Community Research Partnerships Learning Programme Scoping

Final report

December 2022

Purpose

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) are seeking to build capacity for a more collaborative, open and equitable research innovation system.

A consortium led by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) and the Young Foundation working alongside the University of Brighton; Trust for Developing Communities; Staffordshire University; the Get Talking network; and the British Science Association (BSA), have together undertaken a research and co-design process to the explore the following question:

'What role could a professional development offer play in building capacity for more embedded, effective and equitable involvement of communities in Research & Innovation?'

This summary report sets out our collective findings and recommendations to help inform existing and future work to build the capacity and capabilities for a range of actors involved in Community Research Partnerships (CRP).

You can find a summary of all abbreviations used in this report in Appendix 1.

Contents

Executive summary

Summary headlines and recommendations

Audience needs and barriers
- There is a need for learning support for those involved in community research partnerships (CRPs) including researchers, brokers, and community members.
- The biggest barrier to engaging with learning in all three potential participant groups was the time and resource needed, although some referenced a lack of knowledge about what was available.
- All groups referenced the different types of roles and responsibilities within each sector, and the context specific nature of community research projects
- Community organisations referenced the need to base any learning support on a real project, ensuring that there was value realised for the community alongside individuals developing new skills.
- Community members wanted to share their knowledge and experience, as well as learn from others
- Brokers recognised that in supporting the development of community research partnerships, they often didn't have direct experience to draw on.
- Researchers were keen to have opportunities to meet with community organisations in a more exploratory way.

Key principles for a learning programme
- The overall programme needs to be co-produced, co-managed and co-delivered.
- Any learning intervention would need to be underpinned by a set of key principles that:
  - valued the mutual benefit of participating
  - addressed power differentials
  - put equity and inclusion at the heart of the work
  - was based on real projects, with tangible outcomes for communities and researchers
  - funded people to participate fully in whatever was offered.
- A learning intervention needs to be locally informed, and nationally relevant, and where possible embedded in existing provision.
- There should be support for people new to CRPs and those who had been working in CRPs for many years, with a concern that focusing only on those with experience created additional barriers to participation.
- Any learning intervention would need to have clear narratives associated with it, including the purpose of the intervention and how it fitted into other investments in this area.

Summary headlines and recommendations

The co-design process led to a learning infrastructure comprising 4 related parts:

A Hub, learning resource library: an online resource for those working on CRPs to consolidate, inspire, and connect

A supported learning programme: a rolling programme of online events relating to all aspects of developing and running a CRP. This could work alongside existing investments or should be supported by the Matchmaking and funding component below.

Coaching and mentoring: partnership coaching, to support newly established partnerships, or to help existing ones, and peer-to-peer mentoring for those who want to refine their practices. Supported through a 'partnership gym' resource for coaches and mentors on the Hub.

These interventions can be linked to existing programmes of activity:

- **The Hub:** underpins all other interventions
- **Supported learning programme:** Accessed as part of the support offered for other learning interventions and through mentoring. Direct link to 'matchmaking' support, to build ongoing local and national networks.
- **Coaching and mentoring:** Can provide impactful follow-up support from structured learning programme.

Matchmaking and network building: an opportunity to learn more about potential partners through matchmaking events, and funding

Where the learning infrastructure is not supporting an existing programme of activity, the matchmaking element becomes an essential part of the offer – enabling people to develop nascent partnerships and get support to work together. Without this the learning activity will not have practical application, and be less valuable.

The interventions should be piloted through linking to existing investment programmes, to test out the assumptions, and ensure the approach fits with the needs of participants. The process elicited a set of tensions that need to be borne in mind when implementing one or more of the recommendations, including that a learning intervention is only one of the necessary contributions needed to strengthen CRPs.

Other key considerations and the wider context for this project

The project also revealed some wider issues that will impact on what might happen next. These fall outside the immediate scope of the work but are important to surface, as they should be taken into account in taking forward the practical recommendations outlined above.

Wider considerations

1. **Strengthen the narrative on community research partnerships, and invest in learning**

There's a need for a compelling and easy to understand narrative about what work UK funders of Research and Innovation (R&I) are currently doing around community research partnerships, and how this can influence related broader agendas in the R&I system. A community learning initiative alone won't achieve the wider systemic changes needed to embed support and help CRPs in the research and innovation sector to thrive.

2. **Start small, test and learn**

The co-creation led to an ambitious programme of activity, all of which aimed to build capability in CRPs. However, it is important that these ideas are developed in partnership with the potential beneficiaries of the approach. Therefore it is important to pilot aspects of the programme to ensure that they work effectively for potential participants.

3. **Funders should work together to embed and expand learning infrastructures**

A learning infrastructure would provides a mechanism to support any individuals involved in CRPs. Therefore there is an opportunity for funders to work together to explore if and how the learning infrastructure could work for them, to enable support for CRPs they are investing in. This would enable changes to be made to the approach to better meet the needs of the range of potential participants, and would be likely to achieve much greater system change than an approach funded by a single funder acting alone.

*Find out more in section 3 of the report*

Context and scope of this project

Strategic and operational context

The primary focus of this work was to explore the potential for evidence-informed professional development for community and university leaders seeking to develop and enhance their work to engage with research and innovation.

We adopted a co-design approach grounded in the existing knowledge base, and the experiences of people who were potential participants in learning programmes aimed at supporting community research partnerships. This work was undertaken in two distinct phases. The first sought to understand and set out the context for future investment and interventions; and the second to co-design potential approaches with key potential participant groups. The approach followed an adapted double diamond design method over a six-month period and is detailed below.

Overview of the approach

Phase 1
Phase 2

Research   Insight

Co-design   Consolidate
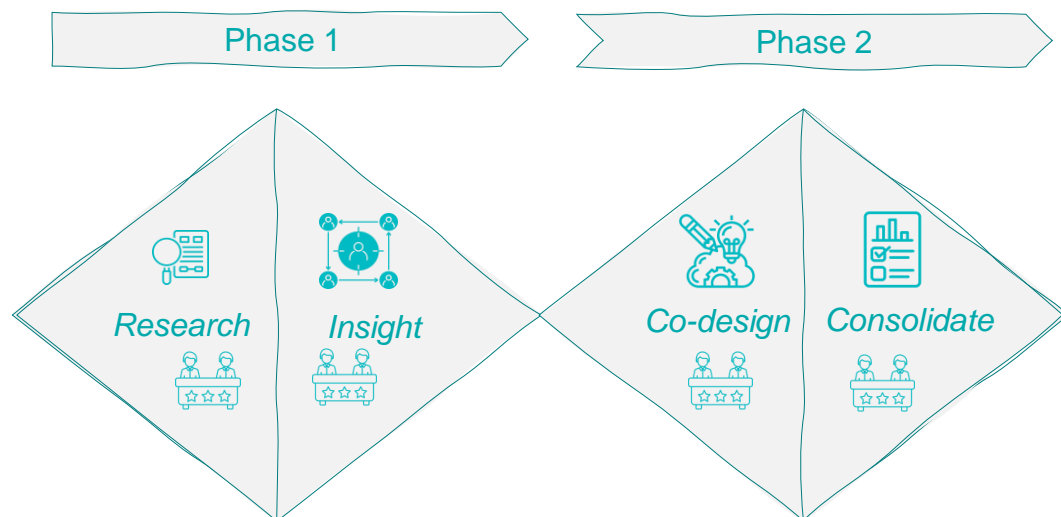
The key elements of the work

A rapid evidence review, to gather and analyse existing knowledge in this area

Interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders to capture insights, experiences, and early ideas

A programme committee of engagement professional development experts, to help interpret the data and develop a set of options

A co-design process to create potential intervention options

Partnership work across the consortium and UKRI to consolidate the options and recommendations

Who was involved

This work involved over 80 individuals from a range of perspectives:
- 33% community organisations/ community researchers
- 32% brokers
- 29% researchers
- 5% funders

Community organisations

Brokers

Researchers

Funders

Methodology

At the heart of this project was the **project consortium**, brought together as they represented the three main participant groups of interest to UKRI, namely researchers with experience of CRP; community organisations with experience of CRP, and brokers. The consortia co-designed the original bid; met together for workshops to inform all aspects of the research design; and were central to the co-design process. The final consortium workshop was an opportunity to co-write the report, ensuring the views of all who had been involved were reflected appropriately.

A rapid evidence review, to gather and analyse existing knowledge in this area. This desk research explored: existing support for CRPs in the community and Higher Education (HE) sector; principles for training and professional development; current understandings of the needs and interests of potential participant groups. Additional resources were contributed to the desk research through crowd sourcing from consortia members, programme committee, and interviewees.

Interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders to capture insights, experiences, and early ideas. These semi-structured interviews/ focus groups were undertaken by a researcher and a community member and sought to address key questions raised by UKRI in the brief. 15 interviews were held, each 1 hour long, and 4 focus groups of 2 hours were held. Themes were drawn out deductively from this data, and key resources highlighted.

Programme committee, which met three times to review the overall design of the project; initial findings from phase 1, and findings from phase 2. The programme committee provided challenge and support, offering alternative perspectives, and linking the consortia to key reports and people. Members had expertise and experience of CRPs, professional development, and community engagement from different audience perspectives. Members of the consortium also took part in these meetings.

A **co-design process** to create potential intervention options. This involved people with experience and expertise in each of the three potential participant groups, identified in phase 1. Each workshop followed a similar format, with delegates being invited to choose ideal menu options for a learning support programme, and then to develop them together. Participants in the workshops were invited to join a final sensemaking workshop, where developing personas for potential participants in a learning support programme enabled further road testing of the ideas, to refine and improve them.

Part 1:
Headline learning and insights from phase 1

Current learning landscape

Existing opportunities

The proposed intervention traverses several sectors and domains, each with their own training and development provision, and factors that affect supply and demand. Our research explored the needs, restrictions and current activities relevant to community research partnerships.

Existing schemes provide opportunities for communities, brokers and researchers to develop skills and expertise in community research partnerships. In Appendix 2 we have provided a summary table outlining some relevant schemes and their scope. These programmes covered topics such as community leadership, community research, and community engagement. They varied in format (e.g. peer support, conferences, training, programmes). Few specifically focussed on community research partnerships, and many are not currently available.

