove attendees e.g. if they are being abusive.

What didn't?

- Only reached 16 attendees with our networking event. Can be a bit intimidating – the idea of interacting with strangers on Zoom (as with in real life, but people are less used to it).
- Having to sign up in advance potentially lowers audience takeup. It doesn't always occur to people that they'll have to do this, so some people who plan to attend find themselves unable to join at the last minute.

What would we try next time?

- Include more access provision (e.g. BSL, captions)

How did we measure success?

- Number of attendees
- Feedback in the chat / social media / audience form
- Data from signup form in Eventbrite / Google Forms + data from audience form against our audience targets.

48-hour anijam (animated short filmmaking competition)

Aims:

- Make participants feel connected even though they're apart
- Create a buzz around it, make it feel like an event
- Allow participants to join in from anywhere in the world
- Enable and encourage participants to support and buoy each other up throughout the process
- Enable and encourage participants to network with each other
- Enable sound designers and musicians to join in as well as artists and animators
- Promote and platform the participants' work

18 days
staff time
for this
event

A promotional graphic for the Cardiff Animation Festival's 'Quick Draw' challenge. It features a pink watering can at the top right, pouring water into a pink pot. Inside the pot are several green pencils standing upright. A circular sign on the right side of the pot displays the dates '20-22 MARCH'. The text 'QUICK DRAW ANIMATION CHALLENGE' is written in large, bold, white letters across the top. Below it, 'FROM SEED TO SCREEN IN JUST 48 HOURS' is written in pink and white. At the bottom, it says 'WINNING FILM WILL BE SHOWN AT CARDIFF ANIMATION FESTIVAL!' and '@CARDIFFDRAW' with a Twitter bird icon.

QUICK DRAW
ANIMATION CHALLENGE

**FROM SEED TO SCREEN
IN JUST 48 HOURS**

WINNING FILM WILL BE SHOWN AT
CARDIFF ANIMATION FESTIVAL!

@CARDIFFDRAW

20-22
MARCH

48-hour anijam: platforms we used

Signup: Google form

- **What is it?** A platform for building forms and gathering responses
- **Why did we choose it?** Free, collaborative, easy to use
- **Other options:** Eventbrite (also good, but we didn't need anything more complex than a Google Form)

Announcing the theme: Social media

- **Why?** Builds buzz among non-participants as well as participants, builds social media following
- **Other options:** Email (doesn't have above benefits)

Community space for participants: Slack

- **What is it?** A communication platform, used a lot by creative and tech businesses, available on browser and as an app on mobile devices
- **Why did we choose it?** Free, can set this up prior to competition start so participants can meet each other, start talking/networking and get excited!
- **Other options:** Discord (similar but less widely used among our audience)



Marketing

How did we communicate these new ways of watching/participating with our audiences?

