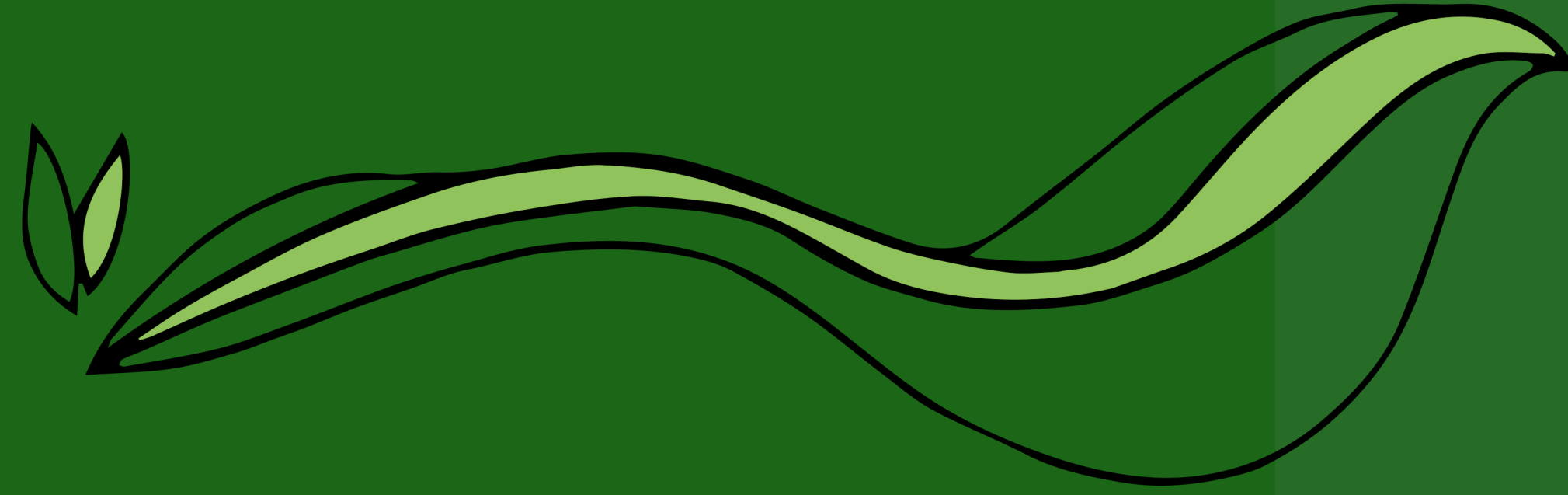


POSITIVE IMPACT



EXPLORE #2

HOW HUMAN
INTERACTION HAPPENS

A report on an experiment to
explore the future of how human
interaction happens

December 2020

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INTRODUCTION

WHY READ THIS REPORT?

We are living in a time of unprecedented change.

We are facing crises of health, economics, climate and equality. Every company and government in the world is looking for solutions to address these crises.

This report explores how human interaction could be a solution to our global crises by asking the question:

What is the future of how human interaction happens?

This report draws on the findings from a virtual experiment which took place over 8 hours on the 8th December 2020 with 7 corporate event planners from 4 countries.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF HOW HUMAN INTERACTION HAPPENS?

In January 2020 asking this question would have seemed pointless. In January 2020 we could meet anyone, at anytime and anywhere.

Asking 'what is the future of how human interaction happens' in December 2020 raises more questions including:



 **What is human interaction?**

 **Could human interaction address the economic, climate, equality and health crises the world is facing?**

Humans have always come together to share ideas, create collaborations and innovate. What if 2021 was an opportunity to advance human interaction so idea sharing and collaboration became something every single person could be included and participate in?

What does understanding how human interaction happens mean for the governments and business looking for new ideas to advance the SDGs?

WHO IS THIS REPORT WRITTEN FOR?

This report is written for corporate businesses (their CEO's and Heads of Sustainability) and government bodies who have a commitment to:

- Addressing the health, economic, climate and equality crises the world is facing.
- Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Exploring ideas on how to interact with their communities (for example, their staff, suppliers and customers).

A NOTE TO OUR EVENT PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY:

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 our industry has changed beyond recognition.

As event professionals you have a skillset which is highly relevant for the needs of our future world and our hope is that this report will support you.

Event professionals are the people who make human interaction happen.

WHO HAS WRITTEN THIS REPORT?

This report has been written by global not for profit Positive Impact who since 2005 have existed to provide **education, engagement and collaboration opportunities to create a sustainable event industry.**

Positive Impact has a number of memorandums of understanding with United Nations bodies including UN Environment, UNFCCC Secretariat, UN SDG Action Campaign and since 2019 has delivered an initiative with Unicef UK.



WHAT IS HUMAN INTERACTION?