Our review uncovered:
- There were an increasing number of opportunities for development in 'advanced' skills in public engagement with research for researchers.
- Examples tended to focus on leadership development, which may or may not include a focus on building capacity for community development. Content could be framed as building 'advanced practice' rather than leadership per se.
- For stakeholders outside of the university sector, there were few leadership development programmes that are specifically focused on engagement with research and innovation. Those that did exist tended to be offered by the Higher Education (HE) sector.
- There were some specific programmes focused on brokers, focused on change agency, leadership and support for researchers in Public and Community Engagement (P&CE)
- Schemes rarely provided primary evidence of the needs analysis undertaken for the groups targeted, and there was limited evaluation of the impacts on programme participants. Where there was evaluation, it tended to be immediate assessments of whether the programme had met the need and goals of participants, rather than longer term evaluation on behaviour change, improved practice or institutional changes.

Current learning landscape: Case Studies

Knowledge for Change (K4C)

Organiser: UNESCO Chairs in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education
Date started: 2018
Participants: practitioners; community-based researchers; community groups; academics
Aim: developing research capacities for the co-creation of knowledge

K4C creates local training hubs to develop research capacities for the co-creation of knowledge. The hubs bring **practitioners, community-based researchers, community groups and academics together for collective action**. Each local hub is made up of a higher education institution and a civil society organisation. Local hubs access the K4C 21-week Mentor Training Programme, which is based on online learning activities, a two-week face-to-face learning residency, and a field study component that mentors carry out locally under the guidance of a local supervisor. After completing the programme, the certified mentors play a key role in the development of the local hub, including the creation of training and supporting research capacities in the local/regional hubs. There are currently 23 hubs in 14 countries, including the UK.

Community Leaders

Organiser: British Science Association
Date started: 2018
Participants: community organisations
Aim: upskilling and supporting participants to develop long-term science engagement projects and help facilitate collaboration between their community groups and the science communication sector.

The British Science Association (BSA) runs a Community Leaders programme. Each year, 12 individuals are recruited from the BSA Community Engagement Network, and who have previously received a British Science Week, British Science Festival or other Community Grant.

The individuals become science ambassadors in their regions of the UK. Through the Community Leaders programme, participants are upskilled and supported to develop long-term science engagement projects and help facilitate collaboration between their community groups and the science communication sector. The programme is supported by funding from UKRI.

Current learning landscape: Case Studies (contd.)

The Future Leaders Fellow Development Network

Organiser: UKRI
Date started: 2020
Participants: research and innovation staff
Aim: leadership and career development

The Future Leaders Fellows Development Network is a UK-wide programme providing leadership and career development opportunities to Future Leaders Fellows (FLFs) and UKRI-nominated Early Career Researchers. The Network brings over 500 participants together, forming cohorts by year group, region, discipline, interest and career.

Several strands of activity support their development as leaders within their teams, institutions and sectors through the delivery of training, networking and expanding their understanding of the wider research environment, including impact and engagement. The first 3 cohorts began in 2020, and cohorts 4 – 6 ran from 2022.

The NCCPE Engage Academy

Organiser: National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement
Date started: 2015
Participants: engagement professionals and change-makers across higher education, research, knowledge, charity, health and public sector organisations
Aim: developing engagement professionals to act as change agents in their organisations.

The NCCPE Engage Academy is an annual 7-month development programme. It provides engagement professionals with the opportunity to network amongst peers, explore common challenges, build skills and strategies to enhance their approach, and develop as change agents within their institutions. The Engage Academy supports people whose role involves supporting others to engage. Participants come from across higher education, research, knowledge, charity, health and public sector organisations and are at every stage of their engagement career. The programme components include in-person events, online workshops and webinars, peer learning groups and 1:1 mentor support.

The Clore Fellowship

Organiser: Clore Leadership
Date started: 2003
Participants: cultural sector leaders
Aim: cultural sector leadership development

The Clore Fellowship programme is for leaders in the cultural sector. Each year around 20 Fellowships are awarded to exceptional leaders from a range of areas of the cultural sector including the visual and performing arts, museums, libraries, archives and heritage, film and digital media, cultural policy and practice.

The Fellowship has a loose framework, but it is individually tailored, adaptive and self-guided. It includes 2 residential courses, 3 days of skills-based workshops, a Climate Assembly, a 360° leadership profile, a secondment, a development budget, a bursary, support from a mentor or coach, a provocation piece, a collaborative enquiry project and an opportunity to apply for a supervised research project funded through the Arts and Humanities Research Council, following completion of the Fellowship. Whilst the programme doesn't cover public engagement with research, there are opportunities to develop relevant engagement leadership skills including social justice, cultural engagement, and stakeholder work.

What is therefore needed?

Perceptions of current provision

From our discussions with potential participants, the following themes emerged about their understanding of current provision:

- The main barriers to participating in learning were: being time poor (with little time for training and learning); the costs associated with taking part (including opportunity costs / costs to cover the time to engage); and a lack of awareness of opportunities available.
- For researchers, professional development tended to occur within their different disciplines, and senior academics could have significant agency in defining what it means to be professional (and the associated development) in their context.
- For the community participants, there was very little generic support available. It was noted several national providers have reduced the training provision they offer, and there has been a reduction in infrastructure (e.g. conferences and networks). Local networks were often key to advertising opportunities, although national charitable networks, local authorities and CVS (community voluntary services) were also referenced.
- Brokers referenced the NCCPE's Engage Academy, PEP Network and Engage conference as key opportunities for professional development. They recognised the value of opportunities to train alongside communities and researchers.

Implications for a future learning offer

The following themes emerged as important in the development of any learning offer.

Supply and demand
- There is significant interest in a learning support programme, and learning support was frequently cited as being valuable to individuals but not valued by employers, resulting in individuals not having the time and capacity to engage in learning.
- Whilst community members, researchers, and brokers value learning together, there was also a desire to have some sessions specifically for each group.
- Any future offer should build on what already exists (i.e. rather than develop a stand-alone programme, embed content in existing programmes).

A mechanism for change
- There is an opportunity for a learning support programme to be an agent for change, both for individuals within their contexts, and to influence how CRPs can be supported in the future by organisations and funders. It is therefore important to put culture change at the heart of the programme and its development approach.

What is therefore needed?

Format and focus
- There should be clarity on the overall purpose of the programme, including its desired impacts on the community, researchers and research system.
- Learning support and programmes need to focus on real rather than theoretical projects with tangible outputs and outcomes.
- Learning support would need to be both intellectually engaging and confront the practical complexity of partnership work.
- Flexibility and choice is crucial to meet the needs of different people involved in CRPs, utilising different modes of teaching and learning.
- Any programme should provide sufficient time, support, and resources to enable participants to master new content and integrate this into their practice.
- Peer to peer learning was favoured by those we spoke to, offering opportunities to recognise the expertise and insight potential participants bring to a programme.

Important considerations
- Language is important. Use language carefully and test it with potential participants (e.g. don't use the term 'professional development programme').
- Embed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the design and delivery of the programme.
- Reward and recognition of individuals involved in the programme is important for participants.

Further quotes from participants in this scoping process can be found in Appendix 5.

"Clarity of language, because universities have got this way of using the very technical sometimes Latin names of things just to make themselves look big and important and then people don't understand."
Community member

"I like the potential for sharing learning and best practice, and really understanding need.
Community member

"Time is really challenging but so implicit in all of this [to] enable people to be able to participate meaningfully"
Researcher

Potential participant groups for a learning programme

There is clearly no 'one-size fits all' approach to providing learning support, and the offer will need to recognise the breadth and depth of expertise and experience that exists within Community Research Partnerships (CRPs).

During phase 1 we identified six main groups as potential participants in a learning programme. The groups were people who were interested in, or had experience of, CRPs. Whilst each group represents a broad category of people, all of whom will need different things from a learning programme, we have focused on the common needs expressed by these groups. These needs reflect some of the challenges that affect community research partnerships which are explored further in Appendix 3.

Community Research Partnership participants' identified learning needs

Community: New to community research partnerships

Community: currently involved in a community research partnership

Broker: new to this role

Broker: experienced in engagement practices

Early career researcher interested in developing a community research partnership

Established researcher who has worked in community research partnerships

Understanding how universities work.
Finding a researcher.
How to ensure benefits to community organisation.
Recognising your value.

Sustaining, innovating and developing partnerships.
Managing power dynamics.
Developing research capability.
Ensuring outcomes benefit community.

Finding potential partners.
Understanding how to support community research partnerships.
Help to convince colleagues to support this work.

Ethics of partnership working including sustaining/ending.
Support a wider diversity of people to participate.
Tackle systemic issues.

Find a community organisation.
Find out how to develop a partnership.
Get support to do this work well.

Sustain partnerships beyond research funding.
Tackle systemic issues that impede partnerships.
Deal with ethical challenges.

What do potential participants need?

