



# FANCY A BIT OF HISTORY?

The FABoH survey

# A history survey with 18-29 Year Olds

Research conducted at the History Trust of South  
Australia in the office of the History Advocate,  
Dr Kiera Lindsey

Presented by Grace Turpin  
Intern of the History Advocate of South Australia, Dr Kiera Lindsey

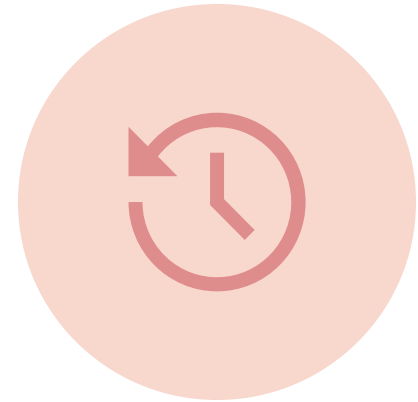
# Intentions



YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES  
TOWARD HISTORY



CURRENT ENGAGEMENT AND  
DISENGAGEMENT WITH HISTORY



FUTURE INTERACTIONS?

# Why?

- Grace Turpin
  - Passion for research and young people's relationship with history
- Dr. Kiera Lindsey
  - Build on SASSi results
  - Learn more about intergenerational exchange
  - explore potential of Youth Advisory Panel
- 18 – 29-year age group
  - Deploy Grace's networks
  - Ethical restrictions re: working with children



# WHO?

- Using networks of the intern and the History Advocate
- Consulted list
  - Dr. Heidi Ing, Research Fellow University of South Australia
  - Michelle Fulham, Education Programs Manager History Trust of South Australia
  - Sophia Booi, PhD Candidate University of South Australia
- Circulated list

'Not into History' (NIH): Mercedes Old Collegiate Soccer Club (Not Into History [NIH])  
Specsavers West Lakes, Carclew, Office of Commissioner for Young People and Children

'Into History Already' (AHI): History departments of University of Adelaide, University of South Australia, Flinders University, ABC Adelaide Radio & Instagram and LinkedIn
- Expectation
  - Happy with 10 responses
  - Complemented by 30 min 1 on 1 interviews



# What?

- 20 questions including 2 demographic questions
- Combination of compulsory and optional
- Style of questions:
  - Rank
  - Written response
  - Multiple selection
  - One selection
- On Microsoft Forms
- Survey open from 27 August to 17 September 2024



# So, who GOT FABOH?!, with us?



106 people aged between 18-29 years old



55% Not into History: 21% Grace's network & 34% unknown



45% Into History Already: 12% Museum students, 29% history students & 4% HTSA staff

# How to define data sets based on sampling public opinion

- 'Non-Probability Research' is not randomised but useful for conducting exploratory research. It is generally more qualitative and can include written responses

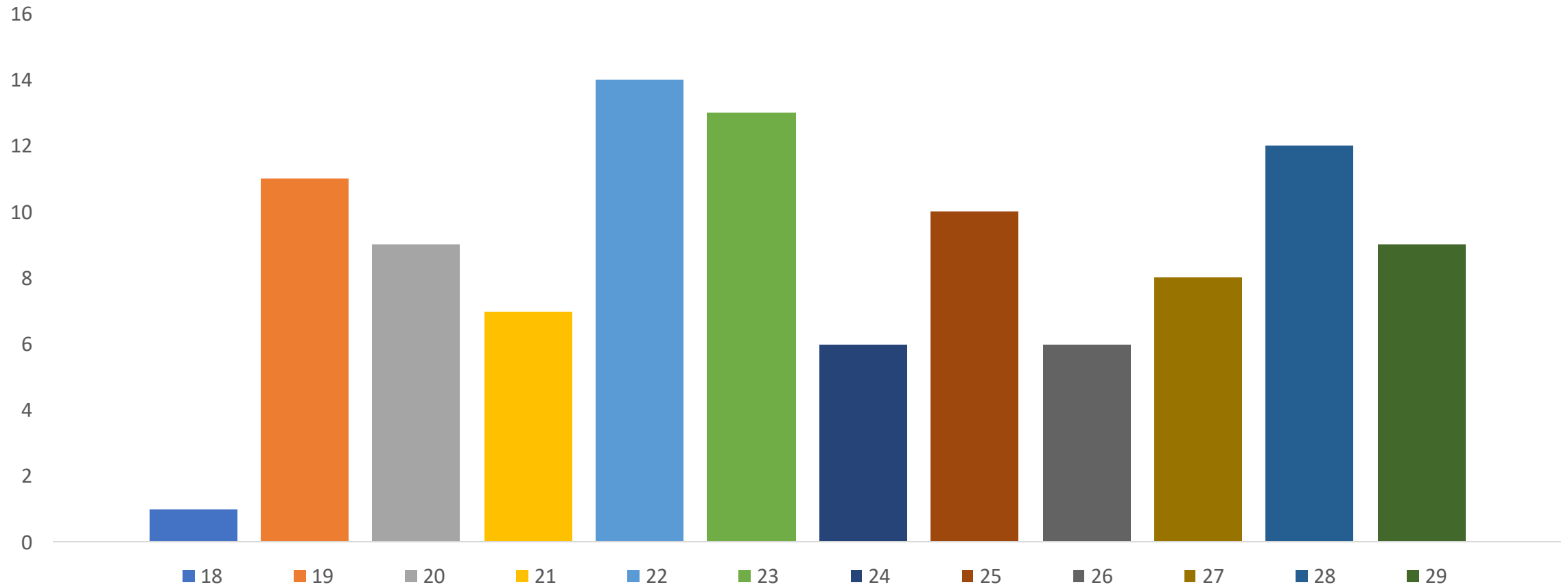
**Ahmed, SK 2024, 'How to choose a sampling technique and determine sample size for research: A simplified guide for researchers', *Oral Oncology Reports*, vol. 12, pp. 100662.**