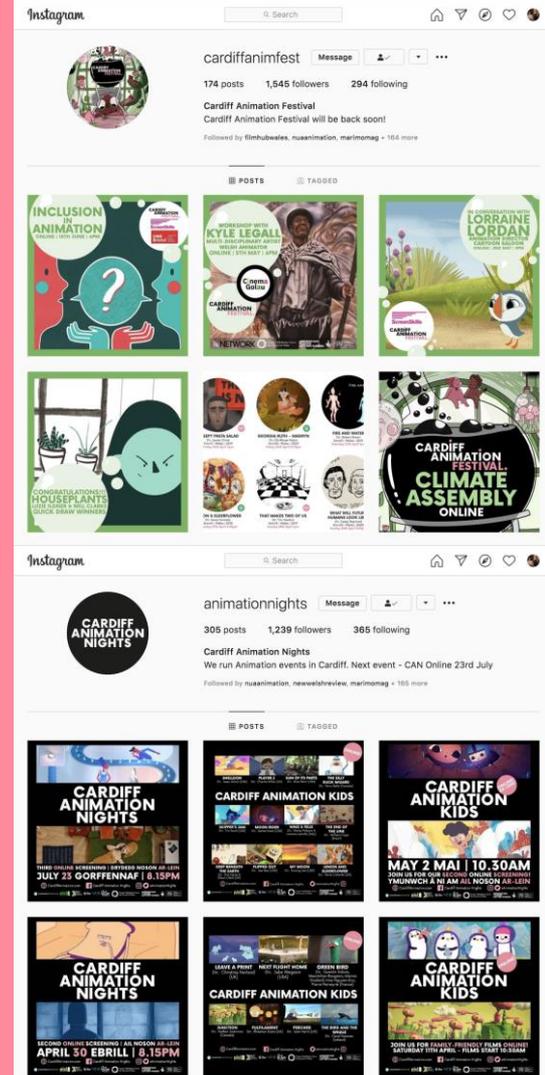
- Newsletters highlighting and promoting the new online events and how they can be accessed.
- Social media to regularly promote all new online events and screenings and how they can be accessed.
- Created hashtags on Twitter and Instagram during live screenings, and encouraged everyone to share how they were watching.
- Tweet-alongs on Twitter during the live streams, including re-sharing the link to the screening so that people could join in even after the event had started.
- Created Facebook events with all the screening information and how to watch.
- Having a presence in the YouTube Live chat, listing film information and engaging with the audience.



Marketing

How did we communicate these new ways of watching/participating with our audiences?

- Created a YouTube channel and promoted subscribing to the channel so that our audience can keep up to date and get notifications of live events.
- Created new online partnerships to help promote the online events and screenings.
- Updating our website with lots of new online resources and content to encourage engaging with us at home and promoting other online screenings, events, educational material, our own events and free activities for all ages.
- Created press releases and sent them to relevant publications to help promote that we had started to work online.
- Marketing slides during the live screenings (before and after films started and during the break) promoting other events we have coming up that the audience watching might be interested in.



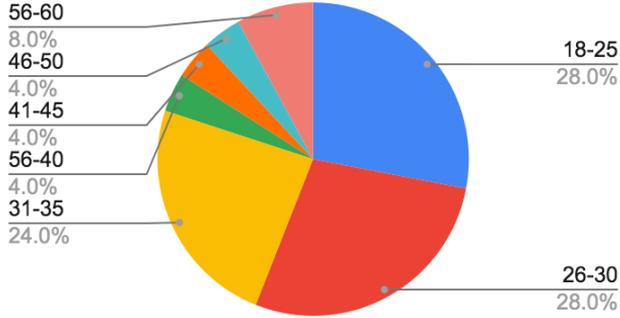
Audience tracking: methods

	YouTube Live audience stats	Eventbrite / Google Form signups	Audience form
How we used it	To track data from everyone who watched the stream	With events utilising Eventbrite or Google Form signups, we asked people to answer EDI monitoring questions etc in advance. This is a pro of making people sign up to join the event rather than publicly sharing the joining details.	We made an online audience feedback form and posted it in in-event chat boxes, emailed it out afterwards to participants, shared it on social media, etc.
What it can measure	YouTube Live measures numbers of views, comments, how many subscribers that were gained during the live stream, traffic source, countries, age and gender.	Whatever you ask it to measure.	Whatever you ask it to measure.
Pros	It measures this data for everyone who watches – you don't have to rely on people completing a form.	You can measure whatever you need to. Everyone has to complete the form. Doing this prior to the event means it's not part of audiences' experience of the event itself.	You can measure whatever you need to.
Cons	It only measures what it measures – you can't ask it to measure any other data you need.	Asking too many questions on signup can discourage audiences from signing up.	We only had 26 responses to our audience form across all events, and it was mostly our regulars that filled this in – takeup was much lower than it is at our 'in person' events (easier to persuade a captive audience to complete a form!)

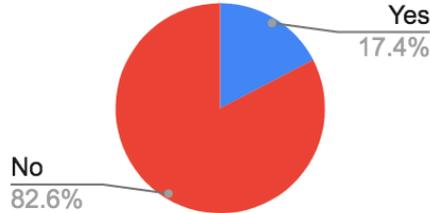
Audience tracking: who were our audience?

