

ORAL HISTORY SOCIETY STRATEGIC REVIEW 2018-2021: MEMBERSHIP CONSULTATION

Please return this questionnaire to caiparryjones@ohs.org.uk by Sunday 4th March 2018

The OHS has begun a process of review of the organisation and we are thinking about our plans over the next three years. We wish to ensure that we are spending within our budget, meeting our priorities, considering more effective ways of communicating with members and ensuring a diverse involvement at all levels of the organisation. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

1. MISSION, PRIORITIES

The aims and objectives of the OHS, as stated in its Constitution, are:

- To further the methods and encourage participation in the practice of oral history in all appropriate fields.
- To encourage the discussion of methodology, technical issues, problems and all relevant matters by the publication of a journal, and by the organisation of conferences, training, meetings, a regional network and other relevant activities.

We welcome your views on these objectives and whether anything should be changed or added.

Are there any changes/additions you would like to see considered?

We also welcome your views on which activities should take priority in achieving our objectives over the next three years. A summary of the Society's current activities is set out at <http://www.ohs.org.uk/about/>. When you have had chance to consider this, we would ask you to answer the questions below, and to add any other comments of your own.

What in your opinion should be the top five priorities for the OHS over the next three years, in order of importance? Please feel free to include ideas of your own as well as drawing on the list of current activities.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What in your view should take the lowest priority over the next five years? Is there anything that could/should be dispensed with altogether?

2. EXPANDING AND ENGAGING OUR MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the OHS has been declining since 2013. There is also an imperative to ensure greater diversity within the OHS membership. Membership subscriptions are a vital income stream and if the decline continues or does not grow substantially, it could signify the end of the Oral History Society unless there are other options. Please let us know your thoughts on these or any other membership issue.

In your view, given the increased number of oral history projects since 2000, why has membership of the Oral History Society not increased?

In your view, what does the Oral History Society need to do to increase its membership base?

As well as increasing membership, are there other services that you would like the Oral History Society to develop?

The Society would like to increase the diversity of its members in terms of ethnicity, culture and belief, gender and sexuality, age and social status. In your view, what does the Oral History Society need to do to achieve this aim?

Do you think the Oral History Society should remain a membership organisation? If yes, why? If not, why not?

If the Oral History Society was not a membership organisation, what alternative methods could be explored to raise funds?

3. PROMOTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE Oral History Society

Aims and Objectives (see extract from Constitution above p1).

Diversity

Oral history has been successful in enabling people who have been 'hidden from history' to have their voices heard. Groups engaging in oral history across the UK are demonstrably diverse. However, this diversity might be better represented in OHS membership and its Trustees.

How can the OHS increase the diversity of its members in terms of ethnicity, culture and belief, gender and sexuality, age and social status?

Communication

OHS communication on oral history issues and activity takes place via the journal, website, social media, regional network, conferences, seminars, and Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

Is OHS communication up to date and technologically relevant to diverse oral history practitioners in the UK?

How can the OHS meaningfully use technology to encourage interconnection and discussion amongst diverse practitioners?

Budgeting/costs

The OHS needs to ensure that its financial resources are sustainable in the future. How can we do this?

In your view, is charging for membership key in ensuring that the OHS's financial resources are sustainable?

Is charging for services against the OHS principles of being open to all?

How can the Society engage its membership and other interested parties in discussing and contributing to the real costs of carrying out oral history (ie how much/how many of the OHS services are members and others prepared to pay for, and how much should be free in the spirit of what oral history is?)

4. GOVERNANCE

The Oral History Society is running, co-ordinating and partnering in a large number of activities including advice, training, advocacy, publishing, events and engagement with subject specialist groups. As part of the strategic review the Trustees recognise we need to reflect on the OHS governance structures to ensure that the organisation is efficient, effective, accountable and transparent in how we direct and manage our resources - both financial and human. The following questions will help address these issues. **Please tick the response that best represents your opinion.** If you have other comments outside these questions that you wish to share, please don't hesitate to provide them.

"I have sufficient information about the structure and governance of the Oral History Society."

Do you:

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

If you answered "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree": What information do we need to provide?

If you answered "Agree" or "Strongly Agree": What do we do well; what could we do better?

"If I wished to contact the Oral History Society to ask how it is run..."

1. I would know who to ask
2. I would not know who to ask
3. I would know how to find out

If you wish to expand on your answer, please do so here:

Overall comments, not necessarily related to above themes. Please feel free to tell us anything about the Society.

Thank you very much. Please return this questionnaire to caiparryjones@ohs.org.uk by **Sunday 4th**
March 2018