It would be helpful to have a better understanding of the communities working locally and whether they would like to partner with the university, and if so what for.
Researcher

Should be local, to see better impacts in communities, but needs to be linked nationally to celebrate and share what is going well, and lessons you have learnt from the messiness of working together.
Community member

I think feeling uncomfortable is really important […] because it tells us that we're being challenged in ways that we're not used to, and we need to explore why we feel that […] Having that support structure in place to encourage that reflection is important.
Public engagement professional

You quite quickly learn that it is quite difficult and time consuming to design engagement activities and anything that gives people who wouldn't traditionally be used to working with people outside of academia a chance to fail in a safe environment would be useful.
Researcher

Community: New to community research partnerships

Community: currently involved in a community research partnership

Broker: new to this role

Broker: experienced in engagement practices

Early career researcher interested in developing a community research partnership

Established researcher who has worked in community research partnerships

Often unless a project fits with what a researcher is looking to do, there just isn't the time and capacity to establish a partnership. But how can the community influence what the research topic is, rather than it coming the other way round?
Community member

Nothing replaces spending time with a community and building that trust and relationship, but people need help doing that.
Public engagement professional

Could we go back to basics:
Are you listening?
Are you hearing?
Are you changing your perspectives?
Researcher

Would like to have had more on ethics and agreements. Measuring, monitoring and evidencing.
Public engagement professional

Universities shouldn't be precious about owning it. If community groups can lead - let them.
Community member

**Part 2:
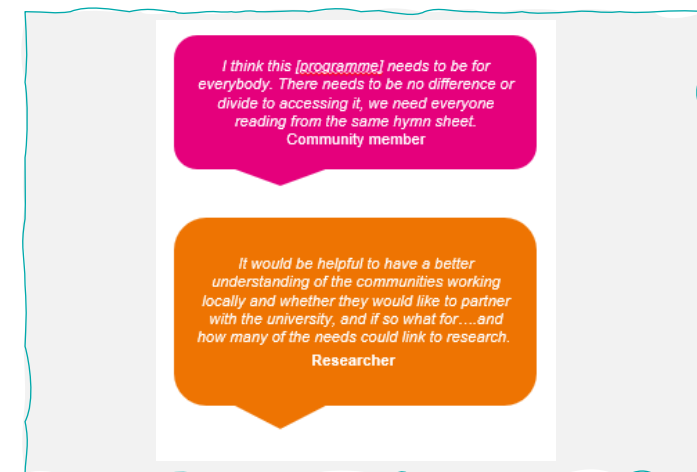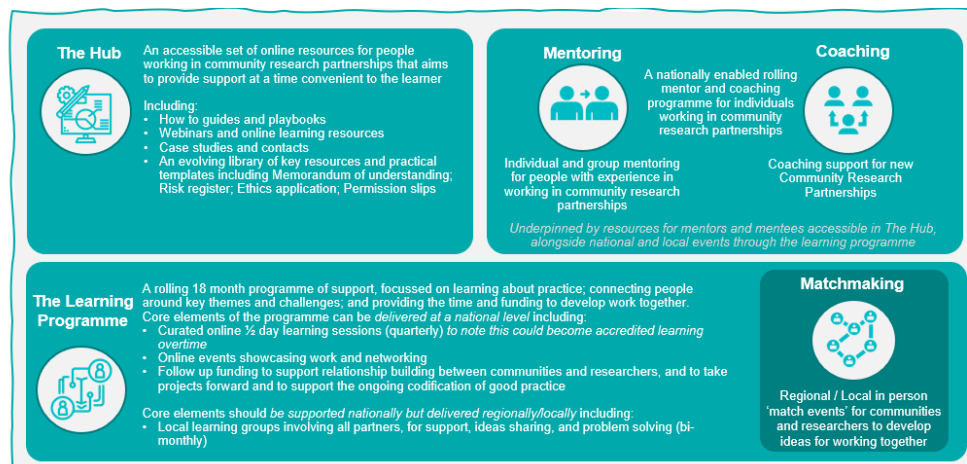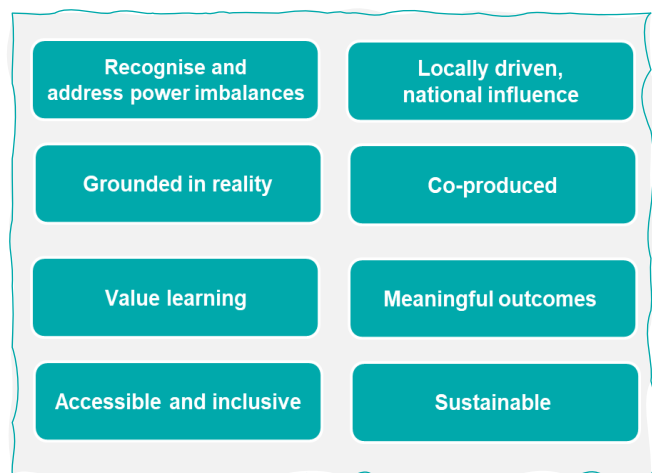Overview of a learning support offer for Community Research Partnerships**

Introducing the co-produced learning support initiatives

Building on the early research and insight gathering, the consortium embarked on a rapid co-design process to identify and shape potential solutions to meet the identified learning needs of Community Research Partnerships (CRPs).

The next section sets out the outcome of this proposed process and includes:

1. A set of **Core Principles** to shape the development of the CRP learning infrastructure and practical support offer at a national and local level.

2. A suite of diverse and **interconnected learning support interventions** to cater for the range of learning needs of individuals involved CRPs.

3. An initial set of **wider reflections** that have surfaced through the work to enhance the likelihood of any future developments and investments to achieve their potential.

Core Principles:
- Recognise and address power imbalances
- Locally driven, national influence
- Grounded in reality
- Co-produced
- Value learning
- Meaningful outcomes
- Accessible and inclusive
- Sustainable

The Hub — An accessible set of online resources for people working in community research partnerships that aims to provide support at a time convenient to the learner
Including:
- How to guides and playbooks
- Webinars and online learning resources
- Case studies and contacts
- An evolving library of key resources and practical templates including Memorandum of understanding; Risk register; Ethics application; Permission slips

Mentoring — A nationally enabled rolling mentor and coaching programme for individuals working in community research partnerships
Individual and group mentoring for people with experience in working in community research partnerships

Coaching — Coaching support for new Community Research Partnerships

Underpinned by resources for mentors and mentees accessible in The Hub, alongside national and local events through the learning programme

The Learning Programme — A rolling 18 month programme of support, focussed on learning about practice; connecting people around key themes and challenges; and providing the time and funding to develop work together.
Core elements of the programme can be *delivered at a national level* including:
- Curated online ½ day learning sessions (quarterly) *to note this could become accredited learning overtime*
- Online events showcasing work and networking
- Follow up funding to support relationship building between communities and researchers, and to take projects forward and to support the ongoing codification of good practice

Core elements should *be supported nationally but delivered regionally/locally* including:
- Local learning groups involving all partners, for support, ideas sharing, and problem solving (bi-monthly)

Matchmaking — Regional / Local in person 'match events' for communities and researchers to develop ideas for working together

I think this [programme] needs to be for everybody. There needs to be no difference or divide to accessing it, we need everyone reading from the same hymn sheet.
Community member

It would be helpful to have a better understanding of the communities working locally and whether they would like to partner with the university, and if so what for....and how many of the needs could link to research.
Researcher

Limitations and caveats
The rapid design process was only intended to explore the potential of a learning programme and did not intend to define a set of definitive and fully worked up and costed solutions. As result we have not undertaken a detailed implementation planning and costing exercise. But to support further progress we have included a high-level indication of scale of investment required (high-medium-low) to illustrate the potential complexity of the associated set-up and delivery. Further work is recommended on detailed planning and costing of solutions and recommendations.

Principles for a CRP learning programme

A set of Core Principles for how a learning programme is delivered is as important as the content. There principles were developed through the co-design process and have been included below, with additional prompts about how these principles might be applied in creating a Community Research Partnerships infrastructure at a national and local level.

Recognise and address power imbalances	Value learning	Locally driven, national influence	Meaningful outcomes
Recognise what claims for representation can and cannot be made by the people involved	Ensure there is time to identify and reflect on learning (and on ways people learn), both together and individually	Recognise the specific communities involved, their context and objectives for partnering	Encourage participants to define outcomes important for them
Actively involve people whose voices are often ignored	Take responsibility to learn from each other, and share that learning with wider audiences	Build on the assets in communities and adopt effective community development principles	Leave communities stronger than at the start of participation in the programme
Ensure fair payment practices	Make the time commitment and benefits clear for all involved	Connect initiatives nationally for learning and sharing	Provide high quality research insight
Agree on what counts as mutual respect			Enable leadership at all levels

Grounded in reality	Accessible and inclusive	Co-produced	Sustainable
Ensure the programme is embedded in everyday work and communities	Discuss areas of difference in constructive ways	Ensure overarching programme is co-produced, co-managed and co-delivered	Consider sustainability from the outset
Enable participants to bring their experiences, and value them	Design curriculum around participants' expertise & needs	Ensure participant ownership over their learning including how they learn, the format and delivery of the programme, and co-development of good practice principles	Ensure plans for longer-term legacy for example by securing investment from participating universities
Contribute to measurable improvements in health, wellbeing, and other issues that matter to communities	Provide a range of access points, and review learning materials for accessibility and inclusion		
Ensure the programme recognises the different contexts, experiences, roles of participants.	Recognise fees and expenses as a barrier to participation		

A Learning infrastructure for Community Research Partnerships

Four types of learning support interventions emerged which complement and strengthen each other, creating an overall learning package adaptable to meet different needs of individuals, and to reflect the context in which CRPs operate. These are: The Hub, access to resources and tools; The Learning Programme; Matchmaking to help people make the right connections in an intentional way; and tailored support through Coaching and Mentoring. An overview is provided below, and further details of potential participants and their needs can be found in Appendix 4.

The Hub

An accessible set of online resources for people working in community research partnerships that aims to provide support at a time convenient to the learner

Including:
- How to guides and playbooks
- Webinars and online learning resources
- Case studies and contacts
- An evolving library of key resources and practical templates including Memorandums of Understanding; Risk registers; Ethics applications; Ways to distribute funding fairly

Mentoring

Coaching

A nationally enabled rolling mentor and coaching programme for individuals working in community research partnerships

Individual / group mentoring for people with experience of working in Community Research Partnerships

Coaching support for new Community Research Partnerships

Underpinned by resources for mentors and mentees accessible in The Hub, alongside national and local events through the learning programme

The Learning Programme

A rolling 18 month programme of support, focussed on learning about practice; connecting people around key themes and challenges; and providing the time and funding to develop work together.
Core elements of the programme *delivered at a national level* include:
- Curated online ½ day learning sessions (quarterly)
- Online events showcasing work and networking
- Follow up funding to support relationship building between communities and researchers, project funding, and to support the ongoing codification of good practice

Core elements *supported nationally but delivered regionally/locally* include:
- Local learning groups involving all partners, for support, ideas sharing, & problem solving (bi-monthly)
- Resourcing of local infrastructure support to promote CRP learning

Matchmaking

Regional / Local in person 'match events' for communities and researchers to develop ideas for working together

The Hub for Community Research Partnerships

Overview of the idea	What is the aim/ learning objectives?	Who is this for?
An accessible set of online resources to support participants taking part in other aspects of the learning interventions. In particular this will be a tool for mentors and coaches to draw on.	1. Support capacity building interventions with relevant, accessible resources. 2. Provide mentors with robust resources to support their mentees. 3. Share examples of high-quality practice and problem solving to inform future partnership working.	1. People who are new to, or working in, CRPs. 2. Participants taking part in one of the other learning interventions. 3. Mentors involved in the mentoring/coaching interventions.