- In 2020 Memon offered quantified sample sizes within the Social Sciences as:

50 to 100 is a small sample size 100 – 200 is medium sample size 200 plus is a large sample size

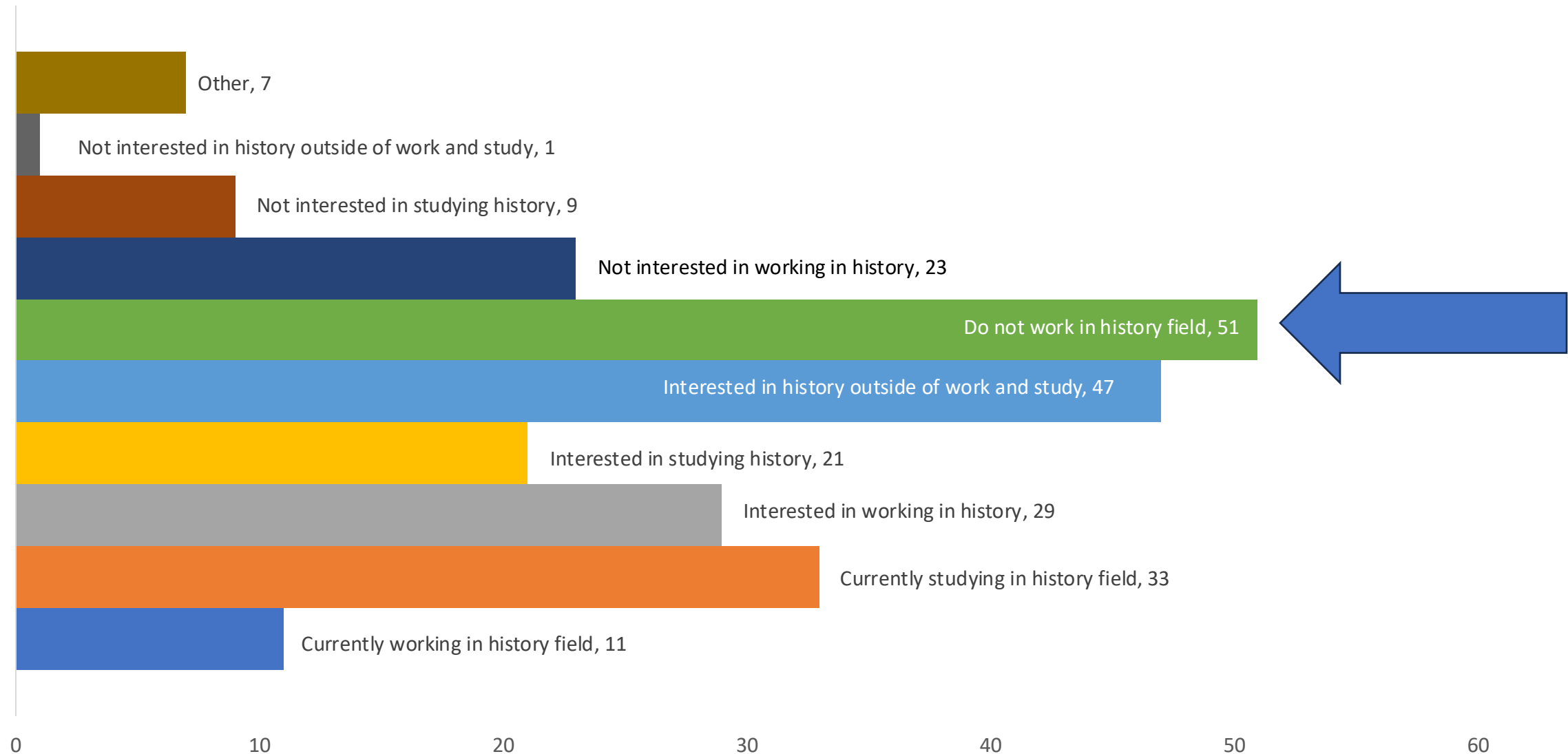
**Memon, M A et al. 'Sample size for survey research: review and recommendations', *Journal of Applied Structural Equation Modeling*, 4:2, i-xx, June 2020.**