'The act of communicating with somebody, especially while you work, play or spend time with them'

Oxford Press Dictionary

"All human interactions are opportunities either to learn or to teach."

Peck (2012)

"Human interaction is the key force in overcoming resistance and speeding change."

Gawande (2013)

CAN WE EXPLAIN WHAT HUMAN INTERACTION IS?

The language we use and the images our words conjure in our mind are influenced by our histories and our thinking that we can understand what will happen in the future by understanding what has happened in the past.

We may not be able to explain exactly what human interaction is by the words we use. Words such as event, meeting and gathering may not represent what we are trying to say.

In short, this report is exploring something so don't expect perfect data and conclusions. **Instead expect to be inspired to think in a new way.**

M. Scott Peck (2012). "The Road Less Travelled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth", p.168, Random House

Atul Gawande (2013). "Annals of Medicine", www.newyorker.com. July 29, 2013.

COULD HUMAN INTERACTION ADDRESS THE CRISES THE WORLD IS FACING?

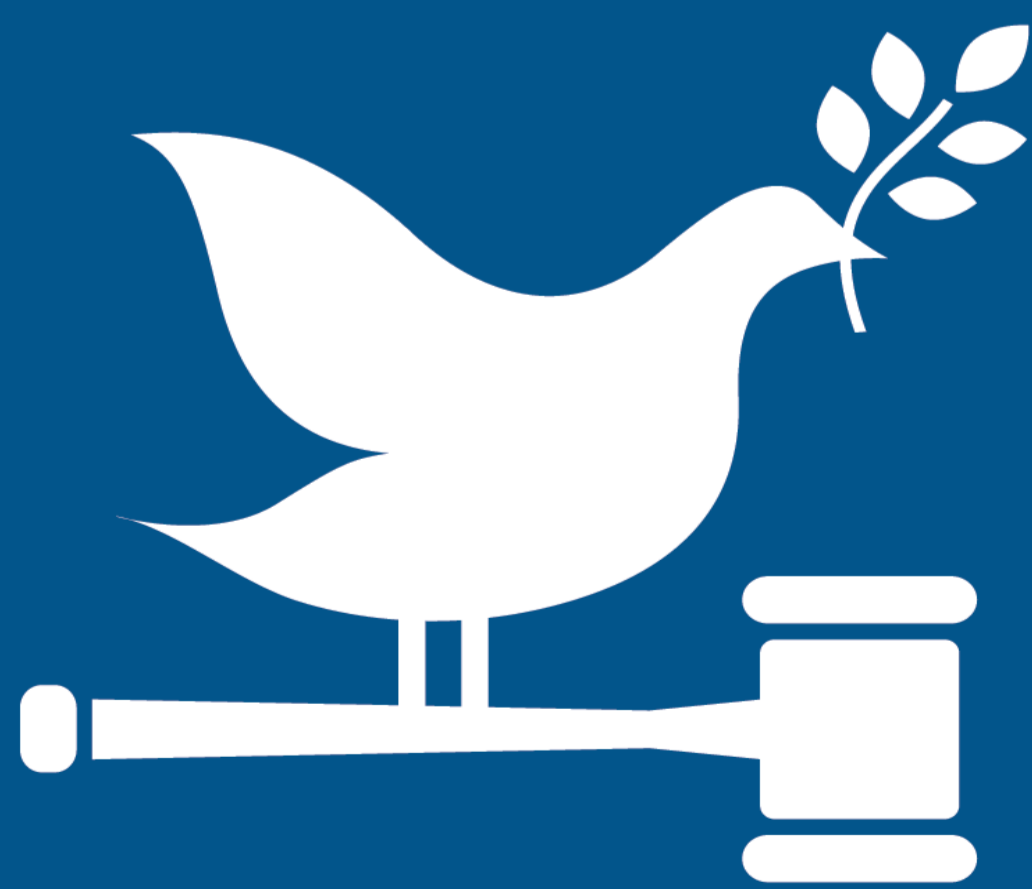
The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are a roadmap for the world which would work for us all.



The Sustainable Development Goals are also a language that business and governments understand because they have committed to these goals being delivered. Therefore it makes sense that the findings from our experiment on how human connection happens would be translated into the language of the UN SDGS.

There is one sustainable development goal, target and indicator which is of particular interest: **SDG 16, Target 7, Indicator 2.**

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Goal 16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Target 7

Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Indicator 2

Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group.



Imagine if in 2021 the event industry reimaged itself as the people who made human interaction happen and enabled inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making.

Ensuring inclusive, participatory and representative decision making is something every business and government wants and the state of the world demonstrates that new ideas and actions for inclusion, participation and representative decision making are needed.

Explore brings to life a new narrative for the event sector:

‘We are the sector that make participation and inclusion in decision making possible.’

INTRODUCTION

OUR EXPERIMENT

To explore this question we created an experiment which took place over 8 hours on the 8th December 2020 with 7 corporate event planners from 4 countries.

