Researcher Development Programme
Public Engagement Fund

"Public engagement describes the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit."- National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement

The Researcher Development Programme is introducing a pilot scheme to encourage doctoral and early career researchers interested in delivering public engagement activity. The aim of the scheme is to build on the success of recent doctoral and early career researchers in securing public engagement funding and to encourage more researchers to engage with the agenda.

Why should you be involved?

You told us you wanted the opportunity – Feedback from researchers in the 2017 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey expressed the desire for more opportunities to communicate research to diverse audiences. Public engagement projects are a key means of meeting this aim.

Expectations of Research Funders - The UK Research Councils, Wellcome Trust, British Heart Foundation and Cancer Research UK all expect researchers to be encouraged to consider the wider context of their research area, particularly in reference to societal and ethical issues, and the importance of engaging the public with research (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/skills/frameworks/).

A chance to engage with a University wide initiative - In June 2017, the Vice-Chancellor signed up to the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement’s Manifesto and under his leadership, the University has increased its focus on the role it plays in the vibrant mix of communities and cultures it is part of (Sussex in the community).

Funding available
The total fund available is ~£5,000 and eligible researchers are invited to apply for a small grant of up to £750. The Researcher Development Programme expects to fund approximately seven public engagement projects this academic year (i.e. by 31st July 2018). We recognise that the amount is small, but are also committed to working with you to seek other funding streams to turn your vision for public engagement into reality.
**Calls for applications**

Within this pilot year there will be one call for applications in the autumn term, and an additional call in spring if funds are unallocated. The deadline for autumn applications is **Friday 17th November**

**Guidance for applicants**

Applications are invited from doctoral and early career researchers at the University of Sussex for funding to support short-term, well defined public engagement activities. Applicants are encouraged to consider:

- **The purpose of the activity**, is this to:
  
  o *Inform and inspire the public*: These projects will have a dissemination function, inspiring, informing, educating and making your research more accessible. Possible activities might include participation in festivals, interactive talks and shows, films and animations.

  o *Consult and listen to public views*: These projects will involve listening to the public’s views and concerns about your research, and provide an opportunity to gain fresh perspectives and insights into your work. Possible activities might include public debates, online consultations, panels and user-groups.

  o *Collaborate with the public*: Here researchers and the public work together on projects. The public help to define your future research directions, policy or the implementation of your research outcomes. Possible activities might include citizen sciences, co-production of knowledge.

  o *Or some combination of the above!*

- An important part of any public engagement is to think about the people who you want to engage with. Who are the public and how can you ensure you engage with them effectively? To find out more about understanding your **target audience** see: [https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/plan-it/understanding-your-audience](https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/plan-it/understanding-your-audience)

- Applicants are encouraged to consider how you will **evaluate your activity**. Evaluation is an important part of any engagement activity, and most funders require it. Tools to help you are available at: [https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/plan-it/evaluation/evaluation-resources](https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/plan-it/evaluation/evaluation-resources)

- Applicants are encouraged to refer to the **National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement** and draw upon their resources in developing their application. The University has recently signed up to the NCCPE’s Manifesto for Public Engagement.
• **Case studies and stories** demonstrating the impact Sussex research has created may also be of interest, as will the Public Engagement Lens on the Researcher Development Framework which describes how public engagement can contribute to your development as a researcher.

• The total amount available for any activity is £750. If you are successful you will be required to identify an existing school/department budget code to which the funds will be transferred, or to work with your school/department to set up a new code. Funds must be spent by the end of the financial year 31st July 2018.

• A **clear budget** is required in your application and any unspent fund should be returned to the Researcher Development Programme. Funds cannot be used to cover staff time or conference attendance. Projects are expected to deliver value for money, and funds can only be used for items that are required for the activity. Award recipients should make themselves familiar with the University’s supply agreements, particularly for purchasing stationary, and laboratory supplies. Successful applicants will be expected to provide a final statement of expenditure after the event.

• The Researcher Development Programme is happy to help with publicising activities through our relevant communication channels. Award recipients are also encouraged to contact Internal communications to discuss potential support with communication.

**Training and support**
Successful applicants will be required to attend an informal meeting with Dr Katy Petherick (Public Engagement Coordinator, Life Sciences) and Helen Hampson (Researcher Development Officer) to provide you with some support in organising your public engagement activity. Researchers must also include a statement of support from their supervisor or PI with their application. All applicants are encouraged to consider who else might support them and contribute expertise to the delivery of the project.

Helen and Katy are also willing to have informal discussions with researchers in the development of their applications.

**Selection process**
The selection panel will be drawn from members of the Researcher Development Team and others with public engagement expertise and might include:

- Helen Hampson, Researcher Development Officer
- Laura Chapman, Senior Researcher Development Coordinator
- Natalie James or Catherine Pope, Research Staff Officers
- Katy Petherick, Public Engagement Coordinator, Life Sciences

The panel reserves the right to consider the distribution of Public Engagement Fund allocation across the University and to offer partial funding. Applicants may be asked for
further information, or to amend their application. We aim to inform you of the decision within four weeks of the closing date. The decision of the panel is final and there is no appeals procedure.

Terms and conditions
Awards are offered subject to the following terms and conditions:

• That promotional materials for the activities include the words “Supported by the Researcher Development Programme’s Public Engagement Fund”

• That the award recipient submit a short evaluation report within 6 weeks of delivery of the activity which should include a final statement of expenditure. Award recipients will also be invited to an informal lunch to discuss and share learning and potential next steps and will be expected to repeat (a scaled down) version of the activity at the Doctoral School's Festival of Doctoral Research (June 2018).

• Where projects involve collaborating with the public (as per the definition above) award recipients must adhere to University ethics and governance requirements

• That the organisers identify an existing School/department budget code to which the funds will be transferred, or to work with your School/department to set up a new budget code for your activity

• That Researcher Development should be informed of any proposed changes to the budget agreed by the awarding panel in advance of the activity taking place.

• After the activity has taken place, any and all unspent budget allocation reverts back to the Researcher Development Programme to allow reinvestment in future public engagement activities

• The University is committed to providing an environment that advances equality of opportunity. We are all responsible for ensuring that staff, students and visitors to the University of Sussex or involved in our events are treated with fairness, dignity and respect. For more information see the Equality and Diversity webpages.

Other resources

• Involve: http://www.invo.org.uk/

• British Science Association: https://www.britishscienceassociation.org/

• Vitae podcast on public engagement (NB: All researchers have full access to the Vitae website and resources if you register with your Sussex email address)