## AGE RANGE OF RESPONDENTS



**Key finding:** responses evenly distributed except for one 18-year-old

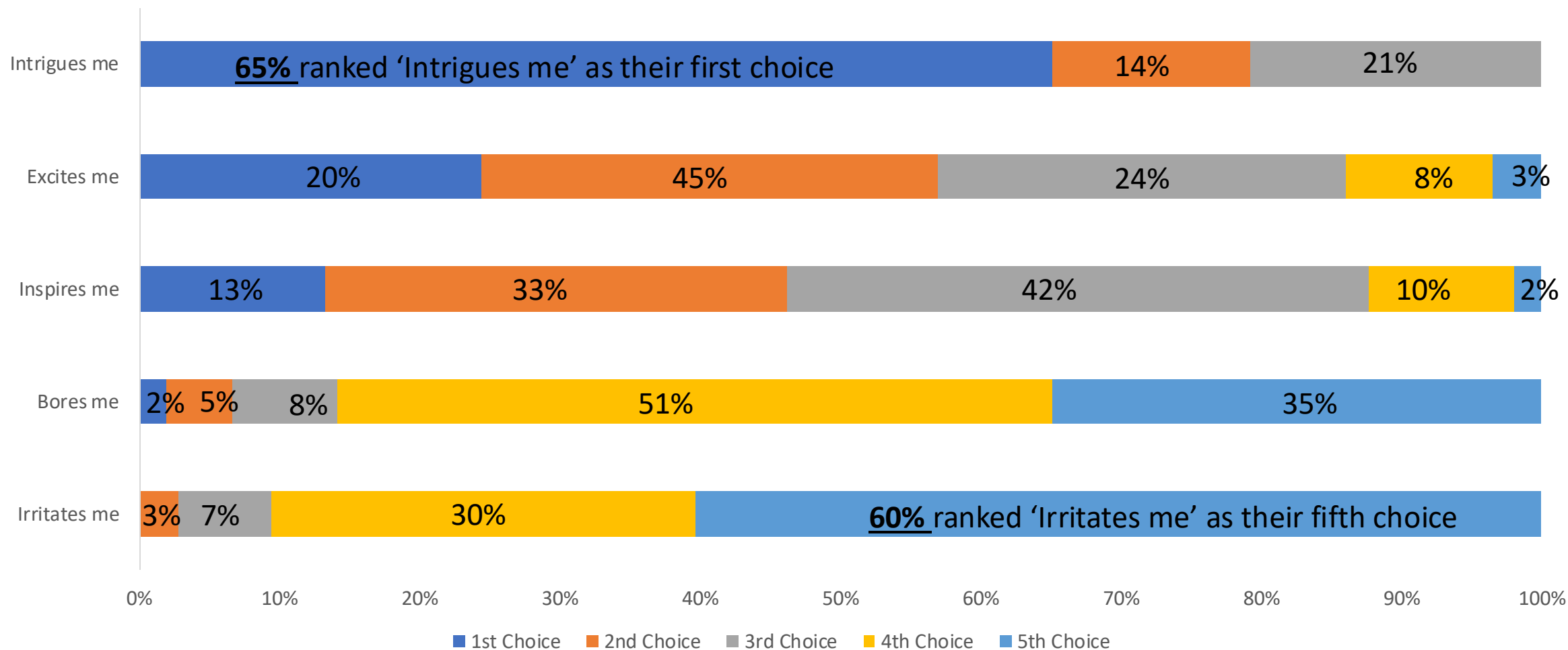
Q18. PLEASE TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT YOU. BY TICKING ALL THE FIELDS BELOW WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO YOU. 'I AM...'





Attitudes towards history

## Q1. PLEASE TELL US WHAT YOU THINK OF HISTORY BY FINISHING THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE. 'HISTORY...'



**Key finding:** People are intrigued by history and do not think it boring

## Q2. PLEASE TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHY YOU FEEL THAT WAY.

**“I love seeing myself in people of the past”**

“It’s a satisfying mystery to unravel”

**“Without history we have nothing to learn from”**

“Especially working in business, you can learn so much from it and take advantage of it...”

**“...history is essential to understanding almost all modern issues.”**

“It satisfies my creativity and intelligence”

**“It ignites imaginations and inspires me to learn more.”**

“History taught in the school curriculum was pretty one sided”

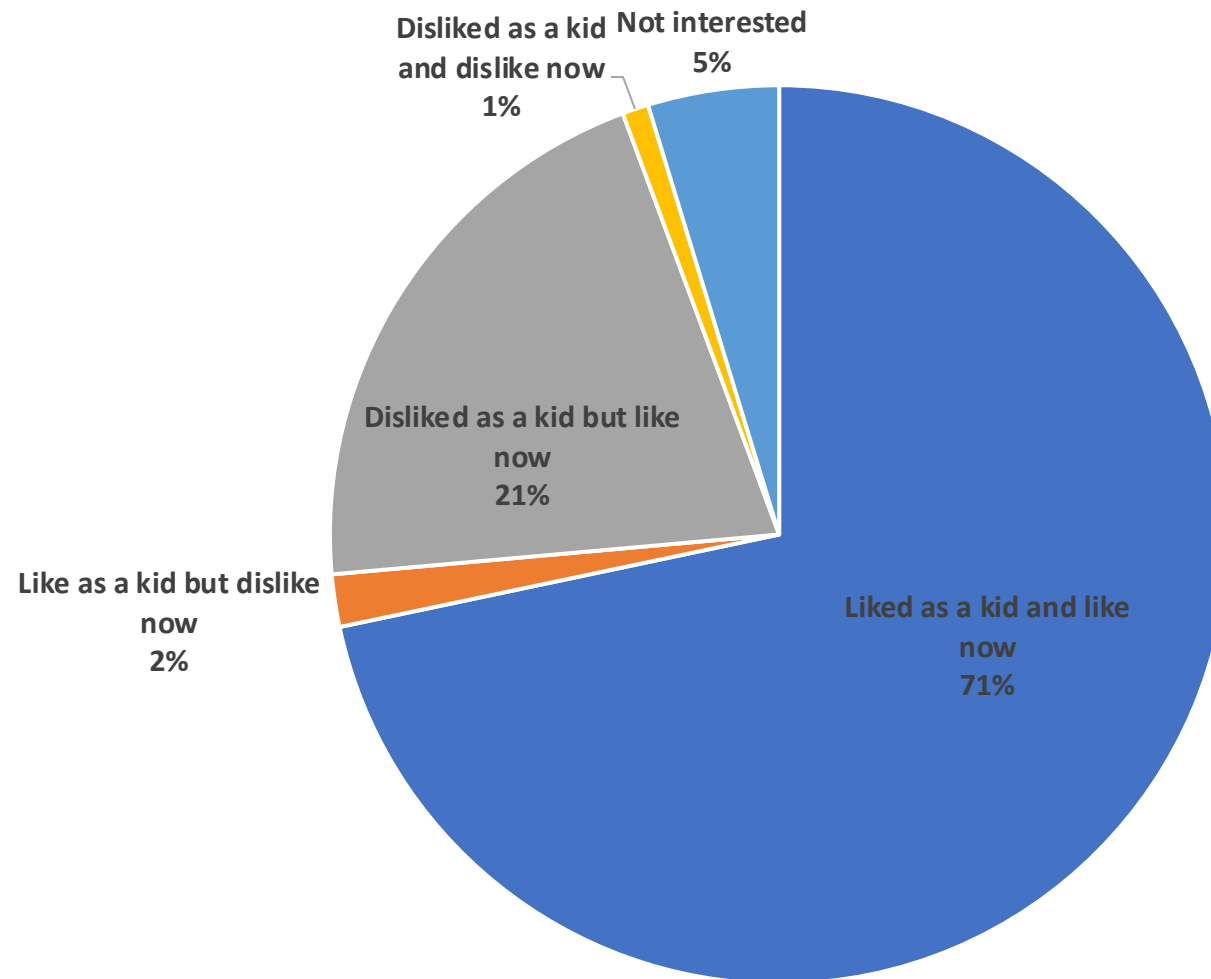
**“Really inspiring teacher during high school...it left me always wanting to learn more”**