The intention of this experiment is to explore the future of how human interaction happens. **The data gathered is interesting because it points to our ability to interact, despite not being in the same place.** This data is not perfect, for example it is a small data set, from a sample of majority women in a similar age range and the analysis that has been done on the data has not been done by experts!

This data is useful because it gives the reader a chance to explore and imagine the future of human interaction.

We invite the reader to take the same approach and ask yourself as you read this report, **what is the future of how human interaction happens?**

WHO TOOK PART IN OUR EXPERIMENT?

We gathered a community of 7 corporate event planners from 4 countries.

We focused on this job role because their job responsibilities include enabling human interaction within their companies.

When this community explores the future of how human interaction happens they are in a position to take action on their learnings, which in turn will positively impact others.

- This was not a 'theoretical exploration'. (i.e. this experiment took place through practical explorations, rather than getting the attendees to 'think' about what the future of human interaction might entail).
- Participation in this experiment was by invitation only.

The majority of the attendees came from the UK and the US.

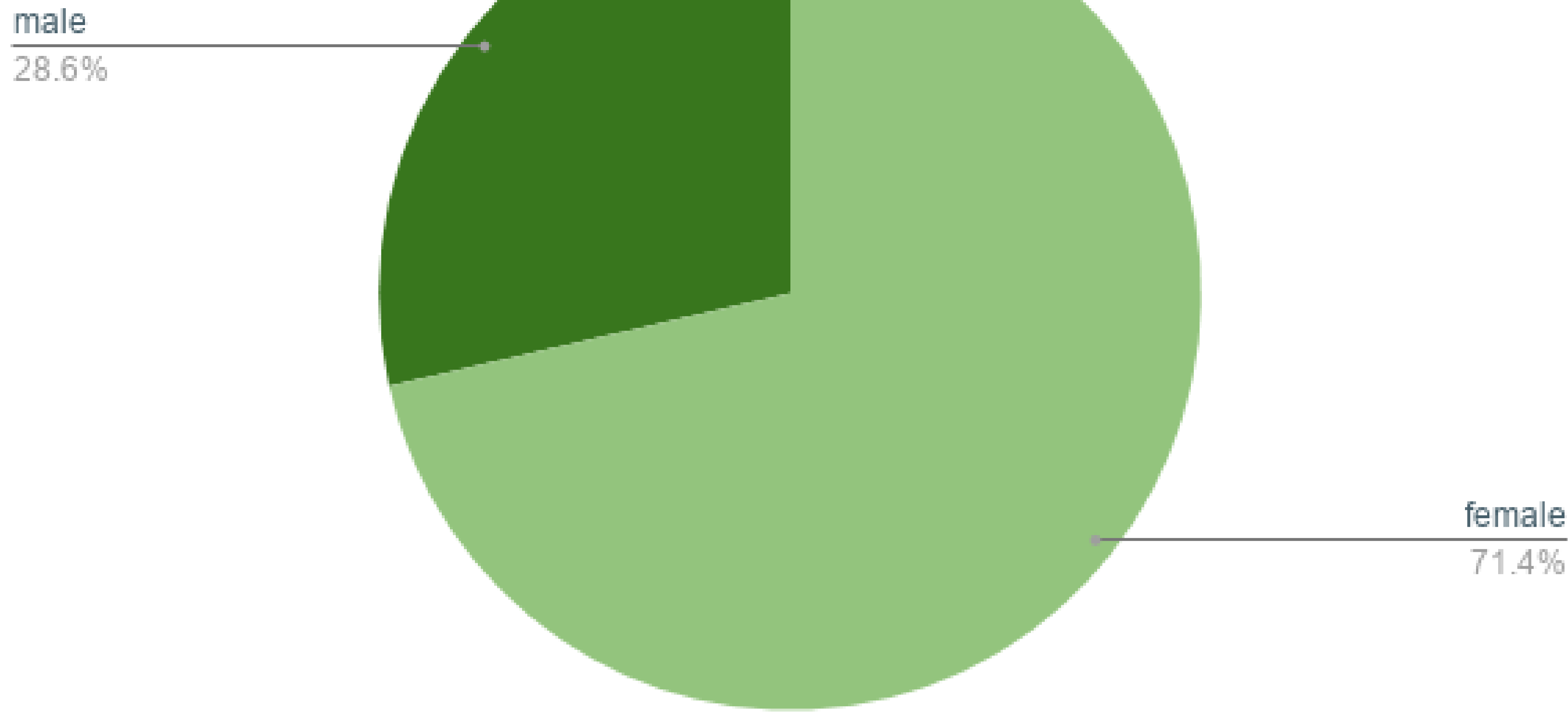
Denmark
16.7%

United Arab Em...
16.7%

United States
33.3%

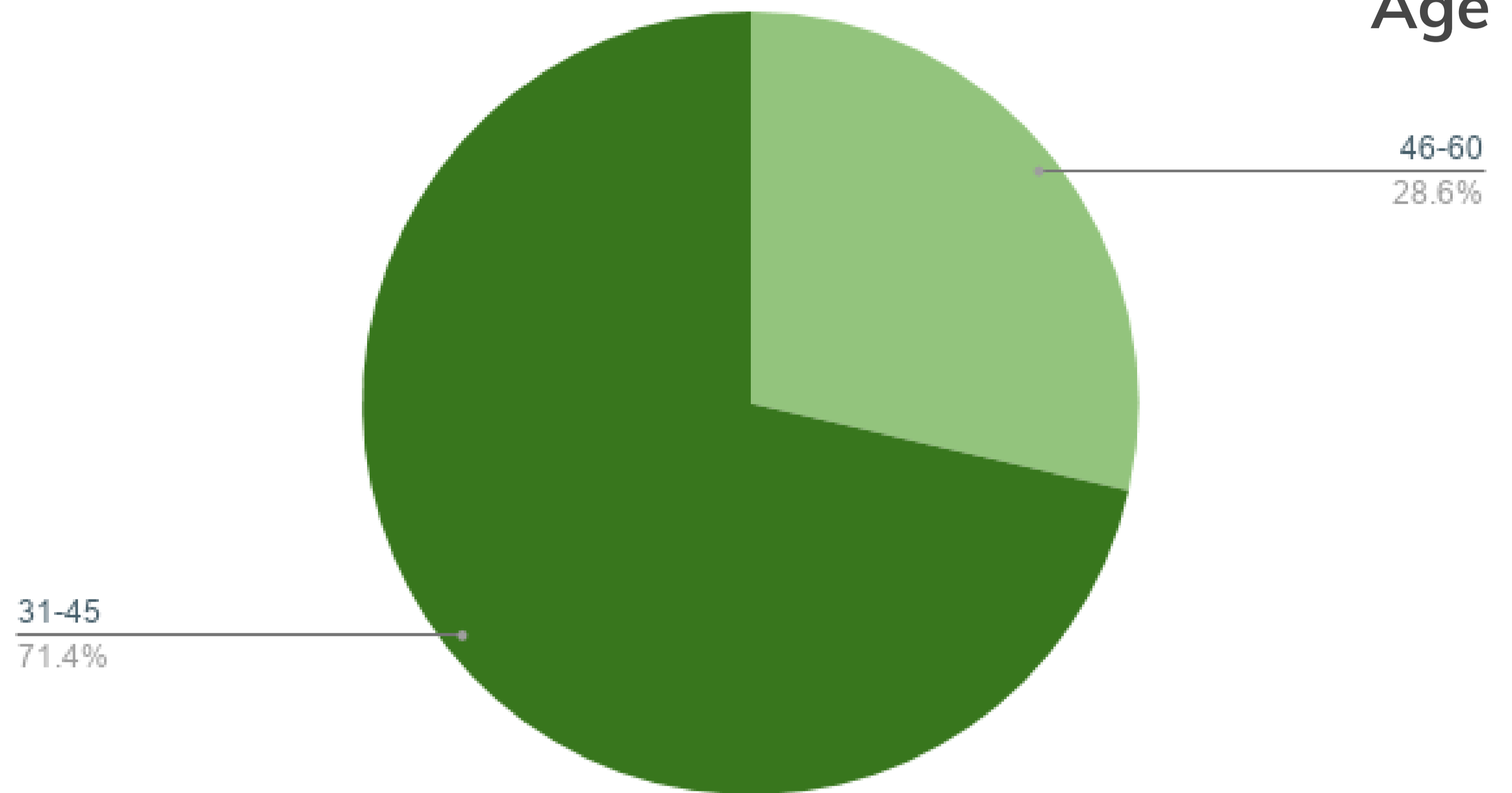
United Kingdom
33.3%

Gender



Over 70% of our attendees were female.

Over 70% of our attendees were aged 31-45.



We know that those taking part in our experiment do not represent the diverse world of humanity we live in. We took action to address this which did not deliver the results we expected and in future Explore experiments we are committed to continuing to take action to address this.

WHAT CAN THE ENNEAGRAM TELL US ABOUT HUMAN INTERACTION?

