



Support for external contributors policy

PCER Conference 2026

Who this policy is for

This policy provides guidance for session leaders and contributors to the Public & Community Engagement Conference 2026 on paying contributors external to Oxford University to take part in preparing for and delivering sessions.

This policy is created by and the responsibility of the Public & Community Engagement with Research team at the University of Oxford (referred to from now on as the 'Conference team').

Support eligibility

For external contributors to be eligible for payment to prepare for and deliver in a session, they must be taking part in the conference outside of their day-to-day, paid role.

External contributors taking part in a session in the capacity of a freelance role or supplier must be paid through University purchasing processes and are not covered by this policy.

Eligible costs

Financial support is offered to contributors for:

- Time for preparation and delivery of their session
- Travel expenses to and from the conference
- Additional expenses incurred in attending e.g. childcare

This policy does not offer financial support for:

- Time spent attending the rest of the conference outside of the session being delivered
- Food and subsistence (lunch and refreshments will be provided at the conference)



Payment rates & processes

All anticipated payments should be submitted to the conference team ahead of time by session leaders in order to plan budgeting. Where you aren't sure of the exact cost of something (e.g. a travel ticket) an estimate will be fine.

A form will be supplied to all Session Leads upon confirmation of their session and must be completed by **Friday 17 April**.

Session preparation and delivery time

This policy follows NIHR guidelines on participant involvement payments. Based on their [guidelines of suggested rates for different types of participation](#), we have identified **£82.50** as the suggested payment for preparation for and participation in delivery of one 50-minute session.

If you feel that this rate is not indicative of your/your external contributors' involvement in a session, please contact the conference team on publicengagement@admin.ox.ac.uk to discuss this.

Payments for time will be paid via the University Initiated Payment process. External contributors should fill in a [PRF form](#) and send this to the session leader and conference team. Payment will be transferred directly to the bank details provided in the form.

Expenses

All expenses claimed must be in line with the [University's expenses policy](#) and must be for activity directly relating to preparing for and delivering a session. Details of common expenses can be found below.

Expenses for external contributors should be claimed using the process and form required for external expenses. Guidance and a link to the form can be found on the [external expenses guidance webpage](#). Payment will be transferred directly to the bank details provided in the form.

Travel

For train travel, all tickets should be booked ahead of time by the University using Key Travel, the University's preferred travel supplier. Session Leads should contact the conference team to arrange this (details at the end of this policy).

Smaller travel expenses e.g. bus tickets and parking may be able to be reimbursed on the day using petty cash. However, this is not guaranteed, and it may be necessary for contributors to submit an expense form for these.



Childcare

Expenses incurred for childcare during the time spent preparing for (e.g. attending meetings with the session team) and delivering the session can be claimed. Receipts must be provided as per the expenses policy and an expense form must be submitted.

Other expenses

It may be that other expenses are incurred in preparing for or delivering a session (e.g. purchasing of essential materials for the session). These should follow the expenses policy and may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If you aren't sure, to avoid risking non-payment of expenses contact the conference team before spending the money to check whether an expense is covered.

Further guidance can be found here: [How to claim expenses: claimants external to the University | Finance Division](#)

Timescales

PRF and expense forms should be filled out after the conference and returned to the conference team by 11 July 2026 (one month after the conference).

For payments for contributors' time made using the University Initiated Payments (PRF form) and expenses claimed using the external expenses claim form, these can take up to 8 weeks to process and for the funds to be received. This is determined by wider University process and is not in the control of the conference team, although we will do what we can to ensure processing from our team happens as quickly as possible.

Tax and benefits

Contributors as individuals are responsible for their own tax affairs and ensuring they are paying the appropriate level of tax.

For contributors receiving welfare benefits, these can be affected by payment for activity such as taking part in this conference. Different types of benefits can have different limits on payments received, and different notification processes must be followed. We strongly recommend that contributors receiving benefits seek advice from relevant places before accepting payment and cannot accept liability for any impact on benefits. NIHR provide [helpful guidance for public participants receiving benefits](#).

Responsibilities

For clarity, in the context of this policy, broad responsibilities of different parties involved are:



| Group | Responsible for... |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| External contributors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking with Session Leads about anticipated payments in line with this policy. • Submitting PRF and expense forms to the conference team by 11 July 2026. |
| Session Leads | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with external contributors about anticipated payments and submitting details to the conference team by Friday 17 April (form will be supplied to all Session Leads upon confirmation of their session). • Supporting external contributors with forms and payment processes as required. |
| Conference team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending PRF and expense forms to local finance teams promptly on receipt. • Contacting local finance teams in the event of any queries, issues or delays to resolve as soon as possible. • Supporting Session Leads and external contributors with form and payment processes as required. |

Payment quick guide

| Cost type | Policies to follow | How to arrange payment |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Contributor payment for time taking part | University-initiated payments Finance Division | Submit PRF form to conference team after the conference. |
| Train travel | Bookings and transport Staff Gateway | Booked via conference team ahead of time. |
| Bus travel | Expenses Policy | Keep bus tickets and submit external expenses form. |
| Child care expenses | Expenses policy | Keep receipts/invoice and submit external expenses form |
| Other expenses | Expenses policy | Speak to conference team before committing to spending. |

Questions?

If you have any questions about this policy or payments please contact Faye Shelbourne in the conference team (publicengagement@admin.ox.ac.uk)