

PLANNING FOR CHANGE

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SELF-ASSESSMENT INTRODUCTION

How well does your institution currently support public engagement? Where are you doing well, and are there areas which you could quickly and efficiently target to make a big difference? We've distilled the work of the beacons and other universities to create a self-assessment tool to help you take stock and plan your own work.

This document has been created using content from the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement <http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support/self-assess>.

The tool has nine focal points:

Clarify your **PURPOSE** for engaging with the public



Mission

Create a shared understanding of the purpose, value, meaning and role of public engagement to staff and students and embed this in your strategy and mission.



Leadership

Support champions across the organisation who embrace public engagement



Communication

Communicate consistent, clear messages to validate, support and celebrate it, and ensure open and two-way communication with members of the public and community organisations.

Invest in **PROCESSES** that support good quality engagement



Support

Co-ordinate the delivery of engagement to maximise efficiency, target support, improve quality, foster innovation, join up thinking and monitor involvement and impact.



Learning

Provide opportunities for learning and reflection and provide support for continuing professional development and training.



Recognition

Recognise and reward staff involvement within recruitment, promotion, workload plans and performance reviews, and celebrate success with awards or prizes.

Focus on how effectively PEOPLE are involved and supported



Staff

Ensure that all staff – in academic and support roles – have opportunities to get involved in informal and formal ways.



Students

Proactively include and involve students in shaping the mission and in the delivery of the strategy, and maximise opportunities for their involvement.



Public

Invest in people, processes and infrastructure to support and nurture the involvement of individuals and organisations external to the HEI.

Using the EDGE tool

We have used these nine focal points to create a self assessment tool, to allow you to assess your institution's progress. We've called it the EDGE tool - as it describes 'Embryonic', 'Developing', 'Gripping' and 'Embedded' approaches to supporting engagement.

MISSION

Without a sense of mission – a shared understanding of the purpose and value of public engagement - it is very difficult to build momentum. By expressing this commitment in your institution’s strategic planning, you can then begin to mobilise the resources and enthusiasm to effect significant cultural and operational change.

There are four key areas that have proved critical to tackling this area:

1

Embedding a commitment to public engagement in your mission

For many institutions, engagement provides a powerful way of framing their civic and intellectual purpose, and their desire to contribute to ‘public good’. Because their commitment to engagement says something so profound about their values and purpose they chose to describe this formally in their mission statement or corporate plan. This provides real momentum.

2

Building a shared understanding of public engagement and its value.

Public engagement is something of a hidden treasure in most institutions: there is far more of it going on that is often realised, and some people will be doing it without even realising it. Opening up the conversation about what engagement means to your institution, what it currently looks like, and how it might be enhanced provides a crucial foundation for further development.

3

Strategic Planning

To capitalise on this potential and to maximise impact and value for money, it helps to develop a strategic plan for engagement. This should articulate why engagement matters, how different parts of the institution can contribute, and how best to ensure it is effectively coordinated and supported across the institution. Clear objectives and performance measures can be set.

4

Alignment with other priorities

It is important that you don’t end up creating an engagement ‘silo’. Engagement is best understood not as an ‘add on’ to existing activity, but as a way of enhancing the quality and impact of the institution’s core activities: research, teaching and learning, student experience and civic responsibility. Ensuring that you articulate this alignment, and the opportunities for all staff and students to contribute, will unlock huge value.

MISSION				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
Embedding mission in	Public engagement is not addressed explicitly in the institutional mission or in departmental / institution-wide strategies.	PE is referenced sporadically within the institutional mission documents and strategies, but is not considered a priority area.	Work is underway to review the institution's commitment to PE, in order to articulate a set of strategic priorities and embed these in the institutional mission and other relevant strategies.	Public engagement is prioritised in the institution's official mission and in other key departmental / institution-wide strategies, with success indicators identified.
Shared understanding of public engagement and its value	The term is used inconsistently and infrequently and very few staff have an understanding or appreciation of what it means or its relevance to their work.	References to public engagement appear in some institutional strategies and plans, but there is no institution-wide definition for public engagement.	Consultation is underway with internal and external stakeholders to share understandings of public engagement and its purpose, and to develop a shared definition.	The institution has consulted widely with internal and external stakeholders to develop a definition for PE and its purpose and value which is used consistently.
Strategic planning	There is no official strategic plan for advancing PE.	Although some short- and long-term goals for PE have been defined, these have not been formalized into an official strategic plan that will guide their implementation.	Work is underway to develop an official strategic plan for PE	The institution has developed an official strategic plan for advancing PE, which includes viable short-term and long-term goals. A senior individual / team has formal responsibility for monitoring progress.
Alignment with other priorities	Public engagement rarely features as a component within wider institutional initiatives	Public engagement occasionally features within wider institutional initiatives, but in a relatively piecemeal way	Processes are being developed to ensure that PE is routinely considered during strategic planning	Public engagement is routinely considered during strategic planning and institution-wide developments.