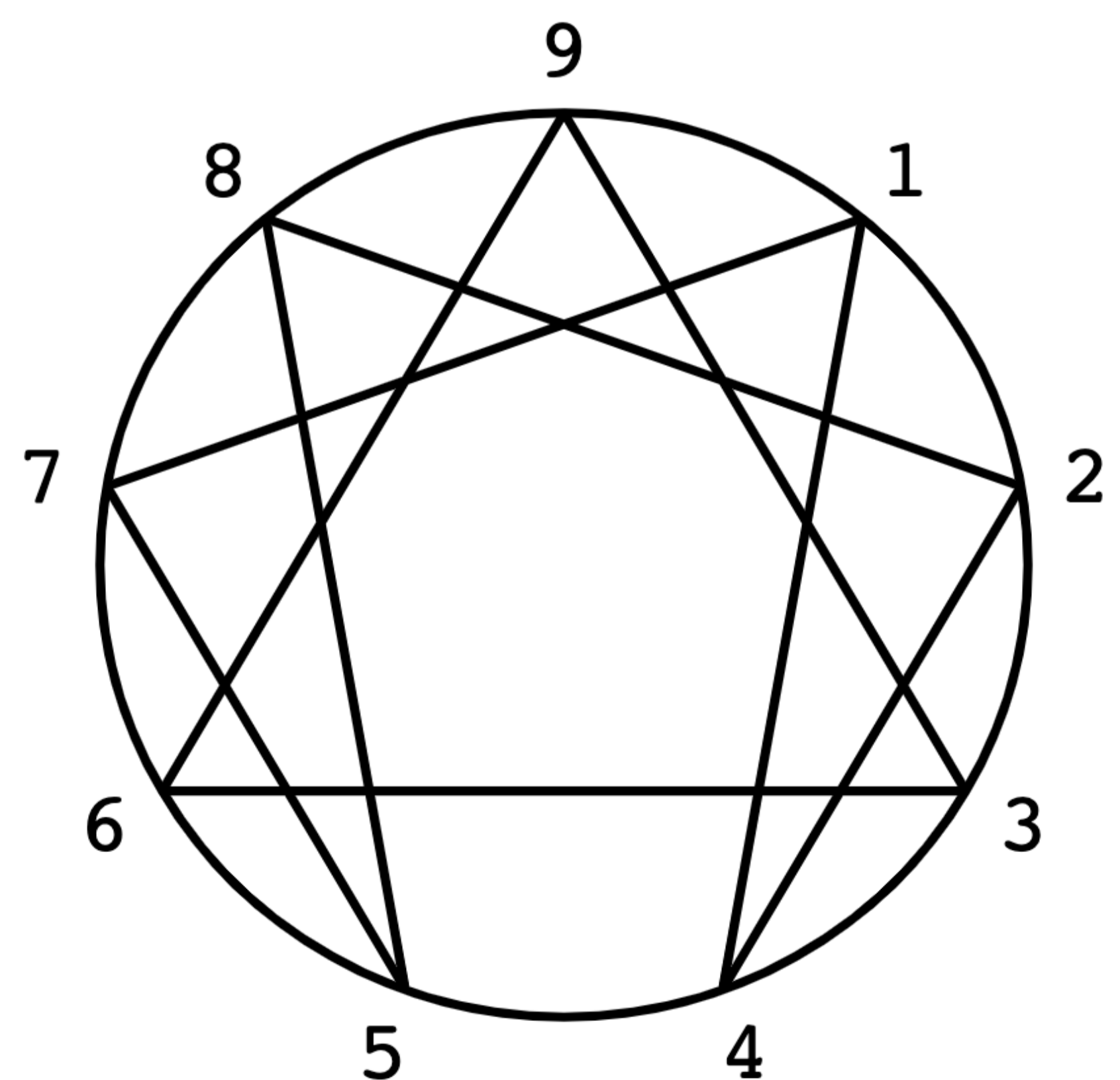
We wanted a way to explore our participants' experience so we decided to group them according to their **Enneagram type**. The Enneagram has been described by Forbes as 'a business tool for our future'.

"The Enneagram is designed to reveal your internal operating system. It points to automatic and unconscious patterns you use to make decisions."

Henley (2020)

"As an observational tool, personality models can help people pay better attention to their clients' wants and needs, and act as a guiding light towards defining and achieving goals."

DeVries (2020)



DeVries, H. (2020) How To Segment Your Best-Paying Clients With The Enneagram Model. Forbes.

Henley, D. (2020) Keep Stress From Getting The Best Of You With This Personality Test. Forbes.


Riso, D.R. and Hudson, R. (1999) The wisdom of the Enneagram: The complete guide to psychological and spiritual growth for the nine personality types. Bantam


A table detailing the Enneagram types of the 7 attendees


Enneagram type	Number of this type
1: CZ: The Reformer	0
2: CX: The Helper	2
3: AZ: The Achiever	1
4: BY: The Individualist	0
5: BZ: The Investigator	0
6: CY: The Loyalist	0
7: AX: The Enthusiast	2
8: AY: The Challenger	2
9: BX: The Peacemaker	0


THE CONTENT OF OUR EXPERIMENT

Over a period of 24 hours we delivered 4 types of content:

 **Experimenting** - Live experiments lasting 20 minutes with optional interaction.

 **Networking** - Live content lasting 15 minutes with facilitated interaction.

 **Participating** - Live content being delivered in partnership with others lasting up to 1 hour with optional interaction.