“... history can be very intriguing, but it's hard to find resources and mediums that portray historical information in an interesting way”

**“The irritating part of history comes from the frustration of a uni degree and an occupation that is underfunded”**

“Knowing our past, is knowing ourselves...”

### Q3. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OF HISTORY OVER THE YEARS?



#### Key findings:

- A lot of people like history i.e., potential audience
- There is resilience towards history (people recover from bad experiences)

## Q4. PLEASE TELL US A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHAT 'SHAPED YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO HISTORY?

**"My parents"**

"Hearing stories from parents and grandparents who experienced the Vietnam War"

**"To have personal ties to photos, memories, stories and songs is priceless"**

"Going to museums and places of historical significance"

**"Mostly TV shows such as Horrible Histories"**

"My grandparents..."

**"Real life travel was the biggest impact"**

"I wasn't as intrigued in school as it was forced on us"

**"School probably made it worse"**

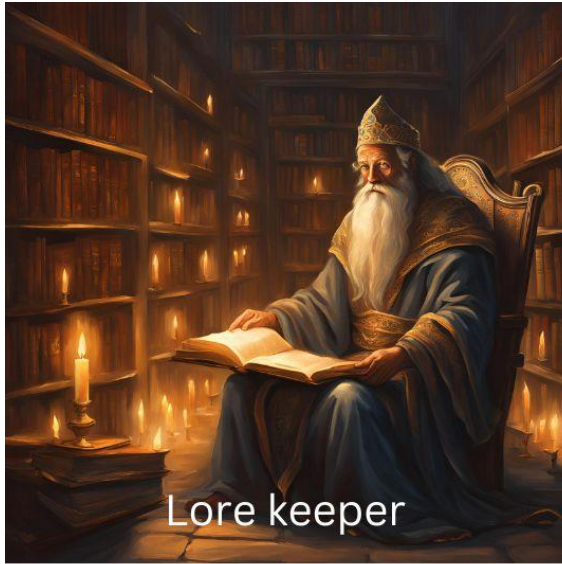
"Hated learning history from textbooks in high school"

**"History was often boring and very focused on war... I felt left out"**

"Having teachers who were genuinely in love with the subject inspired me to also enjoy it"

Responses: 93 of the 106

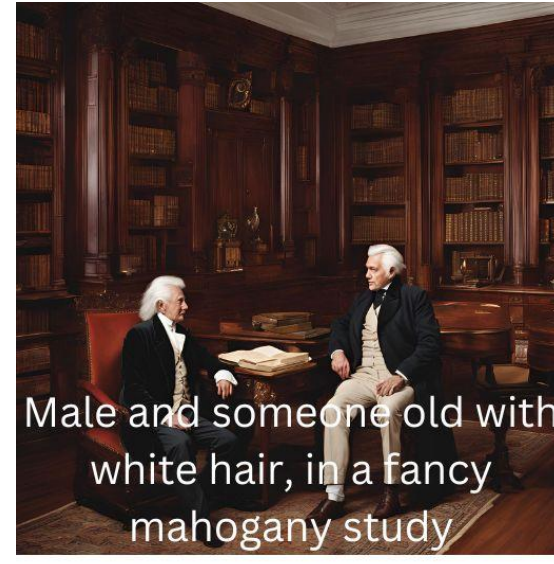
Q5. What do you think when you  
hear the word 'historian'?



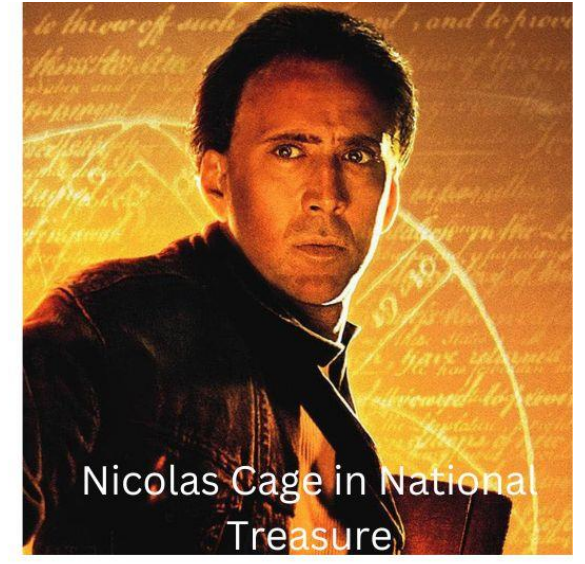
Lore keeper



Super cool, smart people who read a lot and have so much knowledge, and also likes to travel!



