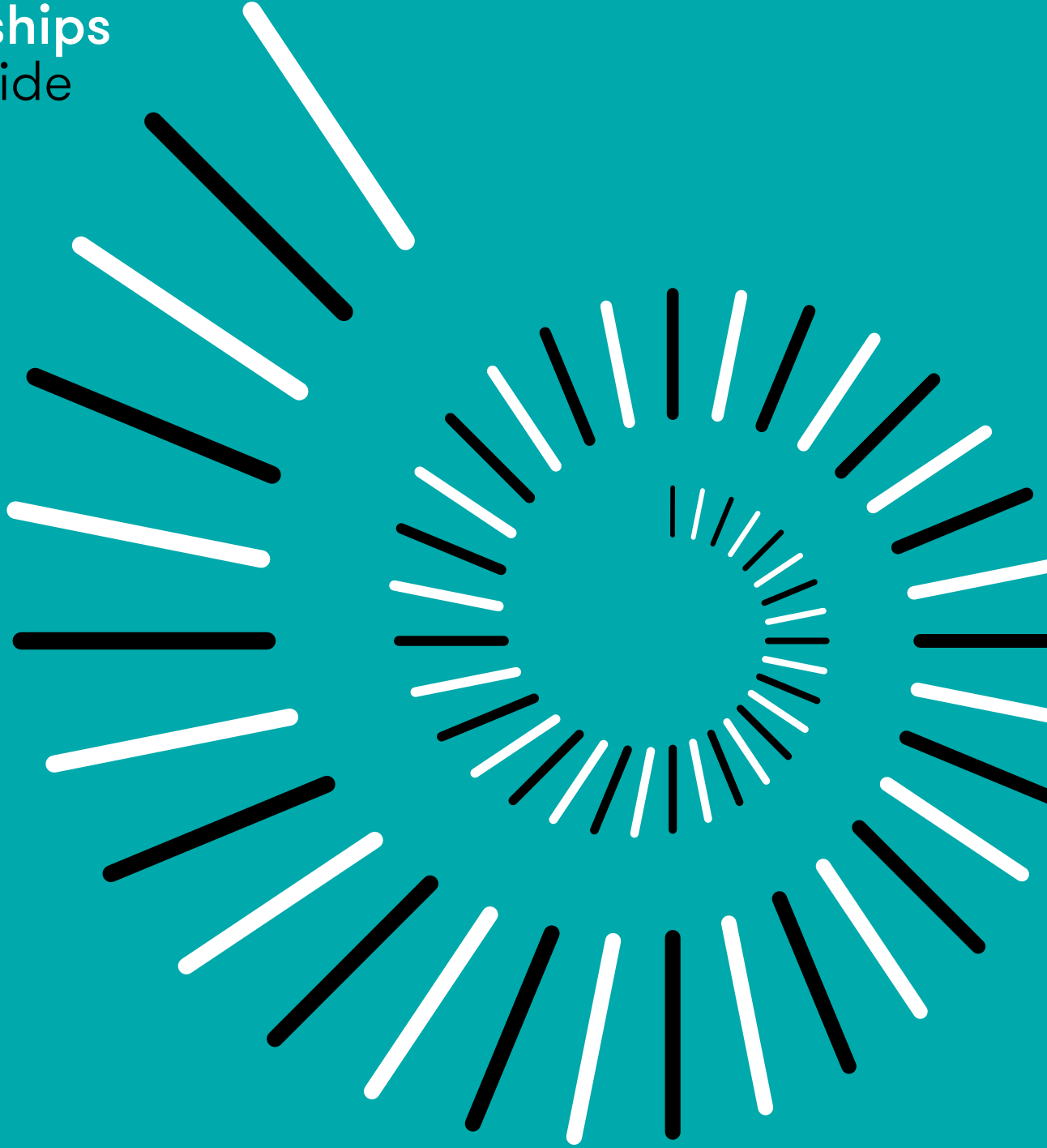


# Museum-University Partnerships

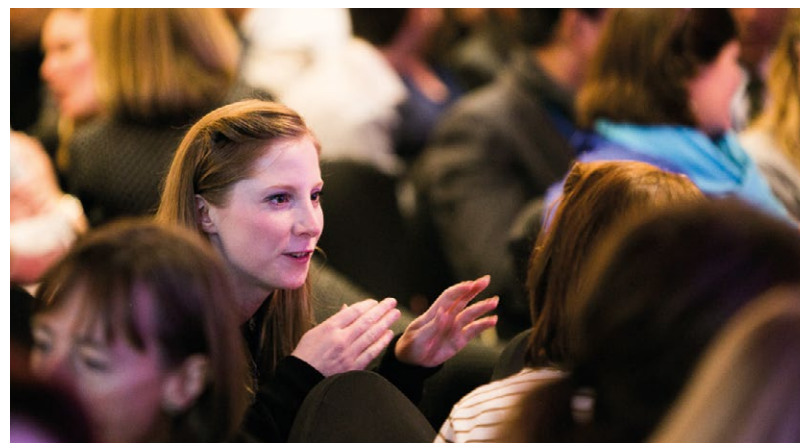
## Match Event Facilitators' Guide



National  
Co-ordinating  
Centre for  
Public Engagement

How do you stimulate effective partnerships between museums and universities? The Museum-University Partnership Initiative (MUPI) developed a model of matchmaking potential partners together, and funding them to develop their partnership ideas.

Funded by the Arts Council England, and co-ordinated by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE), Share Academy and Paddy McNulty Associates, Match Events were held across England in 2016 and 2017. These one day events brought museum and university staff together to build connections and explore ideas. At the end of the events teams were invited to bid for small amounts of 'thinking funding' so that they could take some time after the event to develop their thinking and potentially build bigger project ideas. This provided an opportunity to develop mutually beneficial partnerships that could then seek funding to develop their approach.



These one day events brought museum and university staff together to build connections and explore ideas.

The events were carefully designed to address the many challenges of developing partnerships—locating like-minded people; navigating different professional cultures; having the space to think out loud; not committing to big projects too quickly etc. Delegates generally loved the informality, the pace and the purposefulness of the events:

“The events have been viewed as an excellent way to network with a wide range of potential partners in an environment where this is the sole purpose of the activity rather than part of something else (which is how much networking usually takes place). With a format that encourages networking and with most participants at each event very much focused on making this happen, many formal partnerships and informal connections that may in time lead to other collaborations have been forged. The offering of funding to help start these partnerships is a welcome and in many cases necessary element to assist this process.”

### **MUPI external evaluation**

This guide sets out the process of running a similar Match Event process, including all that is necessary to run an effective approach, and the materials that are needed.