 **On-demand** - Recorded (i.e. not live) content lasting 20 minutes with no interaction.

DATA COLLECTION

After each delivery of live content we asked the attendees the following questions:

1. How much do you feel you interacted with the community (this includes speakers and other attendees)?

2. How willing to interact (participate/contribute/speak up) did you feel?

3. How much do you feel you interacted with the ideas discussed?

4. Did you experience higher, lower or the same level of interaction in this session compared to if it was delivered in person?

5. What action are you going to take now?

6. How likely are you to take action following this session?

We asked attendees to rank their responses on a scale from 'low' to 'high' or 'not at all' to 'extremely' dependent on the question.

We would like to thank Glisser for providing the technology that allowed the attendees to answer these questions.

EXPERIMENTING

HOW DOES STORY-TELLING INFLUENCE HUMAN INTERACTION?

An experiment to explore story-telling

Fiona Pelham led an experiment where attendees could experience the power of story-telling and learn some useful tips on how this can lead to higher levels of human interaction. This experiment links to **SDG 4: Quality Education**.



The data from this session shows that over 85% of attendees felt the same, or a higher level of interaction than at an in person event. Furthermore, over 70% of attendees felt either very, or extremely willing to speak up and contribute during the session.

Imagine if all human interaction experiences were powered by storytelling. Based on the data that would be one way to increased participation.

All 4 Enneagram types in attendance at Explore #2 were present at this session and experienced high levels of interaction with the ideas discussed and the community.

Could it be that story-telling is an effective tool to enhance interaction for all, no matter their personality type?

We asked attendees at the end of the session: what action are you going to take now?

"Write and present my pitches using the story-telling method"

"I will use the techniques we explored to tell more engaging stories"

"Try out the storytelling framework when interacting with my colleagues & peers"

EXPERIMENTING

HOW DOES NATURE INFLUENCE HUMAN INTERACTION?

An experiment to explore nature

Katy Carlisle led an experiment where attendees could experience how interaction with nature made them feel during a virtual event. This experiment links to **SDG 15: Life on Land**.



The findings of this session point to something relevant for anyone who wants to **inspire action**.

Over 60% of participants said they were very willing to speak up and were extremely likely to take action to following this session.

What if every human interaction experience included an element of being in nature? Based on this data that could mean increased participation and a strong commitment to taking action.

The challenger enneagram type was the only type that said they felt extremely willing to interact with the community and participate/ contribute. This data aligns with what we might expect to find, as challengers are most comfortable with challenging the norm (as their names suggests!).

This raises the question, **does how much the topic aligns with our personality type (values and expectations) impact on how willing we are to interact and contribute?**

We asked attendees at the end of the session: what action are you going to take now?

"Keep up a connection with the outdoors, as it helps my well-being and ability to interact."

"Explore the outdoors more. It was nice to see my face reflected on the backdrop of a blue sky even if it was through a screen."

"Take more outdoor meetings!"

EXPERIMENTING

HOW DOES MOVEMENT INFLUENCE HUMAN INTERACTION?

An experiment to explore moving

Paul White led an experiment where attendees could experience communication through virtual platforms using body language. This experiment links to **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being**.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



The data from this session shows that **100% of attendees felt that movement enabled them to experience the same or a higher level of interaction than at an in person event.**

Furthermore, 75% of attendees felt they interacted with the community to a great extent, and felt extremely willing to speak up.

Exploring the use of movement as an approach to building interaction was repeated from Explore #1. In both cases, movement has proven to inspire interaction no matter the Enneagram type.

Imagine if every human interaction experience included movement. Based on this data that would mean increased results in participation from attendees.

We asked attendees at the end of the session: what action are you going to take now?

“Be more mindful of self/movement during virtual meetings.”

“I am going to stretch more during work!”

“Think about how I can bring a movement activity into my virtual events.”

EXPERIMENTING

HOW DOES CREATIVITY INFLUENCE HUMAN INTERACTION?

An experiment to explore creativity

Bella Lloyd led an experiment to explore how being creative whilst listening to a narrative on the future of the events industry could lead to different experiences of interaction. This experiment links to **SDG 4: Quality Education**.



The data from this session suggests that **100% of attendees found that being creative built interaction with the community and were willing to participate/speak up to a great extent.**

Interestingly, interaction levels with the ideas discussed within the narrative were lower and attendees expressed difficulty in retaining the information.

Could it be that creativity is best used to facilitate the more informal, social interactions rather than the exchange of informative pieces?

Based on the data, incorporating creative elements into networking sessions could be a way to increase participation and higher levels of interaction.

We asked attendees at the end of the session: what action are you going to take now?

“Craft in virtual meetings or networking sessions!”

EXPERIMENTING

HOW DOES VOCALISING INFLUENCE HUMAN INTERACTION?