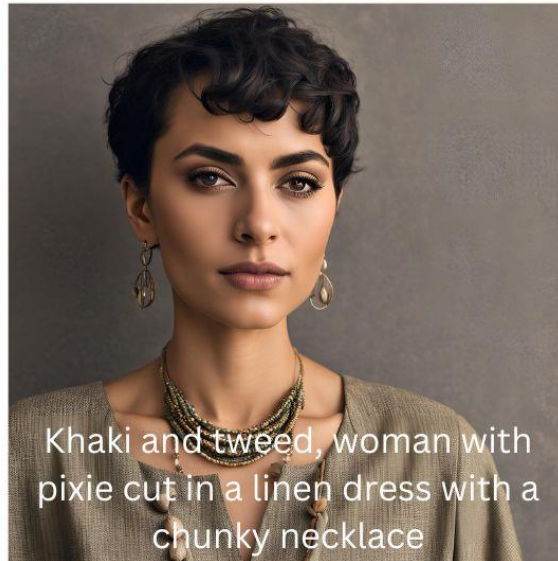
Male and someone old with white hair, in a fancy mahogany study



Nicolas Cage in National Treasure



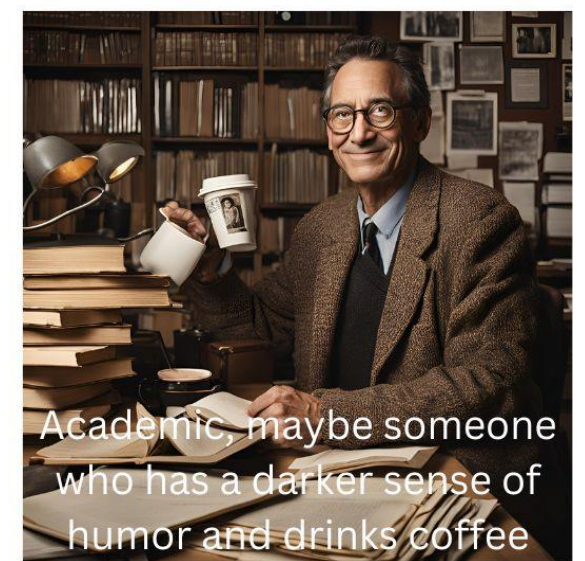
Indiana Jones



Khaki and tweed, woman with pixie cut in a linen dress with a chunky necklace



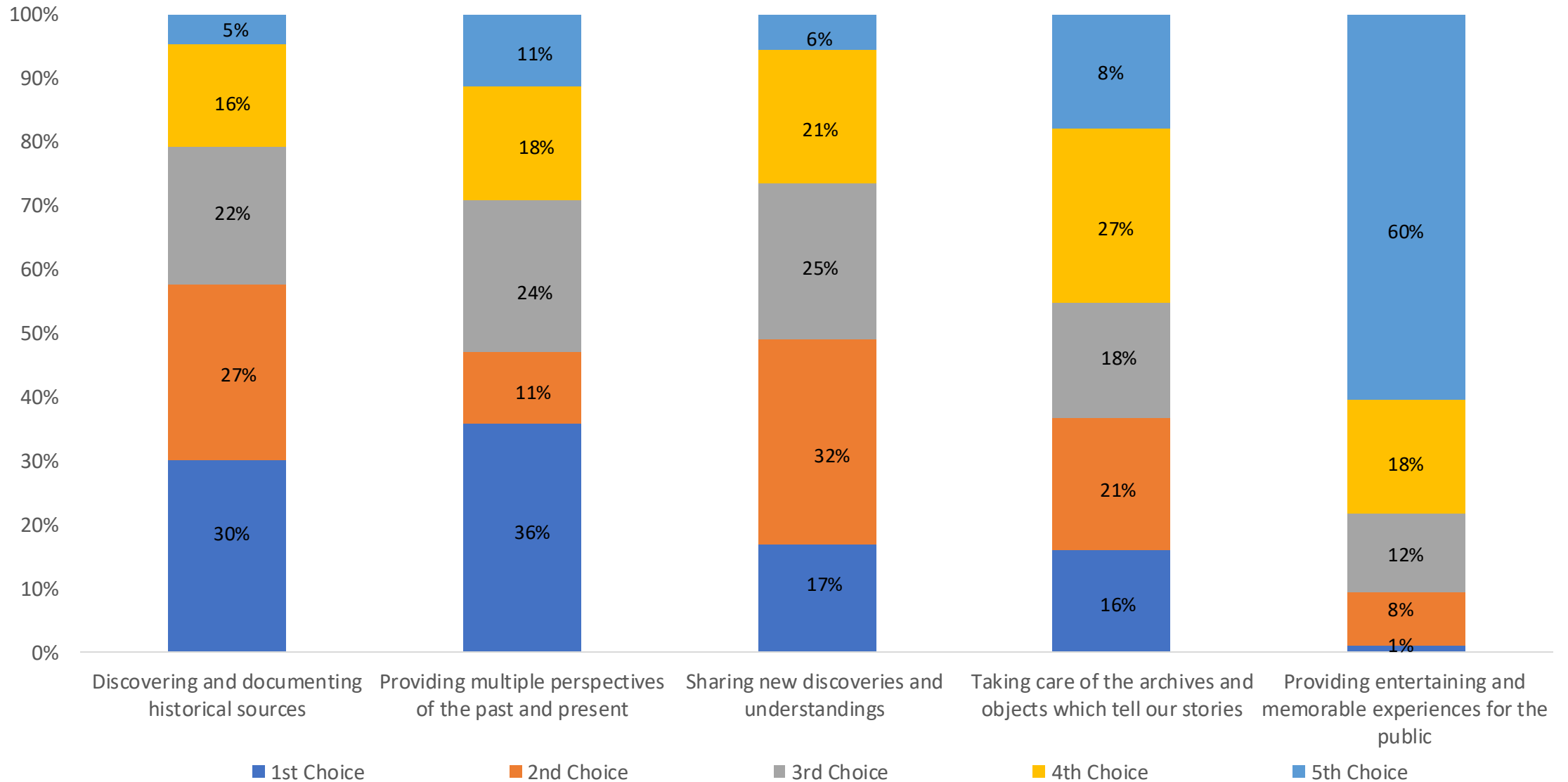
Someone old in Harry Potter



Academic, maybe someone who has a darker sense of humor and drinks coffee



## Q6. What do you think a historian's role should be?



## Q7. WHICH BIG ISSUES DO YOU THINK HISTORIANS SHOULD ENGAGE WITH?

Truth telling about First Nation experiences of the past

Political movements (BLM, Me Too, LGBTQI+)

Climate change

Democracy at peril

AI

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ 1st Choice

■ 2nd Choice

■ 3rd Choice

■ 4th Choice

■ 5th Choice

## Q8. how do you like your history served?

Museums

TV shows/ Films (Game of Thrones, Bridgerton, Horrible Histories)

Non-fiction books

Podcasts (The Rest is History, Stuff the British Stole, Burnt Toast, etc.)

