[[1]](#footnote-1)Public Engagement as part

of Research Grants:

Pathways to Impact

Public engagement with Research activities can be included and resourced as part of Research Council grant applications.[[2]](#footnote-2)

These engagement activities must be *directly related* to the research within the grant application and must not be generic.

You can include Public Engagement with Research (PER) activity in grant applications via the following mechanisms:

a) The Impact Summary and Pathways to Impact section

b) The Case for Support where public engagement forms part of the research process

c) As a Work Package of a larger grant, such as a programme grant.

In this document you will find guidance on applying for PER through Pathways to Impact:

- [FAQs](#_FAQs)

- [What to include in your Pathways to Impact section](#_What_do_I)

- [Where to get more support within the University](#_Can_I_get)

- [A list of indicative Public Engagement with Research costings](#_Example_Public_Engagement)

- [A ‘Planning Public Engagement with Research’ template](#_Public_Engagement_with)

- [Public Engagement with Research into grants checklist](#_Public_Engagement_with_1)[[3]](#endnote-1)

- [Recommended links for further information](#_Further_Information)

- [Feedback](#_Feedback)

FAQs

**Can Public Engagement with Research be considered as a Pathway to Impact?**

Pathways to Impact is an opportunity for you to consider what you will do to enable your research to connect with others and make a difference.

Public Engagement with Research is a valid and eligible ‘Pathway to Impact’ for which resources can be requested to fund the development, delivery and evaluation of the activities.

 *“Through Pathways to Impact we want to encourage you to explore, from the outset and throughout the life of your project and beyond, who could potentially benefit from your research and what you can do to help make this happen.” Research Councils UK*

**What does impact that arises from public engagement ‘look like’?**

Public Engagement with Research can result in economic, health, environmental, policy, academic, cultural and societal impacts. Direct impacts on the public participating in the engagement, which are all valid routes to research impact, include:

- Increase in knowledge and understanding

- Changes in perceptions or attitudes and values

- Changes in behaviour

- Empowerment

- Enjoyment, inspiration and aspiration

- Gaining new skills

*“Our*[*Pathways to Impact case studies*](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/media/brief/impactcase/)*provide personal accounts from RCUK-funded researchers in regards to their approaches and experiences of Pathways to Impact” Research Councils UK*

**What type of activities qualify as Public Engagement with Research?**

Public Engagement with Research describes the many ways that members of the public can be involved in the design, conduct and communication of research. The kind of activity undertaken will depend on the purpose of the engagement:

• To inform and inspire the public: e.g. festivals; talks and shows; digital engagement.

• To consult and listen to public views: e.g: public debates; panels and focus-groups.

• To collaborate with the public: e.g. citizen science; co-production of knowledge; Patient and Public Involvement.

For more information see [What is Public Engagement with Research](http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/public-engagement/why-engage) on the University’s website.

*“Public engagement can take place at any point: before your research begins to help shape your research question, during the research grant as part of the research process, or at the end of the grant.” Research Councils UK*

**What do I include in the Impact summary?**

The Impact summary (up to 4,000 characters) should cover potential impacts and beneficiaries and answer the following two questions:

*Who* might benefit from this research?

*Why* or *how* might they benefit from this research?

**What do I include in the Pathways to Impact summary?**

The Pathways to Impact section is primarily for detailing the activities which you, your team, partners or consultants *will actually carry out* that will help contribute to potential economic and societal impacts. It should continue on from, but not repeat, the Impact Summary by addressing the following question:

*What will be done* to ensure that potential beneficiaries (in this case – publics) have the opportunity to engage with this research?

# **What do I include in the Pathways to Impact section when applying for funds for public engagement?**

Your Pathways to Impact section (2 sides of A4) should aim to address the following questions:

What is the purpose of your activities? For example, is it to inform and inspire; or consult or collaborate with the public?

Which publics are you aiming to engage? Do not put the ‘general public’ – you need to be more specific than this and aim to include the demographics and location of the target groups. For example: ‘families from East Oxford’; or ‘farmers in Vietnam’.