Data collected from audience forms: 26 responses

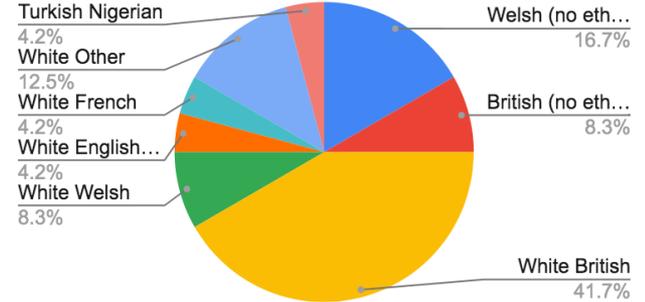
Age



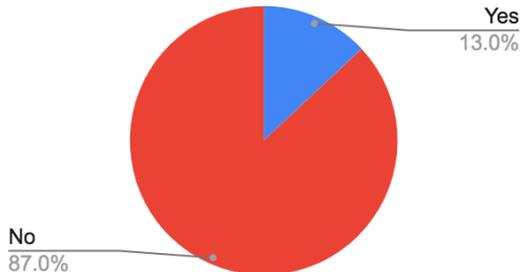
Do you identify as LGBT+?



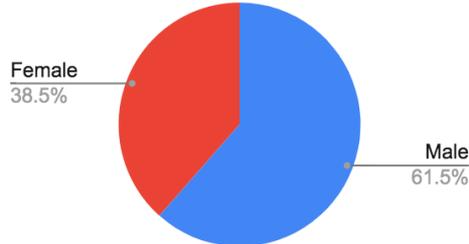
How would you describe your ethnicity?



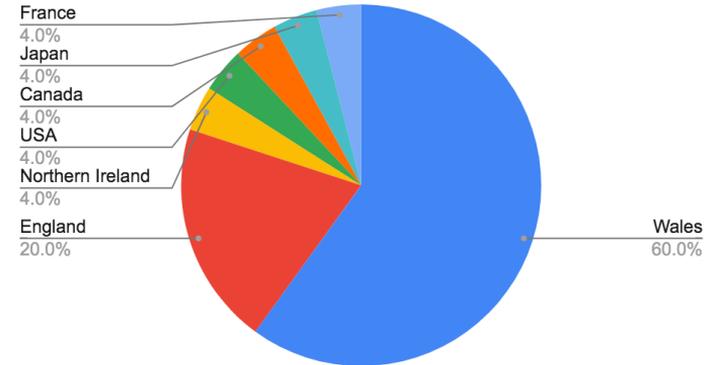
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



How would you describe your gender?