Core content:

- A 'How to' guide to getting started, including why universities and communities might want to work together.
- Short webinars on key challenges and how to navigate them, e.g.:
  - How to access funding; ways to share and distribute funding.
  - Understanding and managing power dynamics.
  - The practicalities of working in partnership.
  - Creative research methods; ethical research.
  - Understanding the research process.
- Case studies of practice and lessons learnt, including a database of contacts to find out more information.
- A method for peer-peer networking and reflecting on the resources.
- A method for continuous feedback on the resources available.
- Templates of key documents to help (including Memorandums of Understanding; Risk registers; Ethics applications; Permission slips.)

Design and implementation considerations:

Accessibility considerations:
- Simple, accessible language, short written resources, with audio options.
- Variety of media e.g. short films; animations.
- Piloting/testing needed to determine a fully accessible online platform and how users will find/access it.

Moderation and intellectual property:
- Time must be built in for co-creation of the resources.
- Ownership of resources must be transparent, with clear copyright/Intellectual Property (IP) guidance.
- Some moderation of resources needed in order to: respond to feedback, so resources can evolve to meet participant needs; keep resources updated and relevant; maintain a quality bar for submitted resources, e.g. case studies.

Accessed as part of the support offered for other learning interventions and through mentoring.

Links to other intervention options: The Hub would be a tool that underpins all of the other interventions.

Indicative scale of investment required: High investment for a moderated hub. Low investment for a non-moderated, online area accessed only by mentors.

Structured learning support programme

Overview of the idea

A rolling 18 month programme of support, focussed on learning about practice; connecting people around key themes and challenges; and providing the time and funding to develop work together

What is the aim/ learning objectives?

1. Provides the space for inspiration, and building confidence and capability
2. Enables people to get started in more informed and intentional ways
3. Provides the connection and initial network building

Who is this for?

1. Communities and researchers (importance of mutuality)
2. Brokers (Public Engagement Professionals)
3. Those at the beginning, who want to develop introductory understanding and skills in CRPs

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Core content:

Core elements of the programme *delivered at a national level and could build into an accredited learning programme* include:
- Curated online ½ day learning sessions (quarterly)
- Online events showcasing work and networking
- Funding to support the ongoing partnership work of participants

Core elements should *be supported nationally but delivered regionally/locally* include:
- Local learning groups involving all partners, for support, ideas sharing, and problem solving (e.g. every 6-8 weeks)
- Resourcing of local infrastructure support to promote CRP learning

How it could work
- Linked to specific funding interventions where CRPs are cultivated
- Modules integrated into existing learning provision for communities and researchers
- National resources, used and tailored by individual organisations supporting local development of CRPs (e.g. community organisations, universities)

Design and implementation considerations:
- Integrated into UKRI (and other funded) Community Research Programmes initially, with potential to make 'open access' over time (following initial pilots)
- The Core Principles guide design and delivery at a national and local level to provide a level of consistency in approach
- Delivered locally through local trusted contacts/ organisations
- Accessible and jargon-free content, with lots of hands-on support throughout
- Alumni/ ambassador approach to delivering some content
- Online option for matching
- Seed funding to buy out time for both communities and researchers, and capture the learning creatively
- Funded/ selection process is inevitable, and important to attach to funding upfront
- Potential for real world impact is high if designed and delivered well (combining learning about practice, alongside learning through practice)

Links to other intervention options: Accessed as part of the support offered for other learning interventions and through mentoring. Direct link to 'matchmaking' support, to build ongoing local and national networks. The Hub would provide ongoing resources as the learning and work of individuals mature through practical work.

Indicative scale of investment required: The level of curation and support needed at both a national and local level would be initially high.

Matchmaking and network building

Local match events for communities and researchers to meet and develop ideas for working together, supported by funding.

1. Create mutually beneficial connections between researchers, community organisations and brokers
2. Build capacity through partnership development

1. Community organisations
2. Researchers
3. Brokers
4. Those with no experience, and those with some experience

Core content:

Local match events - face to face/ online: Events where communities and researchers can come together to meet one another, and generate partnership ideas (e.g. NCCPE Match methodology)

Funding for partnership development: Funds of up to £1000 per partnership, to pay for partnership development including: community and academic time; travel; meetings; desk research. Funding to be held by either partner and aimed at partnership development. No outputs required, other than a short description of if and how the partnership developed.
Funding specifically to explore potential partnership, not for partnership delivery. Support to seek project funding to work together if desired.

Local learning groups: Partnerships put into groups of up to 10 people, who meet on a bimonthly basis to problem solve and share. Supported by a facilitator from the programme team.

Design and implementation considerations:

This option needs an element of pre-work with participants for it to be effective e.g.:
- Understanding the benefits of working together
- Underlying partnership working principles
- Building initial relationships between researchers and communities
- Contracting processes

Incorporating an alumni or ambassador programme could build this approach as previous participants could bring this foundational knowledge to the groups.
Marketing this approach would be done through local trusted contacts/ organisations and involving them appropriately throughout.

Links to other intervention options: Would act as access point to the support offered in the other options. For example, participants who make Matches could ask to be allocated a mentor to support their work, and with the mentor they would use The Hub.

We anticipate the learning infrastructure to be able to be 'plugged into' any funded CRP programmes, where the resources would support individuals and partnerships involved in the funded programme. The match making element is most important if no other funded programme of activity exists, providing the opportunity to develop real partnerships.

Indicative scale of investment required: Very intensive support needed long-term. Managing at local level also needs support.

Partnership coaching

Overview of the idea

Coaching for new and developing partnerships providing targeted, contextual support to help partnerships start and develop well; explore tensions; and build effective ways of working.

What is the aim/ learning objectives?

1. To provide support to new CRPs to enable them to build foundations for effective working relationships
2. To build capacity for CRPs to address common challenges in appropriate ways
3. To draw on existing learning to improve practice

Who is this for?

The main people involved in a partnership including researchers, communities and brokers. Participants numbers should be balanced to ensure there are equal numbers of each type of partner involved (i.e. university / community).

Core content:

Group coaching for CRP teams. Coaching in this case relates to an expert coach working to support partnerships to develop their work together, through a series of facilitated sessions.

Coaches would:
- have expertise in forming and sustaining effective CRPs (including experienced facilitators, community and university brokers etc.)
- be trained, and supported, with briefing events, and coach meetings
- be paid for their work
- could be recruited from people who have already participated in the learning support programme
- have access to the 'partnership gym' a set of online resources and techniques to support partnership development (hosted in The Hub). This content could include:
  - NCCPE partnership tools e.g. finding your purpose cards; active listening; ice breakers; principles of partnerships etc
  - Assessing value, ensuring dissemination is relevant to partners, reviewing and maintaining mutuality

Design and implementation considerations:

- Coaching could be offered online &/or in-person. Coaches working with partnership teams could be involved in key partnership team meetings, to help facilitate specific activities
- Need to draw in a range of coaches – considering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) in terms of who is involved
- Assessment criteria would be needed for partnerships wanting to access partnership coaching, to ensure the approach would be appropriate for the needs identified
- Code of conduct/ expectations: representatives from both partners to be involved in key coach meetings
- Given partnerships can lead to significant challenges – this approach needs to consider safeguarding, and support for any intellectual and/ or emotional challenges emerging
- The quality of coaches and coaching supervision are important elements to monitor to ensure effectiveness

Links to other intervention options: Mentoring; can provide impactful follow-up support from structured learning programme.

Indicative scale of investment required: Recruiting, training, paying coaches, and providing a resource toolkit would be high. Costs could be included in grant schemes, in which case central provision would improve efficiencies, and reduce overall costs. Piloting would enable scope and scale of costs to be understood.

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

Overview of the idea

A peer-to-peer cross sector mentoring programme for individuals with experience of CRPs, who want to develop their knowledge, skills, experiences and networks

What is the aim/ learning objectives?

1. Problem solving relating to long term CRP work e.g. ethical issues, sustaining and ending etc
2. Developing knowledge and understanding relevant to practice
3. To build capability to effect change in own context, to gain support for CRP, and recognition for work

Who is this for?

1. Communities, researchers and brokers
2. People who have over 2 years experience of working in or supporting the development of CRPs

Core content:

Peer to peer mentoring, 12 month programme, option to extend.
Peer-mentors would:
- Be recruited, and then matched with a suitable peer-mentor from a different context i.e. university staff with community organisation staff
- Be supported to work together to share own perspectives, insights and expertise
- Gain insights and advice to challenge and develop own practice

Peer-mentors have access to:
- Toolkit of supporting materials to help facilitate the discussions (hosted in The Hub)
- Discussion forum to share common challenges, and learning
- Peer-Mentor get togethers, where common challenges can be explored collectively

Types of activity: sounding board; challenge and critique; action and review; shared reflection; future planning.
Types of content: Addressing power imbalances; Navigating dynamics; Recognition; Managing risks; Burnout; Ethics; Process evaluation; Assessing and evidencing value; Reviewing and maintaining mutuality, etc.

Design and implementation considerations:

- Needs effective project management and input, infrastructure and support
- Training and support for peer-mentors, to enable them to mentor well and to benefit from the experiences of co-mentoring
- Suitable support platform for key information, connection, sharing and network building
- Avoid assumption that needs of individuals in each user group are the same. Contexts, experiences, roles and approach will be different
- Make sure you take into account the time commitment and ensure that there are clear benefits to individuals involved

Access points: accessible to individuals, paid for, but with bursaries for those for whom payment is a barrier. Can be done fully online, or with in-person elements, where the costs of attending are paid for by the organisations involved.