LEADERSHIP

Articulating your institution's official commitment to public engagement in strategic and operational plans is important, as we have explored in the [mission](#) section. Yet, it is equally important to foster a network of leaders who can act as formal and informal advocates for engagement, to help encourage and bring that strategic commitment to life.

These champions need to be at every level, from inside and outside of the institution, and across the different functions, not just academic staff but support staff too.

To build a critical mass of such leaders and champions we need to encourage the values, attitudes and behaviours which create a supportive culture for public engagement; ensuring that it becomes a natural and visible part of everyday work, conversations and decision-making across the institution.

The experiences of the beacons and others suggest that the following four areas deserve careful attention:

Senior leadership

1

Commitment 'from the top' sends a powerful message to the whole institution that engagement matters. Having the VC/ principal leading as a champion brings obvious benefits, and having a senior manager with formal responsibility for monitoring progress against your strategy helps too. Equally important is encouraging all senior managers to have a clear view of how engagement contributes to their wider responsibilities and aspirations, so that they build consideration of engagement into their day-to-day work and decision-making and can justify supporting it.

Engagement champions

2

Staff and students are as influenced by their colleagues as they are by the institution's senior leaders, so it is important to support engagement champions at every level of the institution. For example, offering secondments or small bursaries and awards can help individuals develop their confidence and expertise. Actively supporting and encouraging networking across and beyond the institution is also important, to build 'grass roots' support and distributed leadership. Simple resources e.g. social media can be used to support networking in addition to face to face meetings.

Departmental / faculty leadership

3

A key learning from the Beacon initiative is that heads of departments and faculties face a particularly difficult set of challenges when it comes to supporting engagement. There will often be both 'high level' and 'grass roots' support for engagement in an institution – but department heads can feel 'caught in the middle', left with the very difficult job of balancing a host of competing demands relating to staff workloads, performance and income. As a consequence, support for engagement can begin to breakdown at a departmental level. Supporting departmental leaders by appointing associate heads

or associate deans for engagement can turn a challenge into an opportunity to provide support at School or Faculty level.



Public leadership

It is possible to become so focused on internal leadership challenges that you risk neglecting the critical role of the public and wider community, and the value of external expertise. There are a number of practical ways in which you can actively involve people from outside the institution to help catalyse innovation, to shape, guide and evaluate your public engagement, and to act as critical friends, leaders and champions for your work. At the Manchester Beacon, public stakeholders were involved in setting objectives for the programme, commissioning, co-designing and co-delivering pilot projects.

LEADERSHIP				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
Senior leadership	Few (if any) of the most influential leaders in the institution serve as champions for public engagement.	Some of the institution's senior team act as informal champions for public engagement.	Some of the institutions senior team act as formal champions for public engagement.	The VC / Principal acts as a champion for public engagement; a senior leader takes formal responsibility; other senior leaders informally champion PE. All senior leaders have an understanding of the importance and value of public engagement to the institution's agenda.
Engagement Champions	Although some individuals chose to act informally as champions or ambassadors for public engagement, they receive no institutional support.	An informal public engagement champions network is beginning to emerge, enabling them to share approaches and offer some support to each other's work.	A critical mass of champions has emerged. The institution recognises the value of this network and the need to provide some formal support for it. Engagement champions are recognised from within, across and outside the institution.	Formal support for PE champions is provided by the institution, with regular opportunities to network with others across the institution and nationally.
Departmental / Faculty leadership	There is very limited or no informal support from departmental leaders for PE activity by their staff.	Informal support for PE activity is offered by a small but significant number of departmental or faculty leaders. Some department leaders struggle to support staff in this area.	A number of departments / faculties formally support PE activity by their staff, e.g. through recognising it in appraisal processes, and workload planning.	The majority of departments / faculties are committed at the highest level to actively supporting PE activity by their staff. All heads of department recognise the importance and value of public engagement, and are seeking ways to support it effectively.
Public involvement	There are very limited or no opportunities for the public or community partners to assume leadership roles within the institution (e.g. serving on advisory groups, providing feedback, collaborating on research).	There are some opportunities for the public or community partners to assume leadership roles within the institution, but there is no co-ordinated or planned approach to involving people from outside the institution.	There are a significant number of opportunities for the public or community partners to assume leadership roles within the institution, and attempts are being made to co-ordinate external involvement and to provide structured support.	Appropriate public / community representatives are formally welcomed and encouraged to serve in leadership and ambassadorial roles. External expertise is evidently valued. There is support for community capacity building, and a widespread commitment to seeking mutually beneficial outcomes through engagement.