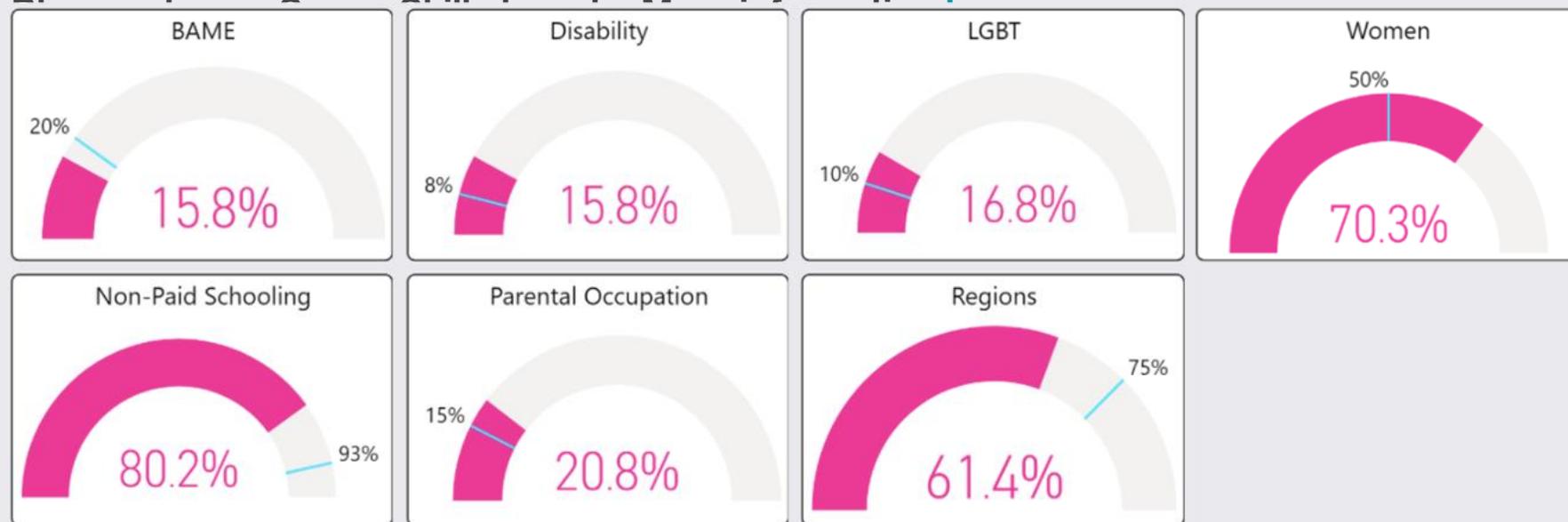
Location



Audience tracking: Directing Animation Masterclass with Lorraine Lordan (Cartoon Saloon)

Held in collaboration with ScreenSkills.

Data collected from signup: 101 responses, 100% of attendees.



Programming + Obtaining rights

We have had a great response from short film makers allowing us to screen their films. We were surprised by how many filmmakers were happy for us to screen their short films online – overall, the number of filmmakers who don't respond or say no to their films being included hasn't actually been higher than for our 'in-person' events.

- Everyone's in this situation, so a lot of people are prepared to do things a bit differently at the moment.
- The fact that our screenings were live and not accessible after the event helped – filmmakers seem to prefer this rather than e.g. films being accessible for a week
- We have been making sure that filmmakers know from our first contact with them that the screening is streamed live and that we do not keep the films up on our channel after the live screening has finished.
- We've only programmed shorts online, so we have no experience yet of trying to obtain rights to show features online.

Difficulties obtaining rights:

- One issue that has arisen is films being contracted online with other video sites for example Vimeo which means we are unable to screen them on a different site like YouTube but fortunately these contracts are for a certain time.
- When streaming live on YouTube sometimes the short films are already on YouTube and have been copyrighted. This means that when we stream the film it flags and takes down our live stream. We make sure to test the screening in full multiple times to make sure that there are no copyright issues. If any issues arise we can contact the filmmaker to allow us the rights and whitelist our YouTube channel so that we can stream their film without any issues.

Appendix – Other platforms we could have considered for online festival events:

- Amazon/AWS
- Bitmovin
- CineSend
- CineWee
- Eventive
- Evia
- Festhome TV
- FestivalScope
- FestiVee
- Film Festival Flix
- FilmChief
- LivestreamFest
- MediaFly
- OBS
- Seed&Spark
- SHIFT72
- Vmix
- Xerb



Ffilm Cymru Wales is the development agency for Welsh film. We are dedicated to advancing and sustaining a strong film industry for Wales; one that we can all be proud to call our own. We do this by providing funding and training to emerging and established Welsh filmmakers, offering exciting cinematic experiences to audiences across Wales, engaging people of all ages and abilities in creative learning, and developing new skills and career paths through a range of training programmes.

www.ffilmcymruwales.com



Cardiff Animation Festival (CAF) is a Community Interest Company run by an experienced team of animation lovers and creators living in Cardiff. We run a biennial four-day animation festival, regular animation screenings and special events. The aim of all the work we do is to benefit our local community and the animation community locally, nationally and internationally. The Cardiff Animation Festival team have been running animation events in Wales since 2014.

www.cardiffanimation.com