An experiment to explore vocalising

Andrew Walker led an experiment where attendees explored how using their voice creatively through song could build human interaction. This experiment links to **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being**.



The data from this experiment suggests that no matter the Enneagram type, singing builds interaction virtually, through encouraging attendees to step out of their comfort zone.

Contrary to what we might think based on the traits of each Enneagram type, 'the helper' was more willing to interact with the community and participate than 'the enthusiast'. Furthermore, 100% of helpers experienced a higher level of connection than at an in person event.

Could it be that singing in our own homes, our own environments, enables less extroverted personalities to participate more and thus experience higher levels of interaction?

Imagine if all human interaction experiences incorporated stepping out of our comfort zones. Based on this data that would mean enhanced interaction with the community and ideas discussed.

We asked attendees at the end of the session: what action are you going to take now?

"Be more open to singing and not be afraid of not being a professional singer."

"Sing more with my peers because it was a fun and mood boosting experience."

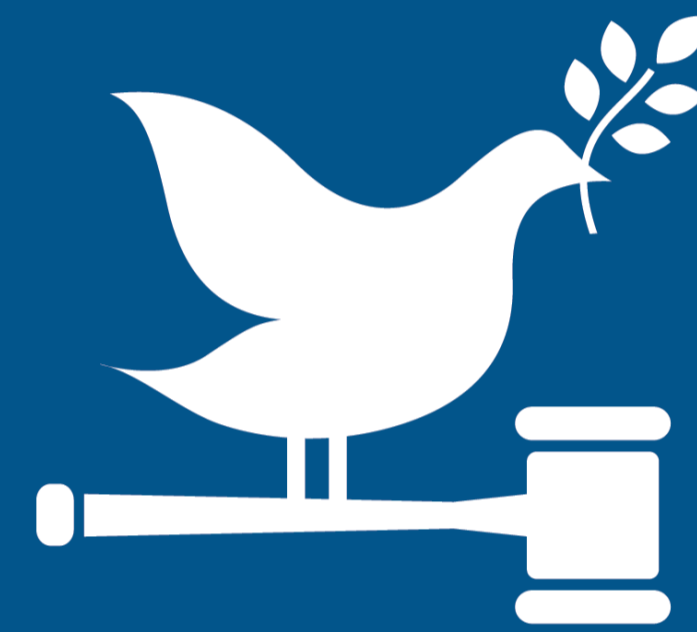
EXPERIMENTING

HOW DOES TRANSPARENCY INFLUENCE HUMAN INTERACTION?

An experiment to explore transparency

Heidi Wilson led an experiment exploring how transparency around the financial breakdown of the explore series makes the attendees feel. This experiment links to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



The content of this session referred to the financial breakdown of Explore #2, which is not often covered at events.

During this session attendees were taken through a financial break of Explore #2, to demonstrate what was and was not included in the budget. This is something that is not often covered at events, however **100% of our attendees said they interacted quite a lot to the ideas discussed.**

This experiment was repeated from Explore #1, and there was a smaller group present.

Interestingly, this session appealed most to the 'helper' who felt extremely willing to speak up and participate.

This raises an interesting question. Are helpers more willing to explore new ideas and topics and speak up/participate when there is a smaller group to interact with?

Imagine if human interaction experiences explored a variation in group sizes of attendees. Based on this data that could be one way to increase participation.



PARTICIPATING

A ROUNDTABLE WITH UNFCCC SECRETARIAT

Could the event sector embrace, measure and adopt standards for the reduction of carbon emissions?



Following on from the Explore #1 roundtable, UNFCCC Secretariat and Positive Impact gathered 7 corporate event planners to provide input on a foundation document which identifies several areas that the event sector could act upon to reduce its carbon emissions.



“.. creating a framework in collaboration with the UNFCCC Secretariat has significant potential ... It means event professionals can become climate action champions. It means the event sector can demonstrate climate leadership and send a message to global governments that the event sector is united in reducing its carbon emissions, reaching net zero and taking urgent action to respond to the climate challenge.”

*Miguel Naranjo,
Programme Officer at UNFCCC*

UNFCCC Secretariat attended the roundtable to receive input from corporate event planners on:

-  Aspects that are missing/ areas that could be changed in the foundation document.
-  Whether there is the possibility of addressing the areas of impact in a collaborative way, similar to what has been done within the sport and fashion sectors.

THEMES WERE IDENTIFIED FROM THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

1. Having measurable targets

“I think it would help to create a roadmap to help people understand how to set their baseline measurements, customised to the organisation.”

“If we could translate these goals to measurable metrics, that could be easily incorporated within the document, that would make it a very easy sell to CEOs and leadership teams.”

2. Stakeholder engagement

“We should be informing our attendees about the fact that, during this crisis, we are actually making a huge impact on the climate which has been needed for years. We should thank them at our events for making a difference in the world.”