What activities will take place to engage the public with your research?

Will you work with partners to help facilitate your Public Engagement with Research work? Wherever possible, you should aim to identify and name your partners.

Who is going to undertake the public engagement activities, for example: the PI, other members of the research team with the support of academic support staff or public engagement consultants? Will staff require additional skills and how will they gain these (e.g, consider training requirements). Briefly note your track record in this area and any public engagement support and expertise you plan to draw on.

How will you evaluate and reflect on the activities? Thinking about your public engagement objectives – how can you collect evidence for this to understand if the objectives have been met and impacts realised? Who will conduct the evaluation? It is advisable to do a focused piece of evaluation really well that explores the outcomes and impact of a project rather than an evaluation that tries to collect evidence on ‘everything’ and is spread too thin or one that just reports on the outputs and numbers (although recoding numbers and outputs are also important to collect). Collecting evidence of impact is also important for funders and can be used in other ways such as for REF Impact Case Studies.

You should also include:

The timescale for delivering the activities and note the key milestones.

A brief summary of the resources required to undertake the activities. You must ensure that any costs you are applying for are included in the Resources section in the Je-S form (e.g. ‘Travel & Subsistence; Other Directly Incurred Costs; Other Directly Allocated’ and potentially ‘Research Facilities/ Existing Equipment) and in the Justification of Resources.

You may request any costs that are eligible under fEC, so long as they are specific to the project and justified and not covered by the indirect costs or elsewhere in the proposal.

*“Innovative and creative approaches to engaging beneficiaries and fostering impact are strongly encouraged.” Research Councils UK*

**I can’t predict exactly what the impacts will be - how can I develop a Pathways to Impact plan?**

At the application stage RCUK does not expect applicants to be able to predict the impacts that research will achieve. The aim is to encourage applicants to explore potential pathways to impact to enable your research to connect with others and have plans and resources in place from the outset which allow you to take opportunities when they arise.

**Do Pathways to Impact affect funding decisions?**

Pathways to Impact provide additional information which is taken into account when reviewing and ranking proposals. If there are two equally excellent proposals with respect to research – an excellent Pathways to Impact will likely make the difference within the funding process. RCUK reserve the right to withhold the award of grant until the Pathways to Impact plan is of a standard appropriate for the project.

Furthermore, there are many benefits to Public Engagement with Research and applying via Research Grants is an ideal opportunity to get this activity resourced.

*“Public engagement can provide substantial benefits to the researchers involved in engaging the public, as well as providing a major contribution to society. Engaging the public can also improve the quality of research and its impact, by widening research horizons.” Research Councils UK*

# **Can I get more support for building Public Engagement with Research activities into grants?**

Yes. Public Engagement with Research staff within Research Services, Divisions and GLAM can offer one-to-one surgeries to help shape your public engagement plans. If you would like to set up a meeting please email publicengagement@admin.ox.ac.uk. Thinking about public engagement activities needs to take place as early in the research grant planning process as possible.

# Example Public Engagement with Research Costs

**This is as an indicative guide only for some of the public engagement costs that can be requested. Resource requirements and costs will vary on a project-by-project basis:**

1. **Interactive stall at an event such as a festival or fair: £100 - £1,000\***

Costs may include: purchasing stall space (Directly Incurred); staff time to develop activities (Directly Incurred/ Directly Allocated); consumables (Directly Incurred); travel, accommodation and subsistence (Travel & Subsistence).

\* Large interactive exhibits that also require very high-quality production (such as those for the [Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition](https://royalsociety.org/science-events-and-lectures/2017/summer-science-exhibition/)) can be £10,000+.

1. **Show, talk or panel debate at an event such as a festival: £100 to £2,000**

Costs may include: purchasing programming space; developing ‘demos’; speaker travel, accommodation and subsistence; speaker fees.

1. **Show, talk or panel debate – self-organised: £200 to £2,000**

Costs may include: venue hire; marketing; refreshments; developing ‘demos’; staff time to organise logistics; speaker travel, accommodation and subsistence; speaker fees.