COMMUNICATION

A third key element in building a strong sense of institutional purpose is to ensure that public engagement features prominently and consistently in internal and external communications. It is important to communicate widely to encourage and share effective practice and to celebrate success, within the institution and with the wider world.

The following three areas are well worth tackling:



Internal communications promote and celebrate PE

Featuring public engagement regularly in internal communications sends a very strong message to staff and students about its importance.



Research is undertaken into public perceptions and needs

Understanding your different audiences and stakeholders means that your communications and your engagement activities can be much better targeted and 'tuned' to meet their interests, expectations and needs. Universities are increasingly using research to help inform their activities.



Marketing and communications reflect commitment to engagement

It is important that your commitment to public engagement is also communicated externally, through your website, marketing materials and press activity.

COMMUNICATION				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
Internal communications promote and celebrate PE	The institution's commitment to public engagement is rarely if ever featured in internal communications.	Public engagement occasionally features in internal communications.	Public engagement frequently features in internal communications, but rarely as a high profile item or with an emphasis on its strategic importance.	Public engagement appears prominently and consistently in the institution's internal communications; its strategic importance is highlighted, and resources and strategic support have been allocated to sustain this activity.
Research undertaken into public perceptions and needs	The institution has not begun to analyse or research its different public stakeholders, or their attitudes, aspirations and expectations of them.	The institution has a limited understanding of its different public audiences and stakeholders and their attitudes, aspirations and needs.	The institution is investing in research and intelligence gathering to deepen its insights into its different public audiences and stakeholders and their aspirations and needs.	The institution has built an in depth understanding of its different public audiences and stakeholders and their aspirations and needs, and uses this intelligence actively to inform its communications, planning and evaluation of engagement.
Marketing and communications reflect commitment to engagement	Public engagement does not appear in the institution's marketing materials (e.g., website, promotional brochures, etc). Few if any efforts are made to disseminate the results of activities.	Public engagement appears periodically in the institution's marketing materials. Results of PE activities are occasionally disseminated but on an ad hoc basis.	Public engagement appears frequently in the institution's marketing materials, including the website, brochures, press releases. Key networks and forums are kept updated on PE activity.	Public engagement appears prominently and consistently in the institution's marketing materials and communications activity. There are extensive efforts to share results of public engagement activities through diverse networks. Strategic support has been allocated to support this activity.

SUPPORT

Although public engagement often happens spontaneously, and is driven by the interests and commitment of individual staff and students, there are important ways in which institutional support and co-ordination can enhance quality, improve efficiency and support innovation. The experiences of the Beacons for Public Engagement and other public engagement practitioners suggest that the following areas are critical to supporting high quality, effective public engagement.

Investment in expert support

1

The goal is to not to have public engagement specialists running PE programmes on behalf of the university but instead to support all staff and students to embrace PE in their work. However investing in a small amount of specialist expertise and allocating formal responsibility to the delivery of some key functions can deliver efficiencies and increase the impact of your public engagement. These PE specialists often play a major role in co-ordinating networks and supporting collaboration with external partners.

Effective networks and co-ordination

2

Most universities have a large amount of public engagement activity happening in an organic way. Some co-ordination and active support for networking can help to ensure that the quality of that work is enhanced and expertise is shared. A flexible and collaborative approach to co-ordination creates ownership of engagement across the organisation and economies of scale, minimises duplication and supports innovative new ideas.