Links to other intervention options: The Hub, Coaching support, matchmaking

Indicative scale of investment required: requires design and set-ups, and ongoing management and coordination.
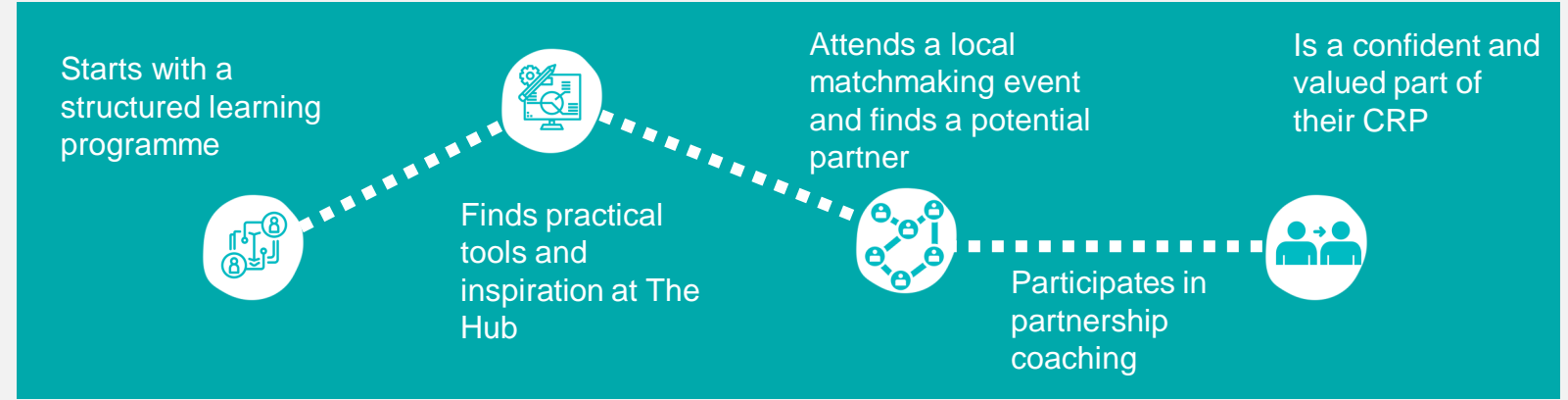
Illustrative Potential learner journeys

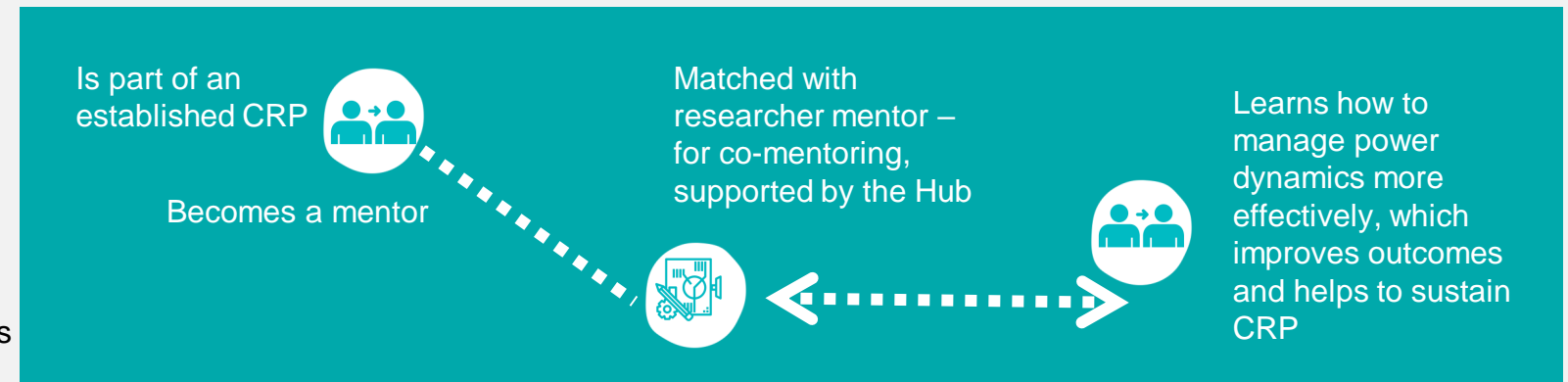**Community**: new to community research partnerships

Learning and support needs:

Understanding how universities work
Finding a researcher
How to ensure benefits to community organisation
Recognising your value

Starts with a structured learning programme

Finds practical tools and inspiration at The Hub

Attends a local matchmaking event and finds a potential partner

Participates in partnership coaching

Is a confident and valued part of their CRP

Community: has worked in community research partnerships

Learning and support needs:

Sustaining, innovating and developing partnerships
Managing power dynamics
Developing research capability
Ensuring outcomes benefit community

Is part of an established CRP

Becomes a mentor

Matched with researcher mentor – for co-mentoring, supported by the Hub

Learns how to manage power dynamics more effectively, which improves outcomes and helps to sustain CRP

Illustrative Potential learner journeys

Broker: new to role

Learning and support needs:

Finding potential partners
Understanding how to support community research partnerships
Help to convince colleagues to support this work

Participates in the learning programme

Revisits the Hub for inspiration

Encourages researchers to attend match making event

Early career researcher: interested in developing a community research partnership

Learning and support needs:

Find a community organisation
Find out how to develop a partnership
Get support to do this work well

Attends a matchmaking event

Participates in discussion on Hub, and finds useful resources

Meets broker who puts them in touch with local community organisation

New partnership accesses partnership coaching and develops effective project

Visual of the system

A consistent theme through the co-design and solution consolidation process was the need to recognise the interconnected nature of the individual elements, visualised in the diagram opposite.

It was also highlighted that at a local level, some of the building blocks and elements of the learning infrastructure may already exist and may also need resourcing.

The consortium recognised that a diagnostic/ needs analysis and planning process would be helpful for those developing the CRPLP, to focus and localise the interventions and using the framework we have developed as guide. This would ensure the resulting activities would dovetail and strengthen existing local provision.

Additional investment and work at a national level would however be needed in support of:
- The Hub – curating information and support
- Structured Learning Programme (including elements of matchmaking and network building at a national level)
- Providing the infrastructure, guidance and support for effective mentoring and coaching to be adopted locally

The operating model for the above was not part of the scope of this work but should be considered as a next phase.
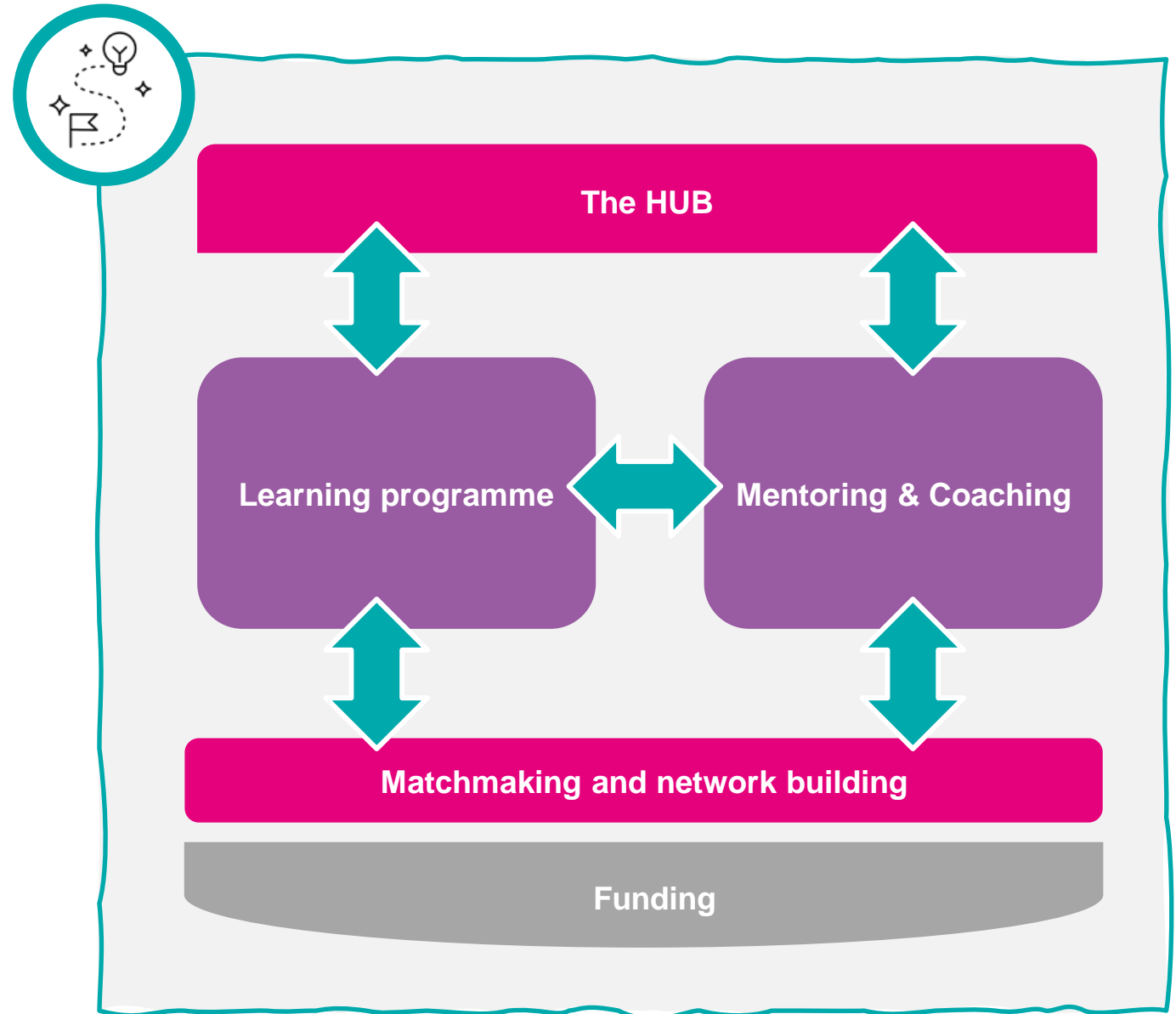
Part 3: Recommendations for moving to implementation

Key areas for consideration in implementing the CRPLP

Many of the considerations for implementing the CRPLP have been reflected on in the descriptions of the interventions above. In addition, three key additional recommendations emerged from our collective work, described in the summary, and detailed in the following pages of the report:

1. **Strengthen the narrative on community research partnerships, and invest in learning**

2. **Start small, test and learn**

3. **Work with other funders to embed and expand the learning infrastructure**

Strengthening the narrative on community research partnerships

Why is this important?

