

Public engagement at the University of Exeter

Public Engagement with Research is a guiding principle of our research culture at the University of Exeter. We actively seek new ways to engage with diverse public communities in order to nurture, support and develop meaningful partnerships to tackle some of the fundamental issues facing humankind. Engaging with public communities is necessary to support the quality of our research and ensure that our research can make a difference locally, nationally and globally.

Public engagement activities enable you to collaborate with, consult and/or inform public communities in your research.

Please note that public engagement does not refer to the recruitment of patients or members of the public as participants in research (research subjects).

Purpose

If you want to develop high quality engagement it is important to think about purpose. What are you hoping to achieve? The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement has identified six main categories of purpose for public engagement:

1. Sharing what we do (inspiring, informing)
2. Responding (to societal needs / requests)
3. Creating knowledge together / Doing research together (collaborating, innovating)
4. Applying knowledge together (collaborating, innovating)
5. Learning from others (consulting)
6. Changing attitudes / behaviour

Audience: who is the public?

Understanding the people you want to engage with is critical if you want to develop high quality engagement work. Think about:

- Who is likely to benefit from impact of your research? (e.g. patients and carers)
- Who is likely to uptake the outputs of your research? (e.g. clinicians, charities)
- Who needs to work with you to design and deliver the engagement?

However, your engagement activities may also want to be aimed at the 'general public', for example if you want to participate in science festivals.

Where to start?

Some questions to kick you off:

- What do you want to achieve from your public engagement?
- Identify your audience – who do you want to engage with?
- What activities are going to work best with that audience?
- What activities are most appropriate for your particular research?
- What will you feel comfortable doing? (It's probably wise to avoid things that will push you too far out of your comfort zone)
- Meetings with patients or carers need to be carefully planned and aims thought through – they are not always easy and don't automatically deliver benefit
- Think ahead about longer term benefits of public engagement to your research, not just seed corn project

Benefits of public engagement

Effective public engagement delivers a wide range of benefits, including:

- ✓ Demonstrating accountability and transparency
- ✓ Fresh perspectives and new insights
- ✓ Research that is responsive to societal needs
- ✓ Important to research funders
- ✓ Strengthening reputation and trust
- ✓ New ways to communicate research

Impact and evaluation

Evaluation is a process of collecting evidence and reflection that will help you understand the dynamics and effect of your public engagement activities, and help inform future projects or approaches. Used correctly, evaluation is a valuable tool that enables you to learn from your experiences and to assess the impact of your work (National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement)

Why should you evaluate your public engagement activities?

- Evidence of impact
- To increase accountability
- To test the effectiveness of the public engagement approach
- To learn from experience and improve practice