Providing opportunities for staff and students to get involved

3

One of the key barriers to researchers, support staff and students getting involved in public engagement is a perceived lack of opportunities to get started. Support and co-ordination can help ensure that there is a range of entry points, for instance through linking staff to external organisations who would like expert input to their activities, or through running an institution-wide programme of events and other engagement opportunities. Ongoing training and development opportunities allow people to continually improve the quality of their public engagement.

Evaluation and evidence gathering

4

Evaluation helps improve the quality, impact and value for money of your institution's public engagement. It can also demonstrate to funders and other stakeholders the impact of the activity being undertaken, and help to ensure that expertise and learning is networked across your institution.



Brokerage and partnership working

Public engagement relies on partnership and collaboration with a range of external organisations, many of whom are likely to find it difficult to approach the institution and to find the right people to work with. Working with external partners can also open up new sources of funding and lead to greater research impact. University research offices and public engagement or knowledge exchange specialists can help to broker such relationships by facilitating interaction between the university and the wider community.

SUPPORT				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
Investment in expert support	There are no staff members with responsibility for supporting and embedding PE on the campus. There may be individuals in a few departments with PE roles.	There are some staff who are tasked with supporting and embedding PE; however their appointments are temporary / not core funded and PE is only one of their responsibilities.	Staff are employed in the institution with explicit responsibility for supporting and embedding PE. Some appointments are permanent but most are temporary / not core funded	The institution core funds staff members with expertise in public engagement, who take responsibility for supporting and embedding PE across the organisation.
Effective networks and co-ordination	There is no attempt to co-ordinate public engagement activity or to network learning and expertise across the institution.	There are some informal attempts being made to co-ordinate engagement activities, but there is no strategic plan for this work. Some self-forming networks exist, not supported by the institution.	Oversight and co-ordination of PE has been formally allocated (e.g. to a working group or committee) but there is minimal support and resource to invest in activity. There are some subject or career-level specific networks of engaged staff.	The institution has a strategic plan to focus its co-ordination, a body (or bodies) with formal responsibility for oversight of this plan, and resources available to assist the implementation and embedding of PE. There are a number of recognised and supported networks.
Opportunities for staff and students	There are few if any opportunities for staff to get involved in public engagement. Staff find their own external opportunities.	Several departments provide some opportunities for staff and student involvement, but there is no systematic support. Central brokerage may provide some details of external opportunities.	The majority of departments have made some provision to facilitate opportunities for staff and students to get involved in public engagement activities	The institution actively facilitates and communicates opportunities to get involved, and provides practical support measures (e.g. brokerage; bursaries; fellowships; secondments). It also invests in institution-wide programmes that provide first steps.
Evaluation of activity	There is no organized, institution-wide effort underway to evaluate the quantity and quality of public engagement activities taking place, nor any recognition of the value of formative evaluation.	A few departments attempt to evaluate the number and quality of public engagement activities. There are no efforts across the institution. Evaluation is focussed on monitoring.	A systematic effort to evaluate the number and quality of public engagement activities has been initiated. Summative evaluation is common.	An ongoing, systematic effort is in place to evaluate the number and quality of public engagement activities that are taking place throughout the institution. Evaluation feedback is being used to inform future activity and strategy. Formative evaluation is an expected part of engagement activities.
Brokerage and partnership working	There is little or no attempt made to facilitate public access to information, advice or expertise within the institution. There is little or no support for staff outreach e.g. access to training, writing grant proposals for outreach projects.	Some basic 'signposting' is in place – e.g. web pages – to describe the institution's public engagement offer and facilitate contacts. There is some support for staff outreach.	Effective 'signposting' is in place, and there are some attempts being made to broker partnerships with external organisations. The organisation has active 'front doors' which will respond to new requests from	The institution has invested in signposting to facilitate contact with the community, provides some dedicated brokerage and is taking a strategic approach to partnership development. It is involved in long-term partnerships with local community neighbours.

			outside. Staff are supported to initiate their own outreach projects.	
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LEARNING

Public engagement can bring great rewards – both for the university and for the public its staff and students engage with. But this mutual benefit can't be taken for granted: it relies on real skill and expertise. Many staff and students recognise that they need help to develop these skills and aptitudes, and an institution that wants to support them effectively needs to take account of this.