Fiction Books

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ 1st Choice

■ 2nd Choice

■ 3rd Choice

■ 4th Choice

■ 5th Choice



## Q9. WHAT AREAS OF HISTORY DO YOU FIND MOST INTERESTING?

### Top 5 Interests

1. Ancient History (59%)
2. Women (58%)
3. Medieval (51%)
4. Resistance and Movements (49%)
5. Australian (44%)

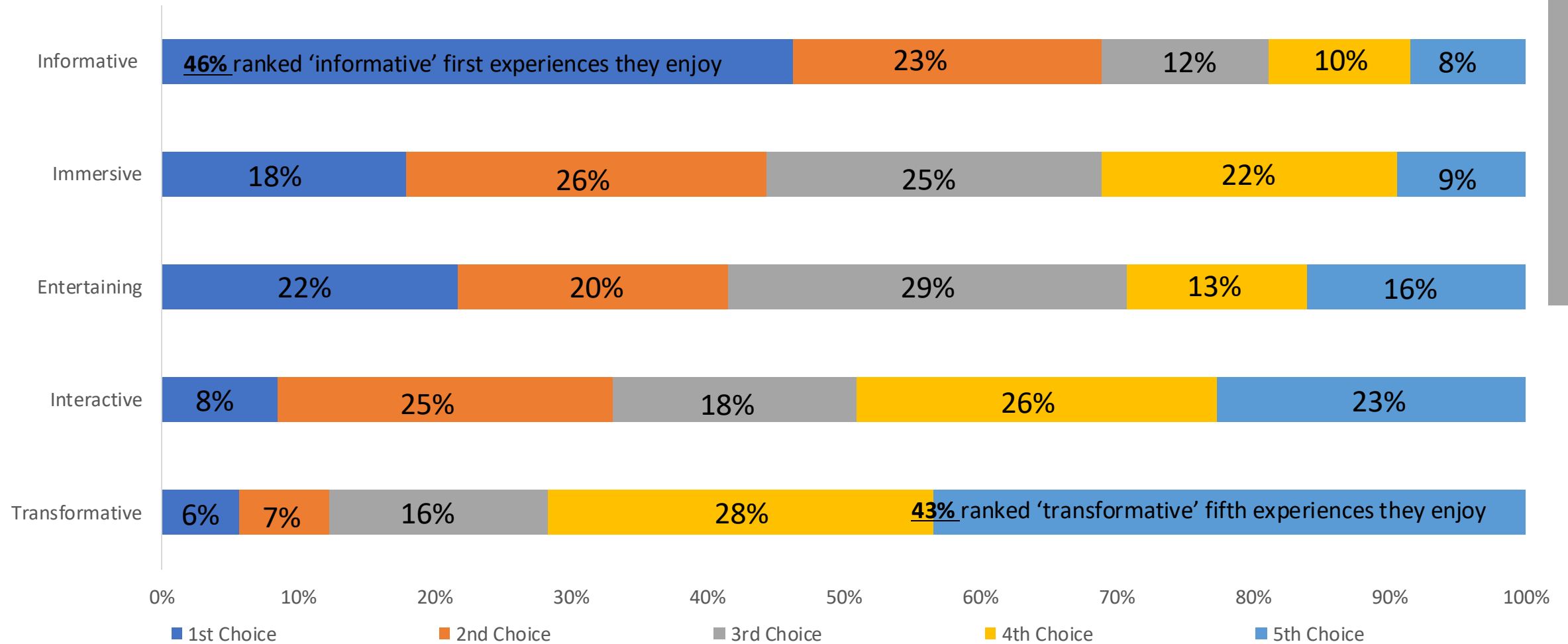
### Least Interested

34. Deep time (16%)
35. Sports (15%)

### Key Findings:

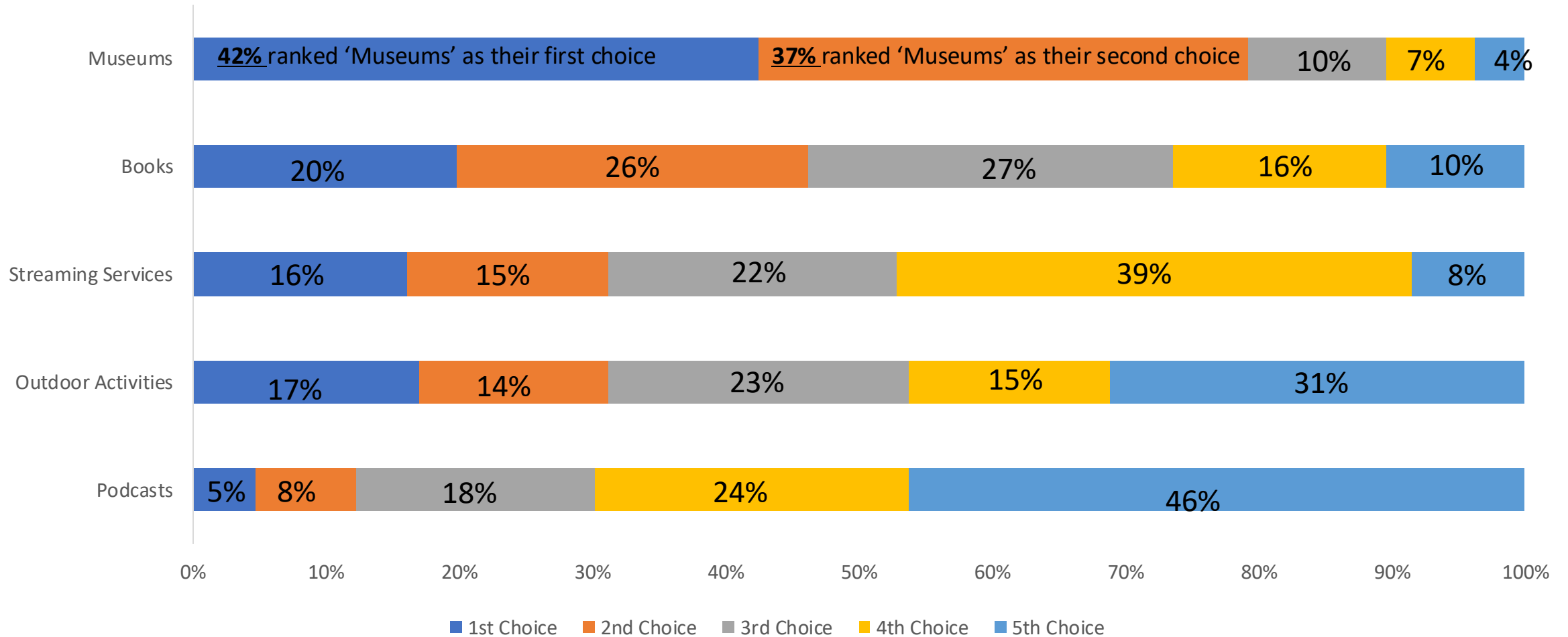
- South Australian history had 26% interest
- Religious and spiritual (38%) was ranked higher than sports (15%)

## Q10. The history experiences I enjoy the most are...



**Key finding:** People want their history to be informative

## Q11. my favourite or most memorable history experiences have been in...



**Key finding:** museum experiences ranked high but might be skewed by Museum students' participation

## q12. Can you tell us about a time when history inspired or excited you?

**“Walking with Elders on Country in northern NSW”**

“First Nations history in Canada whilst on a guided hike”