Contact details for public engagement queries

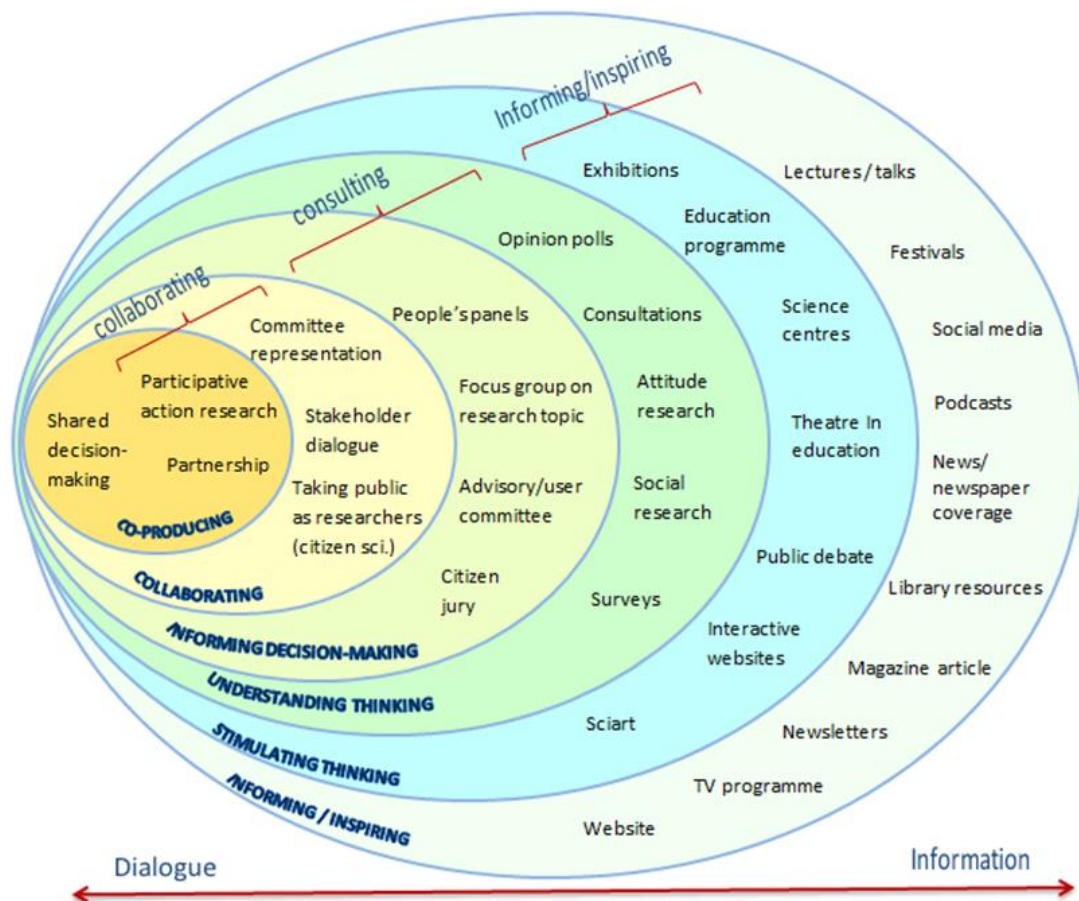
tree@exeter.ac.uk

Developing an evaluation plan can help you think through what you are trying to achieve and ensures you collect relevant data as you go. For more information on evaluation techniques please visit: <https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/do-engagement/evaluating-public-engagement>

Examples

There is a wide variety of different types of engagement activities you may want to consider for your seed corn project. For examples of our group's public engagement case studies please visit our website: <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/tree/publicengagement/casestudies/>

For general examples of public engagement activities, please refer to the public engagement 'onion' image below (Wellcome trust):



Contact details for public engagement queries

tree@exeter.ac.uk

Indicative costs for public engagement activities

Participation costs and expenses

It is best practice to offer patients, carers or members of the public you work with a 'participant payment' to thank them for their time and involvement, and to reimburse travel expenses. Some people will decide not to claim these payments.

Type of payment	Costs	Notes
Participant payment	£25 half day, £50 full day	Half day is up to 4 hours; morning until lunch or afternoon from after lunch
Travel expenses	Varies	We reimburse mileage, bus travel, train travel and taxis. Mileage is reimbursed as 45p per mile for the first 100 miles, then 25p per mile when over 100 mile journey.

Please contact tree@exeter.ac.uk for expense forms.

Venue hire

- Free within University
- External rental fees generally start from £15 per hour (for example Exeter Library)

Refreshments and food

At the University we use Fresh Ideas as the preferred provider. Here are typical costs (per person unless otherwise stated):

Refreshments	
Tea/coffee	£1.75
Biscuits	£0.50 - £1
Devon Scones, Jam and Cream	£1.15 - £1.65
Cookies/ muffins	£1.15 - £1.65
Water bottle large per bottle	£2
Juice 1L cartons	£2
Lunch	
Finger buffet economy	£4.25 - £8.45
Finger buffet gourmet	£4.75 - £8.95
Other	
Economy snack platter (serves 10)	£6.50
Gourmet bar snack platter (serves 10)	£8.50

Video production

We have previously worked with several video producers and animators.

Example breakdown of costs based on previous project to create 3 minute video:

- Development (0.5 day) £175; Pre-production (0.5 day) £175; Production (1 day filming) £350; Post production (4 days) £1400
- Total cost quoted £2100

Contact details for public engagement queries

tree@exeter.ac.uk