The experiences of the beacons and others suggest that the following four areas are vital to supporting high quality, effective public engagement, providing support both for informal learning and for more formal professional development.

Supporting informal development

1

Learning informally from colleagues and sharing public engagement experience is very valuable. Actively bringing together people from across your institution with an interest in public engagement, and helping them to access and share relevant information can build a sense of community and lead to new partnerships and collaborations that significantly improve the quality of public engagement activities. The goal is to support all staff and students to embrace PE in their work – investing in a small amount of specialist expertise and allocating formal responsibility to the delivery of some key functions can deliver efficiencies and increase the impact of your public engagement.

Building formal support into CPD programmes

2

Participating in public engagement develops skills relevant to a career in research. The transferable skills and aptitudes required for effective public engagement makes it likely that there are already many relevant courses in your institution, although there may be some gaps. Integrating high quality public engagement training as part of your institution's professional development programmes will benefit individual researchers and the institution as a whole.

Providing opportunities for learning

3

Training courses can be useful but people also need to engage with the public and reflect on their experience to truly gain expertise. Participating in local festivals and museum events, established public engagement projects or Fellowship schemes provide some routes to learning about public engagement in practice.



Investing in infrastructure

Underpinning the opportunities with infrastructure is also important: for instance, individuals with expertise and defined responsibilities for the strategy; central web-pages listing opportunities; systems for staff to set and track their own goals and link these to the institution's appraisal process etc – all these can make a big difference.

LEARNING				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
Support for informal development	Few, if any, informal mechanisms exist to share information about PE. There is resistance to sharing best practice and groups feel in competition with each other. There is little or no attempt to involve individuals from outside organisations.	Informal mechanisms exist sporadically to share information about PE. People are keen to share experience and learn from each other. There are some opportunities to involve individuals from outside organisations.	Informal mechanisms exist to share information about PE. Regular events are organised. People are keen to share experience and learn from each other. Individuals from outside organisations are involved. More experienced colleagues act as informal PE Mentors.	Informal mechanisms exist to share information about PE. Regular events aimed at different levels are organised by dedicated staff. People are keen to share experience and honest about failures. Individuals from outside organisations are actively involved and there is a PE Mentor scheme (or similar) in place.
Building formal support into CPD programmes	The institution has no clear definition of PE or the skills required to do it. There is little or no opportunity for professional development in PE. There is little or no support for PE training providers.	The institution has defined public engagement, but not the skills or attributes to do it. There are some informal opportunities for professional development. There is some support for PE training providers.	The institution has clear definitions of both PE and the skills or attributes required to do it. The institution provides some strategic support for professional development to individuals with a PE element to their role. There is some support for research groups to develop a public engagement strategy. PE training providers are encouraged to share course evaluations.	The institution has clear definitions of both PE and the skills or attributes required to do it. Individuals are supported to take a strategic and reflective approach to their professional development in PE. This could link to the appraisal system. Research groups are supported to develop a public engagement strategy which draws on different people's strengths, skills and interests. Training is evaluated and is of high quality. The institution supports a network of PE training providers.
Opportunities for learning	There are limited opportunities to try public engagement.	There are some opportunities to get involved in public engagement.	Training courses also provide opportunities to get involved in public engagement.	Training and development is linked to skills and opportunities to apply those skills. A reflective approach is encouraged and supported.
Infrastructure to support learning	The co-ordination of public engagement training and development activities in the institution is not included in any job descriptions. There is limited	Several staff roles include a remit to co-ordinate public engagement activities in the institution. There are some opportunities to create online resources and mailing lists.	Posts which include a remit to co-ordinate public engagement activities are dispersed throughout the institution. There is significant investment in	Posts which include a remit to co-ordinate public engagement activities are dispersed throughout the institution. Regular meetings support a 'joined-up' rather than

	<p>opportunity to create online resources or strategic support for professional development in PE.</p>	<p>There is some infrastructure in place to support professional development in PE.</p>	<p>infrastructure to support professional development in PE. Information about professional development opportunities is linked to skills.</p>	<p>‘top-down’ approach to co-ordination. There is significant investment in infrastructure to support professional development in PE which is evaluated for effectiveness. Information about professional development opportunities is linked to skills.</p>
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RECOGNITION

Reward and recognition is a key way in which you can demonstrate to staff and students that your institution genuinely values public engagement. In many HEIs staff and students feel they get little or no recognition for the work they do around public engagement, evidenced for instance in the Royal Society's 2006 report '[Factors affecting science communication by scientists and engineers](#)'. If people feel that their career prospects are not improved (or are even sometimes jeopardised) by engaging with the public then many of them will choose not to. Small steps can make a big difference in terms of encouraging engagement enthusiasts and convincing novices to give public engagement a try.