1. **Public Engagement Consultants (freelance): £350 to £750 per day**
2. **Evaluation consultancy (freelance): £350 to £750 per day**
3. **High-quality podcast working with a media company: £1,000**
4. **High-quality 5 minute film or animation working with an external company: £4,000 - £10,000**
5. **Focus groups or public dialogue workshops (approx. 8 to 16 people) with an external company: £2000 - £10,000**

Costs may include: external consultancy or facilitator fees; venue hire; recruitment; refreshments; developing stimulus materials; transcribing, synthesis and analysis of the results; speaker travel and subsistence.

1. **Small, high-quality exhibition at a museum: from £50,000**

Costs may include: development of materials; consumables; copywriting; staff-time.

# Public Engagement with Research Planning Template

|  |
| --- |
| What is the **purpose/ aims** of your Public Engagement with Research activity? **When** will you engage the public in the research cycle? |
| **Who** will you engage with? **Why** do you want to engage with this group/ community? **How** will you find and engage them and **where** will this take place? |
| How will this **benefit them**? |
| Howwill this **benefit you, your team and your research**? |
| What will **successful engagement** look like? How can you **reflect**, **evaluate** and **capture** this? |
| What **resources** will you need to design, deliver and evaluate your activity?  |

# Public Engagement with Research in your grant application: the final checklist

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What to consider: |  |
| Is the purpose or aims of your public engagement explicit? Also state which stage in the research process you are going to engage the public: at the start, middle or the end or throughout the research process? |  |
|  |  |
| Have you clearly defined your target publics - individuals, groups or communities - in terms of demographics and location? Summarise why you have decided on these publics. Note if you or your partners already have an existing relationship with the target groups. |  |
|  |  |
| How are you going to engage your target groups? Make clear the type of activities planned and what you are actually going to do. Have you thought about and summarised why this is the right approach? |  |
|  |  |
| Describe where the engagement will happen. Do you have permission to use these ‘spaces’? |  |
|  |  |
| What will success look like? Describe: a) the benefits to the publics being engaged and impacts that you are aiming for (e.g. increase knowledge; inspiration; empowerment; changes in attitudes or behaviour) and b) how it will benefit you, your team or your research (e.g. new insights; new skills) |  |
|  |  |
| How are you going to evaluate your engagement activities? What evidence do you anticipate being able to collect? How will you reflect on this work? |  |
|  |  |
| Include a timeline and key milestones for your engagement activities. Have you factored in the needs of your publics into this? Have you left yourself enough flexibility to cope with changes? |  |
|  |  |
| Have you stated the resource required to deliver this engagement thoughtfully and on time? Explain who will carry out this work; build in and allocate time from senior staff to be involved; include funds for staff time; consultants; consumables; catering; venue hire; travel and other direct costs. |  |
|  |  |
| What experience do you have in this sort of engagement? If it’s new to you, who is going to help you make sure this is successful?  |  |
|  |  |
| Do you have agreements from any external partners and internal staff that you need to be involved? Have you checked they have capacity to work with you on these timescales? |  |

# Further Information[[4]](#endnote-2)

Research Councils UK [Pathways to Impact](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impacts/).

Research Council guidance for completing the sections on Impact can be found on RCUK’s Je-S system [search for “Pathways to Impact”].

University of Oxford’s [How to Engage](http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/public-engagement/how-engage) webpage.

University of Oxford’s [Support for Engaged Researchers](http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/public-engagement/support-researchers) webpage.

# Feedback

We would very much welcome your feedback on this guidance resource so we can make improvements in the future – do tell us your views: Was it helpful? Is there anything you would like to change? Is there other information that you would find useful? Email: publicengagement@admin.ox.ac.uk

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2.  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *v2* (November 2017): Compiled by Dr Lesley Paterson, Head of Public Engagement with Research, Research Services and the PER Advisory Group [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
4.  [↑](#endnote-ref-2)