When supporting community research partnerships, funders need to provide a clear narrative (internally and externally) that provides clarity about the purposes of any intervention and how this fits in with other initiatives.

The profound structural challenges that need to be addressed to achieve effective sustained partnership work need to be acknowledged. It needs to provide clarity of the purpose of a learning intervention, and how this works alongside existing initiatives addressing the practices and support for community research partnerships.

In addition, the research illustrated that when people come together to talk about community research partnerships, there is a desire to explore tactics for creating internal support for the work as well as a need to develop and share specific skills. Culture change was referenced extensively throughout the research phase, and it is important to acknowledge if and how a learning intervention can contribute to this.

Key recommendations

As the implementation and testing of a learning programme moves to action, those funding, setting up and delivering support should consider the following:

- Be clear about the purpose of any learning intervention, and the target participants including how this works with overall funder strategy and strategic investments
- Construct a clear narrative for the learning programme, sensitive to the wider contexts, and being explicit about the outcomes for participants
- Manage expectations for what the learning programme can and cannot achieve
- When piloting, be clear about what is being tested and why, and if and how participants will be supported once the pilot has ended

Start small, test and learn

Why is this important?

This research highlighted the wealth of existing work to support CRPs and individual learning, but highlighted the need for a learning infrastructure. However, the outcomes from the co-design need piloting, to sense check if and how they meet the identified needs, and to work through tensions and wider considerations that exist around any learning offer (e.g. time for individuals to engage).

Opportunities to trial aspects by piloting the interventions within existing programmes should be taken. This will enable a proof-of-concept test of the individual elements.

Whilst this project focused on individual learning needs, and the support needed to develop, lead and maintain CRPs, as this work moves to implementation, the learning needs of individuals should be considered within the wider system and learning should be mobilised across all four levels (individual – teams/partnerships - supporting organisations – wider system), as illustrated in the diagram.
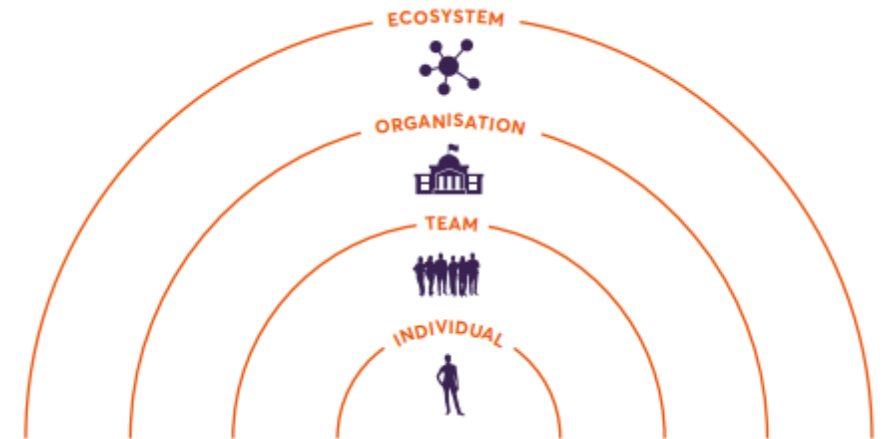
Key recommendations

- Link into existing provision within community and academic contexts. This could be by intelligently linking key elements of a learning infrastructure within existing programmes, with links through to the other programmes for those interested in developing their approach further
- Take the opportunity to pilot aspects of **a** learning infrastructure using existing investments
- Build effective learning around the pilots to ensure deeper understanding is developed around the demand for the intervention, and if and how it meets participant needs

Work with other funders to embed and expand the learning infrastructure

Why is this important?

Individuals in the system work within various contexts and programmes at a local, regional and national level. Therefore the learning infrastructure needs to be able to link effectively with the wider ecosystem.

The research highlighted how individuals involved in CRPs found navigating this system challenging, with different opportunities for learning linked to individual projects and programmes at a local, institutional and national level.

The co-design created a learning infrastructure, enabling participants to gain support as and when they needed it. It has been designed to enable funders to make use of this national learning infrastructure to support their own programmes of activity. The approach can be intelligently aligned to the needs of participants, supporting learning efficiently and at a low cost to the programme leads, and enabling participants to benefit from the network of support wrapped around the CRPLP.

Key recommendations

- Link into existing provision within community and academic contexts
- Share learning and seek learning from others who are running aligned programmes of activity, to maximise the value of efficiency of the CRPLP approach
- Work with other funders to explore key needs relating to CRPs, and if and how the learning infrastructure is relevant to existing projects
- Create an infrastructure that is pliable for other contexts, and enables others to make use of it
- Create a set of minimum requirements to support organisations wanting to make use of the learning infrastructure, and the costs involved

Part 4:
Wider considerations

Wider considerations

The co-research surfaced tensions that need to be considered when developing work in community research partnerships and a potential learning offer. These are detailed below.

A tension between the need and the offer

- This work originally set out to focus on people who have experience of community research partnerships. However the co-design process saw many participants wanting to see community organisations with no experience being provided with a route in too.
- Most communities do not naturally think of engaging with universities as relevant to their interests or mission, or as their partner of choice. If they do, ideas usually relate to evaluation of services, often to bring credibility to funding applications; access to facilities; or working with student volunteers or placements. There are few uninvited requests for research partnerships.
- Therefore communities not currently in a research partnership are unlikely to be looking for support and if they are, they are unlikely to look for that support from funders like UKRI.

A tension between being community-led, and research engaged

- Although out of the scope of this co-design process, tensions arose about the nature of community research partnerships. Many of the participants were clear that to be effective community research partnerships needed to start with community needs and be co-produced. However, this approach will not necessarily lead to research partnerships, for example community members referenced interest in accessing resources, or evaluating key services, which may or may not be relevant to researchers. Therefore, if there is a desire for community-led interventions, we need to recognise that these may well not involve a researcher nor a university. Participants were interested in exploring what this means for how such work could be funded.

It should be open to everyone – not just those already doing this work.
Community member

I think this [programme] needs to be for everybody. There needs to be no difference or divide to accessing it, we need everyone reading from the same hymn sheet.
Community member

It would be helpful to have a better understanding of the communities working locally and whether they would like to partner with the university, and if so what for….and how many of the needs could link to research.
Researcher

Wider considerations

A tension about who could or should be involved in funding this work

Suggestions arose from participants that other partners from outside the research system could usefully be involved. Partnership with community funding organisations would bring in necessary insights, connections, and funding for community-led activity. For some involved in the co-design, this intervention would be better sited outside of the research system, with academic research funders playing only one role in a collective that sought to support community interests.

A tension relating to the systemic changes needed to support community research partnerships

All the conversations identified systemic challenges around how community research partnerships are currently funded, and supported that they need to be addressed. These are shared in Appendix 3. Participants were keen to explore 'what contribution could or should a learning programme make to changing how community research partnerships are currently imagined and supported?'

> *Are UKRI the right funder for a community-led approach?*
> **Public engagement professional**

> *The current university funding model really acts against this kind of work. It's the funders, as well as the university systems and the bureaucracies, and this can really act against the work – so no matter how well trained or what have you the individuals on the ground have to navigate university systems, and it has to go quite a bit further than that.*
> **Researcher**

Wider considerations relevant to interventions

Capacity to participate

The CRPLP co-design process sought to develop effective interventions, several of which required significant time to participate. However, we recognise that communities, researchers and brokers may be constrained in the time available for this type of work, and that there is a responsibility to ensure that time is not wasted. There was a specific sensitivity to not waste communities time with things not relevant or potentially detrimental, or that don't lead to outcomes of value to communities.

Concerns were also expressed that co-design as a process for community research partnerships is also very time intensive and that other methodologies that require less of the community should also be taken into account.

Time is precious

Time and time again the need for funding to participate in learning was emphasised by participants in the co-design process. There was a sense that learning was not valued by communities or universities, often for different reasons. This meant that time to participate was not prioritised either, and in some cases not allowed.

Accreditation

Some people want accreditation, some don't. How do we manage this across the intervention? Community members often want accreditation to build their CVs or professional qualifications. Others didn't want accreditation and saw this as a barrier.

We already don't have time to go to all the things we have access to already.
Community member

There is a time commitment you need to put in, and people need to build this into their workload – so you need the resource to do this. Time is really challenging, so implicit in this is enabling people to be able to participate meaningfully. Funding needs to enable us to plan training into the work of the grant.
Researcher

Wonder if there could be a form of accreditation attached to this, thinking of community members and staff looking for career development.
Community member

Conclusion

A principled approach

This CRPLP scoping exercise surfaced the need for learning support for those involved in community research partnerships (CRPs) including researchers, brokers, and community members. Whilst there are existing offers for all groups, there are barriers at play that reduce engagement with what is on offer.

In order to address these barriers, a set of key learning principles for a learning programme were co-designed with participants in the project.

These principles will help ensure that: the mutual benefits of participating are clear to participants; that power differentials are addressed; that equity and inclusion are at the heart of the work; that the learning offer is based on real projects, with tangible outcomes for communities and researchers; and that the offer is funded so people are able to participate fully in whatever is offered.

The learning offer

The project also delivered a set of highly practical recommendations for discrete but interconnected learning support interventions cater for the range of learning needs of individuals involved in community research partnerships:

- **A Hub, learning resource library:** an online resource for those working on CRPs to consolidate, inspire, and connect
- **A supported learning programme:** a rolling programme of online events relating to all aspects of developing and running a CRP.
- **Coaching and mentoring:** partnership coaching, to support newly established partnerships, or to help existing ones, and peer-to-peer mentoring for those who want to refine their practices.
- **Matchmaking and network building:** an opportunity to learn more about potential partners through matchmaking events, and funding

The bigger picture

The project also surfaced some wider issues that will impact on what might happen next and which should be taken into account going forward.

Firstly, although these ideas have been robustly tested and co-designed, they are not a 'magic bullet'. Piloting aspects of the programme will be essential to ensure that they work effectively for potential participants.

Secondly, it is important to remember that a learning offer alone won't achieve the wider systemic changes needed to embed support and help CRPs in the research and innovation sector to thrive. It will be important to establish how the investment in learning aligns with other investments to encourage participatory research practices and to build community capacity and resilience.