### **Download Match Event resources**

You can find out more about the MUPI project on the NCCPE's website, and download further partnership development tools. Look out for this symbol > which signals a resource available online at [www.publicengagement.ac.uk/MUPI](http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/MUPI)

### The Match Events are excellent for:

- Bringing groups of people together to network, and explore potential partnership development (with an initially small investment of time)
- Ensuring that there is equal opportunity for people to participate in the event, irrespective of their organisational home, experiences of partnership, or their confidence in speaking about their work
- Showcasing approaches to partnership development, to open up new ways of thinking
- Developing mutually beneficial partnerships between event participants, with support to explore the partnership before formally committing to delivering a project together
- Addressing some of the barriers to museum-university engagement highlighted in the literature
- Supporting the development of emergent collaborations by providing small amounts of funding for planning time

#### Note



The examples in this guide were developed through the Museum-University Partnership Initiative but the NCCPE has successfully used this process to encourage matchmaking between universities and other types of organisations.

- Identifying partners to help frame and promote the event
- Agreeing the type of event e.g. regional; thematic
- Getting the word out to the right people
- Selecting participants
- Running a Match Event
- Inviting participants to pitch for ‘thinking funding’ to explore the potential of working together with people they have met at the event
- Offering post-event support to funded projects to help them develop their work together
- Review of the partnership, with support to take things forward e.g. sourcing funding



Design the event with expert input from the sectors involved (e.g. for Museum-University Match Events, work with someone who works in a museum AND someone from a university):

- Helps ensure the event and process work for participants from both sectors, and avoids assumptions being made about each group of participants
- Helps with timetabling, lead-in times, and other practicalities
- Helps get the language right in terms of encouraging participation
- Helps get the word out to the right organisations and encourage them to apply
- Helps ensure that both perspectives are shared at the event, and that any sensitivities arising from the event are noticed and acted on



The type of event you run depends on your and your partner's aims.

