

# Public Engagement with Research Seed Fund Guidance Notes



**Closing Date: midday, Friday 23 October 2020**

## Introduction

1. This Seed Fund is an internal grant scheme to support Public Engagement with Research activities and projects. It is supported by the University's Higher Education & Innovation Fund (HEIF).
2. Applications from those new to or experienced in Public Engagement with Research are welcome.
3. The closing date for applications is midday on the 23 October 2020; decisions will be announced by December 2020 and funding for this scheme must be spent by 30 June 2021.
4. Grants are typically expected to be in the region of £2,000 to £4,000.
5. The Principal Investigator must be a researcher at the University of Oxford. Co-applicants can include other researchers, DPhil students, teaching staff; public engagement officers; museum staff; research facilitators and other professional services staff and external partners.
6. Enquiries are welcome at any time; contact details provided at the end of this document. Applicants may also seek support for developing their projects from the [Divisional public engagement leads](#); some departments also have public engagement professional services staff that will support the development of activities.
7. A University cost centre is needed to host an award. College based activities can occur, but funds must be managed through a Faculty or Department.



## Project proposal

8. Funds can be requested to:

Develop or pilot new Public Engagement with Research projects or;

Improve/ enhance existing Public Engagement with Research activity.

9. *Question 3 on Case for Support:* Your proposal must identify the 'type' of public audiences or public participants that the project aims to engage. You can define your target group by a range of demographic factors. This could include by age, location, gender, socioeconomic status or a particular community. Target groups can also be defined by their interests, attitudes or views.

10. The 'public' is defined as individuals (young people; adults or families), groups or communities who do not currently have a formal relationship with a Higher Education Institution – for example through teaching or research – but who may have general or vested interests in the research.

Projects that aim to target policy makers or engage business and industry are not eligible for this scheme and should apply to the University's [Knowledge Exchange Seed Fund](#).

Projects that aim to reach undergraduate students, or those where the primary purpose is to increase student applications to the University of Oxford are not eligible for this scheme.

Please also note if you consider your target group to be 'hard-to-reach' or underserved.

11. *Question 4 on Case for Support:* Applicants need to identify the key Purpose of the activity:

*To inform and inspire the public:* Researchers informing and inspiring public audiences about their research. Possible techniques include: participation in festivals; interactive talks and shows; films and animations.

*To consult and listen to public views:* To inform researchers on the public's views or concerns about the direction of research, and also an opportunity to hear fresh perspectives and insights. Possible techniques include: public debates; online consultations; panels and user-groups.

*To collaborate with the public:* Whereby researchers and the public work together on projects or help define future research direction, policy or implementation of research outcomes. Possible techniques include: crowd-sourcing; citizen science; co-production of knowledge.

12. *Question 6 on Case for Support:* Applicants need to outline contingencies you will put in place if face-to-face engagement with the public cannot take place due to Covid-19 measures. This can include details of how you would adapt activities to adjust for social

distancing; and any alternative methods of engagement you would implement, should face to face engagement not be possible.

## Reporting requirements

13. Please note that successful Awardees will be required to submit a more detailed evaluation plan for their project at the beginning of the project development phase. Support and guidance will be available, including a PER Seed Fund evaluation workshop for all Awardees.

14. Summary details of the Awards made will be published via internal and external communication channels.

15. Awardees are required to provide a final project report (a template will be provided).

## Application Process

16. Applications are submitted via the University's Internal Research Award Management System (IRAMS).

17. This is a two-part process:

i) Complete the online application form.

ii) Upload the Case for Support in PDF format (using the Word template available in the IRAMS application system; which should be saved to PDF before submitting).

18. The online application form requires a financial breakdown of the project. For each budget line please describe the costs being requested in the corresponding 'Description' field, and if appropriate, a justification.

19. Once you enter the 'Purpose' for three budget lines – more budget lines will become available on the online form.

20. All direct costs required to develop, deliver and evaluate the project are allowed.

21. All funds must be spent by 30 June 2021, so all costs must be attributed to Year 1 only.

22. Applications are automatically submitted to your Department or Faculty. Subject to departmental approval, your application will be reviewed, and the funding recommendations will be made by an internal panel of Oxford researchers and academics, and public engagement professionals (at least one from each academic Division).

23. Applicants are advised to consult with their departmental approver prior to applying to ensure their application will be approved, and once submitted that the application is approved in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary delay.

## Selection criteria

24. The potential to benefit both the public and the researchers or their research.
25. Clear evidence that the purpose of the engagement and target public audience or public participants have been carefully thought through and articulated; and that the chosen way to engage is appropriate to reach the target groups and achieve the objectives.
26. How well the project relates to a specific research project or research area of the researcher(s) involved.
27. The justification for the costs and value for money.
28. The plans for reflection and evaluation of the project.
29. The project's potential legacy which could include one of the following:
  - Potential to continue past the period of funding;
  - To serve as a best practice case study for Public Engagement with Research;
  - Build staff capacity for public engagement with research;
  - Activities for which further funding will be sought (through other funding sources);
  - Potential to contribute to Research Excellence Framework (REF) impact case studies.

## Contact & Further Information

For enquiries, please contact the Public Engagement with Research team:  
[publicengagement@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:publicengagement@admin.ox.ac.uk).

For further information on how to plan high-quality Public Engagement with Research activities; toolkits; guidance; resources and examples of best practice, go to:  
[www.ox.ac.uk/research/public-engagement](http://www.ox.ac.uk/research/public-engagement).

For advice and support on the development of your proposal plans and ideas, please contact your Divisional Public Engagement Lead:

- Humanities Division: [Dr Victoria McGuinness](#) (Head of Cultural Programming and Partnerships)
- Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division: [Dr Michaela Livingstone-Banks](#) (Public Engagement Facilitator)
- Medical Sciences Division: [Brian Mackenwells](#) (Public Engagement Coordinator)
- Social Sciences Division: [Naomi Gibson](#) (Senior Research Impact Facilitator)