Finally, CRPLP made it clear that the development of new learning infrastructure provides an opportunity for funders to work together, ideally including both research and social funders. This would be likely to achieve much greater system change than an approach resourced by a single funder alone, and would help to address some of the barriers and challenges identified by participants.

Appendix 1

Abbreviations used in the report

Abbreviations used in the report

CRP: Community Research Partnership	Partnerships between people working within academic research organisations and people working within community settings. Research partnerships might co-create research together, conduct research together, or apply outputs of research to support communities.
CRPLP: Community Research Partnership Learning Programme	The project sought to co-develop a learning programme for individuals involved in community research partnerships. We refer to this programme as the CRPLP.
Project Consortium: Partners involved in the project	Project co-leads: National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement and the Young Foundation Partners: University of Brighton; Trust for Developing Communities; Staffordshire University; the Get Talking network; and the British Science Association (BSA).
P&CE: Public and Community Engagement	Mutually beneficial engagement activity between the public or community organisations and those working or studying within Higher Education settings.
CVS: Community Voluntary Services	Local and regional membership organisations that support community services across the UK.
Brokers	People who initiate, support and develop community research partnerships as part of their role.

Appendix 2:

Summary of existing learning schemes and approaches

Selection of professional development activity relevant to CRPs

Community Buddies	British Science Association	Matching and supporting community organisers and researchers to develop relationships locally to create a legacy that will last beyond the programme.	Community Leaders and Researchers	Year	Relational Meeting Training followed by 6 months developing and workshopping ideas
Community Leaders	British Science Association funding from UKRI	Upskill participants, supporting them in developing long-term science engagement projects, and help facilitate collaboration between their community groups and the science communication sector.	Community Leaders and Researchers	Year	Training sessions
Leaders with lived experience (LLE) **Breaking down barriers**	The Social Innovation Partnership and UniLtd	Deepening understanding of leadership or change-making, barriers, and enablers for LLE. Co-creating meaningful support and progression that harness potential and desire. Building strategies to create an inclusive environment for LLE, working with Social Purpose Organisations. Capturing and disseminating learning	Leaders with lived experience (community leaders)	14 months	Workshops
Public Engagement Masterclass	Wellcome Genome Campus	Supports researchers from all disciplines who want to embed public engagement as a leadership quality in their career portfolio. No longer running	Researchers	3 days	Masterclasses/case studies/practical sessions
NCCPE Engage Academy	NCCPE	Supporting professional development and inspiring Change Makers. Interrogate high quality public engagement principles (Purpose/Process/People/Evaluation) Develop strategic approaches to embedding engagement in an organisation Explore the 'change-maker' role; develop a strong support network	PEP (Public Engagement Professional)	6-9 months	Hybrid workshops, Online workshops, Webinars, Social Events, Networking, Online Learning Space, Learning Groups
Knowledge for Change (K4C)	UNESCO Chairs	Developing research capacities for the co-creation of knowledge Self organising K4C hubs get support to develop capacity in knowledge co-creation involving researchers and communities. Specific focus on establishing hubs in low to middle income countries.	Practitioners; community-based researchers; community groups; local to K4C Hub.	6 months + long term Hub activity	Online and in person training programme supporting participants to co-create and deliver research projects

Selection of professional development activity relevant to CRPs

[Future Leaders Fellows Development Network Leadership Mentoring Programme](#)	UKRI	Develop mentoring skill set Become a more confident leader in your research area Extend your professional networks.	Future Leaders' Fellows	6 months	Workshops, mentoring meetings
[Public Engagement with Research Leadership Scheme](#)	University of Oxford	Opportunity to enhance and demonstrate leadership skills within an academic environment; and to explore new ways of working through facilitating change.	Researchers and Academics	A year	EDGE Analysis; Events; Training
[Valuing Lived Experience - Learning with National Voices](#)	National Voices	Prototype programme of coaching and mentoring, to bring mutual benefit to those with Lived and Learned Experience and improve health and social care.	Senior positions in healthcare; Lived Experience Partners; Charity members to learn about Lived Experience	2:30 hrs	Online event
[Engage Conference](#)	NCCPE	Annual conference for delegates to come together and be inspired, challenged and encouraged to collectively shape ideas for change	Researchers, communities, brokers, policy makers, leaders	2 day conference	Conference
[upon - Aspirant Directors of Children's Services Programme](#)	upon Inspiring Leaders; Department for Education	Grow as a person and as a leader during the programme. Equips participants to feel more ready to step up to a Director of Children's Services role with confidence, and be part of a national peer community during the programme and beyond.	Leaders; Change-maker; Aspiring Directors of Children's Services	Sept 2022-Mar 2023	Teaching days; learning repository (guides, videos, blogs); learning visits; workshops
[The Common Purpose Programme for Senior and Emerging Leaders](#)	Common Purpose	Discover how to adapt quicker and thrive in a fast, fluid, ambiguous world; Develop your inclusive leadership and explore how build diverse teams, which are both innovative and resilient; Create a wider impact by learning how to solve complex, boundary-crossing problems involving multiple, diverse stakeholders.	2 seperate courses: one for senior leaders, and one for emerging leaders	Nov 2022 - April 2023	Workshops; Interactive sessions; local sessions; app
[Common Purpose courses including national and regional programmes e.g.](#) [Northern Ireland 2035](#)	Common Purpose;	This year's challenge is: How do we act together to transform Northern Ireland into a cleaner, greener place for all?	Young leaders	Four days	Develop ideas to answer the course question, and then present them to Leaders from Northern Ireland

Selection of resources relevant to CRPs

So you want to do collaborative research a guide to practicalities	University of Bristol	A guide to help researchers and professional service staff involved in collaborative research.	Researchers, professional service staff	Online document to work through
Valuing interdisciplinary collaborative research: Beyond Impact (Connected Communities)	Book; Authors: Keri Facer and Kate Pahl	Deepening understanding of the immediate impact and long-term legacy of collaborative research	students, academic researchers, and practitioners	Book
Public Engagement Leadership Lens	Vitae; National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement	Support capacity building to develop, embed and sustain leadership of PE in HEIs; Realise cultural change, in line with the Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research; Develop resources targeted to middle managers, who are requiring support in how to support PE within the teams/departments they lead	Researchers in Higher Education	Online Document

Programmes which have developed resources relevant to CRPs

Keep Talking Blog	Expert Citizens CIC; Staffordshire University; UKRI funding	To understand how universities and community partners can develop sustainable structures for people to engage in long term, place-based research	Community Researchers
Ignite	CUPP; University of Brighton; UKRI	Produce a model for finding and fostering community-university partnerships; Use this model as a platform for developing quality PER; Pilot this model at the University of Brighton;	Community-University Partnerships
Strategic Support to Expedite Embedding Public Engagement with Research	National Co-Ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, funded by UKRI	'Embedding change' proposals that sought to enhance and embed an institution's approach to supporting PER 'Challenge' proposals which addressed a specific challenge in supporting PER effectively, and which expanded the existing knowledge base about 'what works' in effectively supporting PER	Academics; Researchers

Appendix 3:

Challenges faced by those involved in Community Research Partnerships

Well-known challenges for CRPs

Higher education

- Institutions do not always value collaborative work, or the staff who do it
- Institutions struggle to resource community engagement effectively
- Short term nature of funding, meaning hard to sustain partnerships
- Culture of institutions, research, and restrictive funding mechanisms
- Research systems not well suited to collaborative working
- Ineffective processes meaning it is hard to pay communities for their time, IP clauses in contracts etc.
- Relationships often held by junior staff in precarious contracts with little agency to effect changes necessary

Community members

- Hard to access universities in the first place
- Lack of understanding or awareness of the multitude of opportunities possible
- Limited resource to support involvement beyond initial projects
- Absence of clear pathways
- Lack of transparency in funding, resource allocation, responsibilities, outcomes
- Need to align research to organisations mission, aims and objectives
- Surfacing community knowledge and assets
- Fairly sharing resources

Both

- Power inequalities/ and perceived inequalities
- Gulf in language – alienation and misunderstandings
- Communication – frequency, approach, expectations
- Making a case for this type of working
- Finding suitable partners
- Time to invest in developing and sustaining partnerships
- Time to invest in initiating, developing and then sustaining partnerships
- Cultural differences –different hierarchies, assumptions, ways of doing things
- Skills and knowledges to work together well

Appendix 4:

Potential participants in a learning support offer

Potential audiences for CRPLP. Each has different needs and experiences of individual provision

	Established researcher	Early Career Researcher	HE Broker (Public Engagement Professional)	Community experienced	Community new
What do they need?	Recognition Support to enact leadership at institution/ national level Ethics, dealing with controversy Knowledge and understanding of research system, and how to navigate it Participatory research methodologies Contexts for engagement Sustaining, innovating, developing partnerships Funding	Knowledge and understanding of research system strengths and weaknesses Practical tips to support partnership development, and avoiding common pitfalls Pilot funding	Recognition Ethics Navigating institutional processes to support effective working Skills and understanding to support partnership development and delivery Understanding research system	Recognition Support to enact leadership within organisation/ nationally Knowledge and understanding Developing research capacity/ capability e.g. community led research Contexts for engagement Sustaining, innovating, developing Understanding research system , strengths and weaknesses Pilot funding How to develop strategic relationships with HE	Understanding the university and systems Managing the relationship – holding your power Finding a partner Supporting development of relationship
What provision is there in UK?	Leadership fellows NCCPE researchers academy/ NERC researchers leadership cohort PE leadership lens Knowledge for Change Hub	NCCPE/ Citizens UK Community engagement training Institutions training courses	Engage Academy PE Networks e.g. ScotPEN	Citizens UK Young Foundation NCVO Knowledge for Change Hub Science Shops UKCPN	NCCPE community engagement training UKCPN University provision Match processes Ideas Fund

Established researcher

I am….

- Established researcher who has worked in community research partnerships
- An expert in research skills in my discipline/ in my research topic
- Time poor
- Pressured to produce academic outputs from my work
- Needing to ensure that the research I do has quantifiable impact

I'd like …

- Problem solving relevant to my context
- Peer to peer learning
- Skills and confidence to advocate this way of working to university
- Access to new funding streams
- Recognition for the value of community research partnerships

How do I…

- Develop and sustain the partnerships I am involved in
- Understand and manage the ethical challenges
- Navigate the systemic issues posed by this work
- Ensure a positive legacy from the partnership work

Early career researcher

I am….

