

TARGET AUDIENCE: DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Once you have identified your audience groups, it's useful to take the time to understand them. If it is a particular group of individuals then consider their interests and lifestyles. If you want to work with specific professional groups, consider the nature of the organisations they work for, the priorities of those organisations and how they work. It's always worth asking yourself some challenging questions like why might they be interested in taking part in your public engagement activity? Whomever you choose to work with, here are some useful tips to consider:

- Build a profile of your target group. Make a list of what they do, what they read, what they listen to, where they go, how they like to find out about events. You may have to make some assumptions but be wary of stereotyping
- If you are just getting started, work with an audience you feel you already know something about. Build on your own knowledge and further develop the profile of the group by asking relevant questions
- Identify an audience champion. A partner from an organisation or venue associated with your target audience who could help develop the event and provide valuable insights, knowledge and contacts. Remember this relationship needs to be a mutually beneficial opportunity to learn together and develop an effective activity
- Seek advice from the equality and diversity staff or various network groups within your institution, e.g. disability group or Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group. Ideally, involve members of your targeted audience in your planning, as they will bring new perspectives and help ensure you develop an effective project
- Ask yourself challenging questions upfront. For example, why might your audience want to engage with you? What are their motivations and needs? How could you work with them to ensure that the activity you plan is useful and engaging for them?
- Think about the audiences' different learning styles. Make sure you include different types of activity to suit different preferences.
- Consider any barriers and what you can do to ensure that they don't stop your target audience coming to your event. These can include:
 - Transport (availability and costs)
 - Disposable income
 - Timing of the activity
 - Interest
 - Lack of trust in you and your organisation
 - Perceived relevance of your research
 - Accessibility and mobility (physical and cultural)
 - Language (do you need to involve an interpreter?)
 - Awareness of the event
 - Childcare
 - Diet and food (ensure that you provide refreshments that are appropriate for your audience)