**“Seeing rock art that was thousands of years old in Kakadu National Park”**

“ ... a family trip through the Northern Territory...”

**“I was in Louisiana on a riverbank when I discovered a fully intact arrowhead. I then dove into the Native American history of the area”**

“Seeing ancient ruins after studying them for 6 years”

**“Learning about ancient Egypt in primary school”**

“... visiting a historical graveyard on a family trip...”

“A professor at my university was an amazing orator”

**“Museums around the world”**

“Playing Assassins Creed”

**“Musicals such as Hamilton and Six ...”**

“Inspirations from different art movements”

**“My own family history”**

“Reading the book on grandmother’s bookshelf about our family history”

**“... seeing a physical copy of something I had researched ...”**

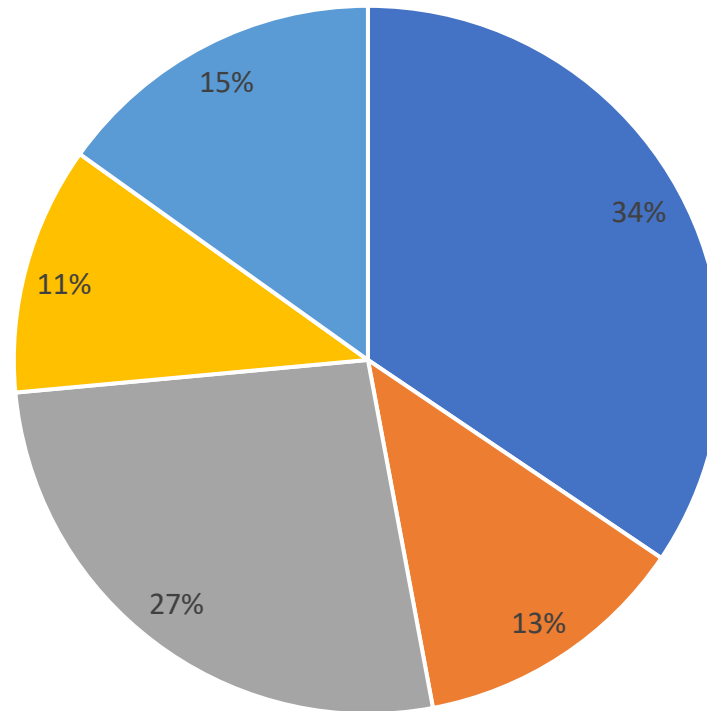
“I learnt about Maria Welch and ... have walked the same footsteps as her”