- An early career researcher
- Currently interested in developing a community research partnership
- Time poor
- Pressured to produce academic outputs from my work

I'd like …

- To make a positive contribution to society
- Develop my skills and experience
- Learning from peers
- Networking opportunities
- Access to new funding streams

How do I…

- Find a community organisation
- Develop a community research partnership
- Understand and manage the ethical challenges
- Manage my time
- Navigate the systemic issues posed by this work

Public engagement professional, new to my role

I am….

- New to my role
- Experienced in engagement through festivals and schools work
- Responsible for community engagement with research
- Working within bureaucratic processes

I'd like …

- Peer support and networking
- To develop my understanding of community research partnerships
- Knowledge and skills in partnership working
- To find out how best to support researchers to work with communities

How do I…

- Get started
- Find appropriate partners – including diverse groups
- Support researchers to work ethically in community settings
- Develop my knowledge and understanding
- Convince my department to resource this work appropriately

Public Engagement Professional, expert in engagement practices

I am….

- An expert in engagement practices
- Able to access some support and resources
- An interface between communities and researchers
- Time poor
- Working within bureaucratic processes

I'd like …

- Problem solving specific to my context
- Support to make a case for sustained work
- Reward and recognition
- To share my knowledge and experience with others

How do I…

- Match researchers and communities appropriately
- Engage with diverse groups
- Sustain partnerships
- Manage power dynamics
- Support researchers to work ethically in community settings
- Distinguish between community research and engagement

From a community organisation currently involved in a community partnership

I am….

- Currently working in partnership with a researcher from the local university to research community interests
- A local branch of a national charity supporting community action
- Struggling to balance the books following the covid-19 pandemic

I'd like …

- To find ways to continue the work with the researcher
- Enhance the partnership I am currently in, addressing some of the issues that have arisen
- Share the work we are currently doing, to raise our profile, and encourage funding support

How do I…

- Find ways to improve the partnership I am working on
- Sustain partnership working
- Explore how to get additional funding to support our contribution to the partnership

From a community organisation new to community research partnerships

I am….

- New to community research partnerships
- A local charity working to support refugees in a NE England town
- Working with a small team of volunteers
- Resourced mainly through donations, and an arts council grant for some community workshops
- Time poor, spinning multiple plates

I'd like …

- To develop new ways of working, to enhance the outcomes for the refugees we work with
- Build our evaluation, to help make a case for future funding
- Find partners who can enrich the leaning opportunities for the refuges we work with

How do I…

- Find out about community research partnerships
- Find a suitable researcher to work with
- Ensure that the outcomes of the partnership benefit our charity and the people we work with

Appendix 5

Quotes from participants

Quotes about the interventions

Matchmaking

- *Loved the matchmaking – enough time for rambling, in-depth conversations, and paid to do it without expectation it will lead to something useful.* Researcher
- *We liked the speed dating events, because its really important, the partnership, and researchers have different ethos's, so whenever you are matching people you want to make sure that you've got same values that you'll be able to work with and able to resolve conflict.* Researcher

Coaching/ mentoring

- *Two way coaching or mentoring would improve the power imbalances between researchers and communities by explicitly recognising both needs to learn from the other. It could have other outcomes – like improving public involvement in governance.* Public Engagement Professional
- *We thought it was a good idea to work with a mentor, a coach but it'll be great to have a kind of peer support a group mentoring scheme combined with the sustained group work …..* Researcher
- *With the mentor or coach from an organization's perspective it could be actually adding capacity for supporting a staff member or volunteer who's engaging in the research partnership with the university.* Community

The Hub

- *I was quite into the idea of online repository of materials. It's something that I've just joined a national charity and they have that internally that you can click and get best practice or most recent research on a given topic. I find it really, really useful. But we were saying that it would be really important that that would be focused and clear and quite succinct.* Community
- *We talked about an open repository that would have all different kinds of things in it, tool kits, inspiring examples….what works and doesn't in different contexts, a place you can be honest about what doesn't work.* Researcher
- *I personally like the case studies on the NCCPE website. Its very concrete if you are looking for inspiration or some sort of sense that other people are doing this.* Researcher
- *Use multi formats to appeal to peoples learning preferences and access requirements.* Community

Two way exchange

- *Community groups have a lot to teach academic partners as well, and it might be really nice to do something based on how to engage a specific community, or how do you manage in this situation or what do you do with this level of funding. I think it could be a real much more of a two way than coaching or buddying.* Community

Other relevant quotes about the learning intervention

- *Should be local, to see better impacts in communities, but needs to be linked nationally to celebrate and share what is going well, and lessons you have learnt from the messiness of working togethe*r. Community

- *Is there an implicit ideal professional identity implied, how do we recognise that some people work in teams, with different skills, and teams with different expertises, so all might need different things from the programme. So needs to be a choice, so you can tailor it to the needs and interests you have.* Public Engagement Professional

- *Its important that whilst things should be pitched at different levels there isn't an assumption about what different people might find useful or want to participate in – so an indication that some are more entry level, but no problem if you are well experienced but still need to find out more about something.* Public Engagement Professional

- *I think it has to be co-created from a Community perspective, so the languages right and we're not sort of saying we're better than you and you need to do this training to be able to come and have these important conversations with us.* Funder

- *That's the biggest learning you can have to work in a room and understand different perspectives.* Public Engagement Professional

- *It'd be ideal if it could be somewhere either out in nature or somewhere that is a bit special, either nature or has historic value [to that community]. [It needs to be] somewhere where somebody is going to enjoy themselves and get something else out of it other than just the training, so it's not just training, it's an experience.* Community

- *It's about breaking down prejudices on both sides[...] if there's prejudice on both sides, then that's always going to be your biggest problem.* Community

- *It's accepting that you've got a sense of power and that everybody in this room has their own version of power and knowing how to adapt and use that power.[...] It's thinking about the power that you have and how you can use that to help others find theirs*. Community

What do potential participants need?

Universities shouldn't be precious about owning it. If community groups can lead - let them.
Community member

You know, rightly or wrongly, people around here are very defensive. There's reasons for that, people feel trodden on so they might just see [the university] as another power that's just gonna tread on them. It's about trying to make people see that we can work together in an alternative way.
Community member

Ethics approvals and if and how you need them, and whose you need – this is complex in Northern Ireland – so important to get support to ensure that the work you do is ethical. Community organisations often have the expertise to navigate the ethics, but not the university ethics processes.
Public engagement professional

Would be great to have support when you are just starting on a new idea or partnership, someone to act as a sounding board, or mentor.
Researcher

Could we go back to basics: Are you listening? Are you hearing? Are you changing your perspectives?
Researcher

Community: New to community research partnerships

Community: currently involved in a community research partnership

Broker: new to this role

Broker: experienced in engagement practices

Early career researcher interested in developing a community research partnership

Established researcher who has worked in community research partnerships

We have to [train researchers] in those soft skills, like listening skills; how to trigger and facilitate discussions; how to deal with difficulties as the discussion gets really heated […]because many of them have never had that sort of experience.
Public engagement professional

Would like to have had more on ethics and agreements. Measuring, monitoring and evidencing.
Public engagement professional

I spend a lot of time supporting communities and researchers to find each other and develop effective projects. Researchers need help to find a partner.
Public engagement professional

It would be helpful to have a better understanding of the communities working locally and whether they would like to partner with the university, and if so what for.
Researcher

What do potential participants need?

I think 90% of the people out there will not know that that is even an option for somebody who's not got a degree or is an affiliate of a university and is just a community group or member who can go and approach a research team or a group of people from university.
Community member

Should be local, to see better impacts in communities, but needs to be linked nationally to celebrate and share what is going well, and lessons you have learnt from the messiness of working together.
Community member

I think feeling uncomfortable is really important […] because it tells us that we're being challenged in ways that we're not used to, and we need to explore why we feel that […] Having that support structure in place to encourage that reflection is important.
Public engagement professional

You quite quickly learn that it is quite difficult and time consuming to design engagement activities and anything that gives people who wouldn't traditionally be used to working with people outside of academia a chance to fail in a safe environment would be useful.
Researcher

Community: New to community research partnerships

Community: currently involved in a community research partnership

Broker: new to this role

Broker: experienced in engagement practices

Early career researcher interested in developing a community research partnership

Established researcher who has worked in community research partnerships

Often unless a project fits with what a researcher is looking to do, there just isn't the time and capacity to establish a partnership. But how can the community influence what the research topic is, rather than it coming the other way round?
Community member

Nothing replaces spending time with a community and building that trust and relationship, but people need help doing that.
Public engagement professional

Public engagement professionals often broker CRPs but aren't always involved in them – however it would be useful to develop this experience, so that we can see how best to support people. Could this be an option?
Public engagement professional

It would be impactful, and it would be more grounded, it would have a reality about it that would matter to the work we're doing.
Researcher

Wider reflections...in their own words

Great things take time.
Don't go alone (partner!).
Pilot and review.
Commit to the long term.
Let the program emerge from the 'doing'
Consortium member (Broker)

All partners involved are suitably recognised and rewarded for their engagement with all aspects of the programme
Consortium member (Broker)

Use your community researchers to help others to do brilliant community-university research partnerships.
Consortium member (Community)

Collectively we need to reframe and value learning in new ways….

Nationally supported and enabled, but locally driven is key.
Consortium member (Broker)

Excite others with these ideas.
Consortium member (Community)

I believe UKRI have an excellent opportunity through this programme to contribute to SOCIAL CHANGE by building strong and EQUITABLE community-university partnerships.
Consortium member (Researcher)

Reflections from the CRPLP consortium. Our hopes for the future of this work…

Long term…

Local outcomes

Community leadership

Learning
Consortium member (Researcher)

This programme will help to surface power differences – AND better still, build capabilities to work with them in community-university research partnerships. Hoorah!
Consortium member (Community)

Community organisations and partners are provided with access and continuous support to develop and amplify their community voice.
Consortium member (Community)

I'm excited for this intervention to be grounded in reality.
A vital part of day-to-day work, rather than intangible add-on.
Consortium member (Broker)

Time to reflect, learn and adapt is built in over the long term.
Consortium member (Broker)