There are a variety of ways in which institutions can recognise the public engagement activity of their staff and students. Here are some you might try:

1

Make public engagement part of appraisal and performance reviews

Your university could review its appraisal processes and develop a policy to ensure public engagement is recognised in relevant role reviews.

2

Include public engagement in relevant job descriptions

Your institution could conduct a systematic review of its role profiles and integrate public engagement into relevant roles.

3

Include public engagement in promotions criteria

Public engagement could be an explicit part of the promotions criteria at your institution, and recognised as a legitimate career pathway.

4

Celebrate public engagement

Your university could celebrate public engagement with high profile awards; formal and informal recognition could be offered at school, department or research group level.



Encourage and incentivise public engagement activity

You could encourage public engagement activity by offering incentives. These could be as simple as small bursaries. More profound change can be effected by ensuring that public engagement is a legitimate activity in workload planning.

RECOGNITION				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
PE is featured in appraisal / performance review	PE does not feature formally in university appraisal processes; there is no central policy for this.	Some departments feature PE as part of performance review; there is no central policy for this.	Many departments feature PE as part of performance review; but there is no central policy for this.	The university has reviewed its appraisal process, and developed a policy to ensure recognition for PE is built into its performance review processes
PE is included in relevant job descriptions	PE does not feature in job descriptions	PE features occasionally in job descriptions.	PE features consistently in some types of job descriptions but not others.	The university has conducted a systematic review of its role profiles, and integrated PE into relevant roles. There is a good understanding from managers of the competencies required for engagement
PE is included in promotions criteria	PE does not feature in promotions criteria.	Some departments recognise PE as a legitimate activity in considering promotion, but on a case by case basis.	Some departments recognise PE as a legitimate activity in considering promotion, and do so on a formal, systematic basis.	There is a university wide policy to recognise PE within relevant promotions criteria
PE activity is celebrated through awards and prizes, and recognised informally	No prizes or awards are offered for engagement activity. There is little or no informal recognition offered to staff for their engagement activity.	Some awards / prizes are offered at a departmental level, but these are not high profile	Some awards / prizes are offered at an institutional and departmental level but these are not high profile. Some departments offer informal recognition to their staff for their engagement activity.	PE activity is celebrated with high profile awards, and through a range of informal mechanisms, such as internal communications.
PE activity is encouraged and incentivised and reflected in workload planning	Few or no incentives are offered for engagement activity, and there is little encouragement for staff or students to get involved	Some departments offer incentives (eg conference fees; sabbaticals, mini-grants) on an informal basis	Some departments offer incentives (eg conference fees; sabbaticals, mini-grants) on a formal basis, and acknowledge PE within workload planning	Most departments offer incentives to support staff and student involvement. PE is a legitimate activity in workload planning for relevant roles.

STAFF

Elsewhere in 'Planning for Change' we've identified a host of ways in which staff can be supported in and recognised for their public engagement activity. This section provides a 'lens' for you to review how effectively all of that activity adds up from the point of view of the people who could potentially be involved. It is important to consider the following areas:



Awareness and participation

How many of your staff can articulate the value of public engagement, and understand how it can be integrated into their core work?



Staff opportunities

Do all staff have the opportunity to get involved in public engagement, and do they perceive the organisation to be supportive of their efforts?



Involvement of support staff

Administrative and support staff have a tremendous contribution to make. Do they understand and support public engagement and actively contribute to making it a visible and important part of the institution's work?