### Regional events

Open to people working in a defined geographical area.

- Lead to local partnerships, that can be easier to sustain in the longer term
- Offer an opportunity for small and medium sized museums to get involved, for whom travel to a more distant location may have proved problematic
- Offer the opportunity to work with several universities based in a region, and draw on a wider academic base
- Could be based within a local museum, providing event income whilst showcasing the museum to others

### National events

Open to anyone working on the chosen topic or theme, wherever they are based.

- Offer opportunity to link to potential partners from across a wider region, and draw on specific expertise
- Can be themed around topics of national importance to museums, e.g. designated collections



Depending on the organisations you are trying to bring together, you may need to find additional partners to work with. It helps if you find partners who are trusted with your target organisations, and have routes to engage with them.

**Beware of language.** Think carefully about the terms you use. For example, the original title of ‘sandpit events’ put off museums, and encouraged academics to think the event was something very different.

**Understand different motivations.** There are lots of ways museums and universities can work together, and different motivations that people have for working together. Therefore be as clear as possible about the potential, and don’t restrict people’s imaginations.

**Use the correct channels.** When we ran MUPI Match Events, Museum Development Programmes were a critical partner who had access to museums in their region, and were trusted. The NCCPE is strongly connected to universities across the UK—providing access to public engagement professionals working in universities, and relevant academics.

**Hold your nerve.** Academics booked early, museums tended to book nearer the time.



It helps if you find partners who are trusted with your target organisations, and have routes to engage with them.



---

**The events need to be curated carefully to ensure balance of expertise, experience, and potential matches.**

- All participants apply for their place
- Applicants completed a short online form, including information about their expertise, experience of partnership working, what they were looking for from the event, and a potential area they would like to work on
- There were clear eligibility criteria e.g. being an accredited museum (or working towards accreditation)
- Numbers were limited to 40 delegates in total

**For the Match Events to be a success it is important to:**

- Ensure an equal number of museum and university participants
- Prioritise museums' interests
- Look at the applicants from universities who have relevant skills and experience that match what the museums are looking for
- Include a small number of public engagement staff from the university sector, who have access to a broader base of academics, and also who are experienced facilitators of partnerships
- Include some 'wild cards' to stimulate ideas not considered before the event
- Prioritise applicants who see partnerships as a mutually beneficial process, who want to contribute and learn

### Clear joining instructions

- Send out joining instructions two weeks before the event. To support the partnership development process, consider including a description of the process, and a list of delegates, expertise and suggestions for working together. This information helps people consider who they might like to work with, and ensures that people have the chance to think about the nature of the partnership they might like to develop

### Appropriate and well briefed venue

- Having the right space is really important. The venue needs natural light; a space big enough to accommodate at least 60 delegates cabaret style, which is then set up with tables for 40, and space to mingle; a refreshment area preferably in a neighbouring space; lots of wall space to share ideas etc. The extra space is really important!

### Prepare materials

Exemplar resources and templates can be downloaded from the NCCPE website.

- Badges
- Flipchart
- Magic Whiteboard
- Pens and post-its
- Agenda
- Triologue cards
- Case study postcards
- Group discussion prompts
- Judging forms—outlining key criteria
- Pitch prompts
- Pitch pro-forma
- Evaluation template

- **Registration Area**—consider providing colour-coded badges (so that participants can readily identify museum and university participants)
- **Signage**
- **Top level agenda**—that sets out start, finish and break times—which you then stick to (important for people who have caring responsibilities, have medical needs, need to make work-related phone calls etc.)
- **Wall display space**—on three walls, for triologue activities and mapping ideas



## Morning Sessions

10.30	11.00	11.20	11.30	11.45	12.00	12.50
Registration and coffee	Welcome and introductions	View from here	High quality partnerships	Dialogues set up over coffee	Dialogues	Mapping themes