Future involvement in history

## Q13. TO GET MORE INVOLVED WITH HISTORY IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES I WOULD NEED TO:

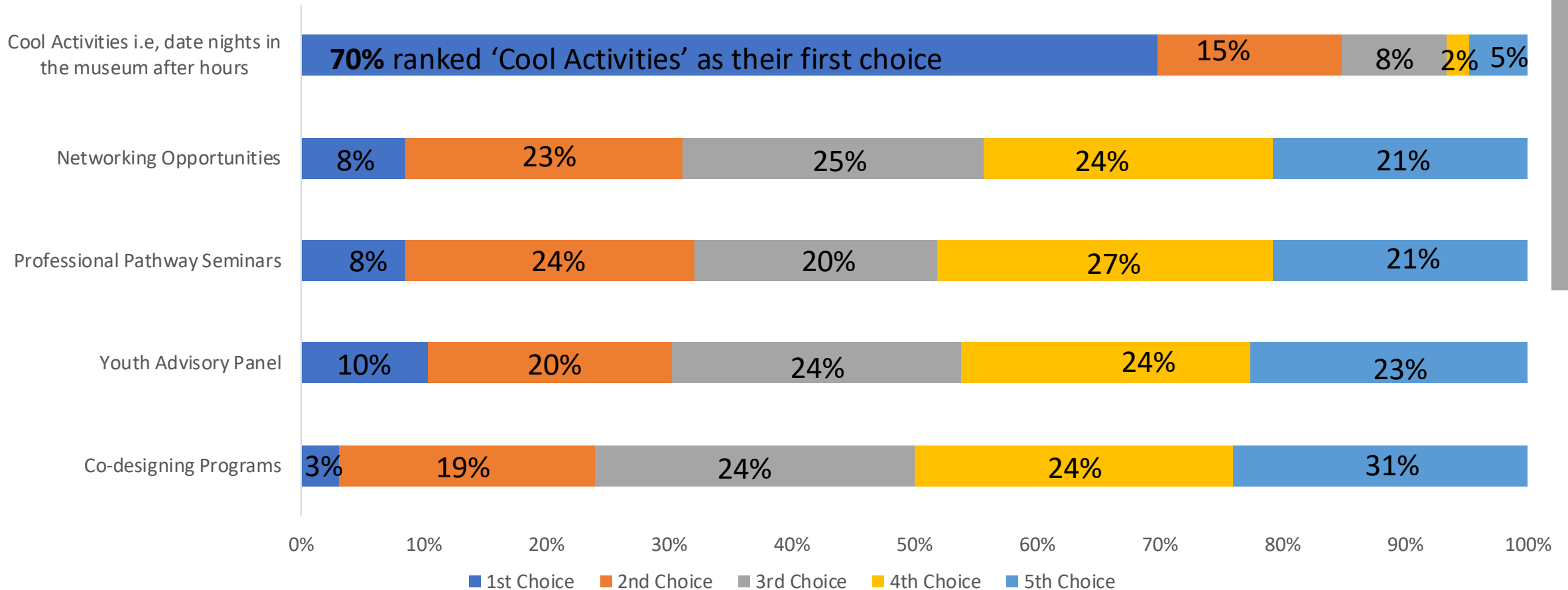
- Learn something I didn't know before
- Feel Listened to and that my perspectives matter
- Develop the skills and knowledge to feel like I can make a meaningful contribution
- Feel I could get a job in the field
- Have my community or my age group's interests represented



### Key findings:

- People want to learn something they didn't know before
- Including skills
- If professional pathways were clearer they would pursue these

## Q17. HOW CAN THE HISTORY TRUST ENCOURAGE PEOPLE OF YOUR AGE TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN HISTORY?



### Key findings:

- Cool activities offer an important gateway to convert curiosity into deeper long-term relationships
- There is strong support for a Youth Advisory Panel

## 1 v 1 interviews

- 9 x 30 minute in-person and online interviews conducted by Grace Turpin from 18 to 25 September
- 21- to 27-year-olds from survey who indicated they were happy to be interviewed
- 3 men and 6 women, 7 Already Interested in History & 2 Not Interested in History
- 100% felt frustrated about lack of information about professional pathways
- Deterred by perceived lack of job opportunity
- 100% like the idea of a Youth Advisory Panel to get younger people more engaged
- 7 out of 9 lacked awareness of the History Trust and what they do
- 8 out of 9 wanted more HTSA to outreach to them through social media platforms



# Takeaways

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People like history (much more than they and we realise)

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54% had no idea about the HTSA but 97% wanted to know more

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School, media and family provide positive and negative history experiences

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Young people are resilient, and they recover from negative history experiences

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Stereotype of history and historians are prevalent

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People want to be informed rather than entertained

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They want to develop knowledge and skills so they can contribute

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Diversity of topics and perspectives desired

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Lack of information about professional pathways is an easily remedied but significant impediment

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Huge appetite for Youth Advisory Panel

# This age group...

likes history more than is commonly assumed. In fact, it is an important form of meaning-making, forges understanding of the world AND connection with friends and family

want to develop knowledge and skills to contribute, but lack of clear professional pathways: a significant deterrent ...

The great news is that we can do something about this!



# Catalysing Change Working Party 2025

- Dive into the FABoH results
- Do a SWOT analysis
- Identify partners and possibilities
- Agree to next steps & resourcing
- Produce 'Future-Proofing the Past' strategy
- Interested? Check out History Advocate webpage for :
- Terms of Reference & Expressions of Interest