STAFF				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
Awareness and participation	Few staff know what public engagement is or understand how it can be integrated into teaching, research, or other priorities. Very few are actively involved in any way.	A minority of staff know what PE is and can articulate how it can be integrated into teaching, research, and/or other priorities. A small number are actively involved, but do not perceive the organisation to be supportive of their efforts	Many staff in most departments know what PE is and can articulate how it can be integrated into teaching, research, and/or other priorities. The institution is actively working to increase the support and recognition for staff involvement in engagement.	Most staff know what PE is and can articulate how it can be integrated into teaching, research and/or other priorities. The majority of staff support the embedding of public engagement into the institution's mission and into their own work, where relevant; many staff participate in public engagement, and feel that the organisation is supportive of their efforts .
Staff opportunities	Few if any opportunities exist for staff to get involved in public engagement, either informally or as part of their formal duties	There are opportunities for staff in a handful of faculties or departments to get involved in PE, either informally or as part of their formal duties.	There are structured opportunities for many staff members to get involved in PE; but not in all faculties or departments. There is a drive to expand opportunities to all.	All staff have the opportunity to get involved in public engagement, either informally or as part of their formal duties, and are encouraged and supported to do so. Staff are encouraged to act as champions for embedding public engagement in their departments or throughout the institution.
Involvement of support staff	Staff in support roles, and their managers, have little or no understanding of public engagement, and take little or no responsibility for its delivery	A few of the support staff and their managers have a clear understanding of public engagement, but they do little to make PE a visible and important part of the institution's' work	Support staff and their managers have a clear understanding of public engagement, but the majority do little to make PE a visible and important part of the institution's' work	The managers of the institution's' support roles, and their teams, understand and support public engagement , and the majority actively contribute to making PE a visible and important part of the institution's work

STUDENTS

Students offer a huge potential resource of time, talent and enthusiasm to deliver quality engagement between universities and the public, in particular through their voluntary contributions to their communities. They also bring an intelligence and sensibility to thinking about the purpose and value of engagement, which can be unlocked by actively involving students in developing your public engagement strategy and in its delivery.

Through a whole host of routes, such as student volunteering and community-based learning, students can experience public engagement as an integral part of their university experience: in the process developing their own skills and confidence, and making a significant contribution to the institution's wider engagement efforts.

The experiences of the **v**inspired students project and the **b**eacons for public engagement have helped focus attention on how best to involve students, and to develop appropriate support:

1

Build a shared sense of purpose

It is important to build a shared understanding of the meaning, value and role of student engagement. Involving key stakeholders – students, staff and community partners – will help to explore and then articulate the purposes and benefits that student engagement serves.

2

Provide an efficient and 'joined up' support infrastructure

Research from the **v**inspired students project suggests that support for student engagement is often piecemeal and fragmented across institutions, with little secure funding. A review of current provision can consider how best to ensure that it is 'joined up' and delivers maximum value for the investment being made.

3

Encourage leadership and advocacy

A senior champion for student engagement, who can communicate clear and consistent messages of its value and take responsibility, is critical to ensure effective support and development of the service. The role of student leaders should be considered, and support provided for an active network of ambassadors across the institution.



Recognise learning and celebrate achievement

A key way that institutions can demonstrate their commitment to student engagement is through celebrating and formally recognising students' engagement activity. Our research shows that students have a more positive experience of engagement if they are supported by their universities through providing opportunities for reflection, and a range of ways that learning through engagement can be captured formally and informally.



Communicate a clear and effective offer

Students will be more likely to get involved if there is a clearly articulated 'offer' that articulates why engagement is valued as part of their experience at university, and how they can expect to access opportunities to engage with the public. A similar offer to community partners should clarify how they can expect to work with the institution and student body.