“My initial thoughts are, how do I engage with my internal stakeholders with sustainability so that we can unite as a company and tackle this challenge together.”

3. Pushing for change across the supply chain

“We have the power as event planners to put pressure on our supply chain to make sustainable choices. If we don’t ask the hard questions, and if we don’t demand to see change from our supply chain, we won’t see it.”

PARTICIPATING

Q&A WITH POSITIVE IMPACT'S CEO

During Explore #2 there was an opportunity for attendees to ask any questions about the future of the event industry in a Q&A session with Positive Impact's CEO Fiona Pelham.

This Q&A links to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



ACTIONS ATTENDEES ARE GOING TO TAKE FOLLOWING THE Q&A SESSION

"Looking deeper into how we can bring interaction onto the agenda."

"Spend more time thinking about how to align our events with the Sustainable Development Goals."

"I will continue to be a part of this external network to learn more about sustainability."

This word cloud highlights popular words taken from quotes gathered from the Q&A session:



CONCLUSIONS

WHAT DO THE ATTENDEES THINK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES OF EXPLORE #2?

We spoke to our attendees after the event and this is what they had to share about their experience at Explore #2.

WHAT ATTENDEES WOULD SAY TO THEIR FRIENDS ABOUT THE EVENT

"Explore is an inspiring initiative that puts us as event planners in a position where we can actually make a difference."

"One of my favourite aspects is that we get to talk to decision makers, specifically at the UN, and provide input on frameworks that they're working on for the events industry."

WHAT ATTENDEES WOULD SAY TO THEIR BOSS ABOUT THE EVENT

"I spoke to my boss after Explore and told her that even though it took the investment of most of the day, it was definitely worth it. It's a unique opportunity, there's just not a lot of events that are like that so it's worth making the time for."

"We need to take the next step in our commitment to sustainability by using the SDGs as a framework for events."



WHAT ATTENDEES BIGGEST TAKEAWAY ABOUT HUMAN INTERACTION WAS

"My main takeaway was that building human interaction can enable sustainability to happen. If you don't have interaction, then how do you expect to move conversations forward and for people to take action?"

"I have learned that having sessions in small groups builds interaction virtually. It definitely makes you feel connected to another person no matter where they are."

WHAT ATTENDEES LEARNT ABOUT THE ROLE OF CORPORATE PLANNERS IN ENABLING INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY DECISION MAKING

"I think it's a selling point for us, to say this is what we facilitate, and it's important. We need to market ourselves that way."

"We now have the opportunity to incorporate such a broad range of people at our virtual events, we can invite people we haven't been able to invite before."

CONCLUSIONS

THANK YOU

Thank you to the UN bodies (including those with whom we hold Memorandums of Understanding with), the contributors and the attendees for their time, collaboration and positivity without which we would not have been able to explore so impactfully.

THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors

Paul White

Fiona Pelham

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Ghassan Ayouni

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Laura Miller

Sam Carew

Kate Adams

Olivia Hamblin-Crossley

Attending companies included

Microsoft

Steel Wood Industries

Interface

(and more companies who requested to remain confidential)

Novolex

Elliot Footwear

CONCLUSIONS

WHAT DID THIS EXPERIMENT MAKE POSSIBLE?

1. During the experiment corporate planners participated in a roundtable, contributing to a **high level strategic conversation with UNFCCC Secretariat**.
2. A **commitment from the event sector was updated** and reported on. Click [here](#) to view the report.
3. The Explore #2 experiment and this report will be the foundation for materials on the role of events in **delivering the Sustainable Development Goals** (This will include UN initiatives such as Acceleration Action Reports and the Decade of Accountability Plans).
4. This report content could start a new narrative for how event professionals explain their job role as **enabling inclusive and participatory decision-making**.
5. This report and access to free supporting resources **will be shared with global industry bodies** with a request that they share these resources with their members (including: JMIC, EIC, BVEP).
6. This report will be shared with over **1,300 Positive Impact Ambassadors around the world**.
7. This report will be used in conversation with UK government in the lead up to the **UK hosting of COP26**.
8. This conversation was continued with a **roundtable discussion at IBTM World**.
9. Resources will continue to be shared with the global Positive Impact Ambassador community. [Click here to join our community of ambassadors](#).
10. A third experiment in the Explore Series on **International Women's Day, 8th March 2020**.

WHAT ACTION SHOULD YOU TAKE AFTER READING THIS REPORT?

If you are a corporate event planner register to take part in Explore #3: International Women's Day [here](#).

There are limited places available.

This event will explore the power of female leadership and human interaction.

If you are an event professional we encourage you to sign up to become a Positive Impact Ambassador [here](#).

You will receive free educational materials and monthly challenges around the UN's [Sustainable Development Goals](#) to share with your networks.