STUDENTS				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping (examples)	Embedding
A shared sense of purpose	There is no institution-wide understanding of student engagement, or the internal and external drivers for supporting it.	Student engagement occasionally features within larger institutional initiatives, but in a relatively piecemeal way.	You've brought key stakeholders together. You've clarified your objectives. You've begun to develop a strategic plan.	You have involved key stakeholders – students, staff and community partners – to explore and then articulate the purposes and benefits that student engagement serves.
An efficient and 'joined up' support infrastructure	There is no identified or dedicated support for student involvement in PE.	There is some identified support for student involvement in PE, which has some (limited) understanding of good practice in this area.	Intelligence gathered about the different activities. A way of monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the infrastructure (eg a senior leader / committee). Investment to plug any gaps.	You have reviewed the current provision for student engagement across your institution, and considered how best to ensure that it is 'joined up' and delivers maximum value for the investment being made.
Leadership and advocacy	Few, if any, opportunities exist for students to take on leadership roles in advancing public engagement in their departments or throughout the institution.	Although some individuals choose to act informally as champions or ambassadors for student engagement, they receive no institutional support.	A senior champion. Student champions.	You have identified champions for student engagement and support an active network of ambassadors across the institution.
Recognise learning and celebrate achievement	The institution has neither formal nor informal mechanisms (eg prizes) that encourage students to participate in public engagement or reward students for their participation.	While the institution offers some informal incentives and rewards (eg publicity, prizes) that encourage students to participate in PE and/or reward them, the institution offers few or no formal incentives and rewards.	Formal and informal incentives, eg prizes, publicity awards etc. Explored potential to integrate within teaching and learning strategies. Offer informal routes to capture and demonstrate learning.	You have addressed how best to provide recognition for students, and you provide support for students to reflect on and capture their learning through engagement.
A clear and effective offer	There is no co-ordinated approach to informing students about opportunities that are available to engage with the public.	While there are some mechanisms for informing students about public engagement opportunities that are available to them, it is not clear how these are connected to wider initiatives (eg student experience, employability).	Mechanisms to inform students about opportunities. A published 'pledge' that articulates how the university supports engagement.	There is a clearly articulated 'offer' to students that articulates why engagement is valued as part of their experience at your institution, and how they can expect to access opportunities to engage with the public.

PUBLIC

It is important that you take steps to review the impact that your engagement activity is having on the public, that you put in place mechanisms to facilitate their involvement, and that you seek their feedback on your activity.

The following are useful focal points for considering the impact and involvement of the public:

1

Awareness

How aware are the individuals and organisations that have contact with your institution of your goals for public engagement, or of the opportunities on offer?

2

Access

How carefully have you considered the accessibility of your institution and its engagement activities to a wide range of potential participants? Are you reaching out beyond the 'usual suspects', and involving community members in assessing the range of needs and interests you could connect with?

3

Infrastructure

What investment have you made in infrastructure to support access and involvement – for instance, through your website, enquiry handling, the accessibility of your buildings and campus, and brokerage such as a helpline or helpdesk?

4

Feedback

In what ways do you seek feedback from your public on aspects of your engagement activity, and how do you use this feedback or evaluation to inform your planning and strategy development?

PUBLIC				
Focus	Embryonic	Developing	Gripping	Embedding
Awareness	Few if any of the individuals or organisations who have contact with the university are aware of the institution's goals for their public engagement activity or the opportunities on offer	Some sporadic efforts are being made to communicate to the public the institution's goals for their public engagement activity and the opportunities on offer	The institution is reviewing the impact of its communications and is checking the public's awareness of the institution's goals for their public engagement activity and the opportunities on offer. There is a commitment to improvement in this area.	Individuals or organisations who have contact with the university are systematically told about the institution's goals for their public engagement activity and the full range of opportunities on offer; there is widespread awareness and appreciation of the activity
Access	Little or no attempt has been made to assess community need, or to support 'non traditional' groups in engaging with the university	Some attempts are being made to support 'non traditional' groups; to analyse need; to begin to tackle access issues	The institution has assessed need and committed resources to supporting a wide range of groups to access its facilities	The institution has assessed need and committed resources to supporting a wide range of groups to access its facilities. These activities are informed and influenced by members of the public and external groups.
Infrastructure	No investment in infrastructure has been made to support access and involvement (e.g. helpline; helpdesk; enquiry handling process)	There are some attempts being made to support access and involvement in some departments (e.g. enquiry handling process and a central point of contact)	The institution is reviewing its current infrastructure to support access and involvement and is actively involving community representatives in the process to better understand their needs	Significant investment in infrastructure has been made across the institution to support access and involvement (e.g. helpline; helpdesk; enquiry handling process)
Feedback	There is little or no attempt to gather feedback from the public on any aspects of engagement activity and for it to inform future developments	Some attempts are made to gather feedback from the public on the institution's engagement activity but little is done to ensure it informs future developments	Some attempts are made to gather feedback from the public on the institution's engagement activity and to ensure it informs future developments	The institution invests in systematic evaluation of its engagement activity and uses the evidence to inform planning and strategy development. It feeds back the results of the evaluation to the public