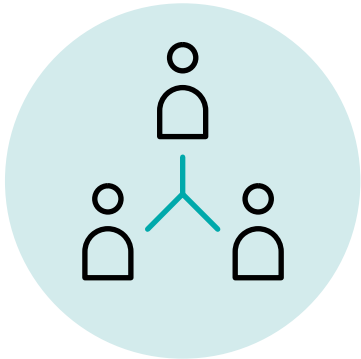
## Afternoon Sessions

1.00	1.30	2.15	3.00	3.15	3.50	4.00
Lunch	Group discussions 1	Group discussions 2	Coffee	Pitches	Final reflections and evaluation	Close

---

# Morning Sessions





## Welcome and introductions

### Why?

- To encourage everyone to feel comfortable
- To ensure that people have the chance to meet one another, and to connect geographically



### How?

- 1 Experience lines: people locate themselves on a line (based on their experience of museum university partnership); talking to people along the line to establish how their experience compares. Facilitator asks a small number of participants to share their experiences, ensuring that both museum and university perspectives are shared
- 2 Geographical location: asking people to map the location of their organisation on an imagined map, and cluster together when working in the same location. Facilitator talks to each of the clusters, to explore who is based in different parts of the country

Morning	10.30	11.00	11.20	11.30	11.45	12.00	12.50
	Registration and coffee	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>	View from here	High quality partnerships	Dialogues set up over coffee	Dialogues	Mapping themes



## View from here

### Why?

- To set out the context for museum-university partnerships



### How?

- Short talks by key people involved in museum-university partnerships—representing the two perspectives, and helping people understand each others' contexts

### Bear in mind



Avoid using powerpoint for this. MUPI Match Events worked better when the information was shared in other ways

Morning	10.30	11.00	11.20	11.30	11.45	12.00	12.50
	Registration and coffee	Welcome and introductions	<b>View from here</b>	High quality partnerships	Dialogues set up over coffee	Dialogues	Mapping themes

# Running a Match Event

## On the day



## High quality partnerships

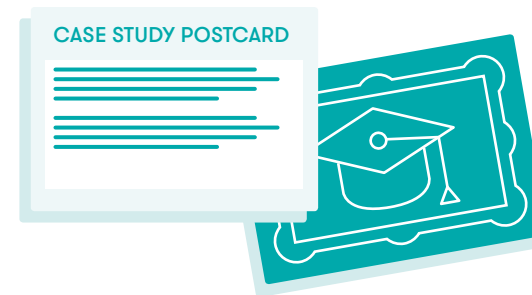
### Why?

- To help people tune into the broad ways museums and universities can partner
- To establish some quality criteria for the partnerships they develop

### How?

Group discussion where delegates share their own experiences of museum-university partnership work, or use our **case study postcards** ➤ which have an enticing image on one side, and some basic information about a partnership on the other.

Groups are asked to come up with their top criteria for high quality partnership working, and these are collated into a list in plenary—which is then visible to all.



Morning	10.30	11.00	11.20	11.30	11.45	12.00	12.50
	Registration and coffee	Welcome and introductions	View from here	<b>High quality partnerships</b>	Dialogues set up over coffee	Dialogues	Mapping themes



## Running a Match Event

### On the day



## Dialogues\*

### Why?

- To provide everyone with a chance to talk about something they are interested in with other delegates (can be an idea, a challenge, or just something they are interested in)



### How?

- Hard to explain but really useful to do—the dialogue activity is an essential component of the process
- Everyone completes a **dialogue card** ➤ recording their name, and a description of what they want to talk about (25 words)
- Ideas are divided into three groups and each group of topics is displayed on a separate wall. (This can be random, or you might choose to group the ideas based on whether it was suggested by a museum or a university, meaning one wall is all from museums, one from academics, and one is a mix)
- People locate their topic on the wall
- People then choose an idea/topic they would like to discuss from each of the other walls, placing name stickers on the dialogue cards they are interested in. Only two people can sign up for any idea

Morning	10.30	11.00	11.20	11.30	11.45	12.00	12.50
	Registration and coffee	Welcome and introductions	View from here	High quality partnerships	Dialogues set up over coffee	<b>Dialogues</b>	Mapping themes

\* Dialogues are based on a technique developed by Dee Hennessy. Find out more via [www.creativeexchange.co.uk](http://www.creativeexchange.co.uk)



## Dialogues [Continued]

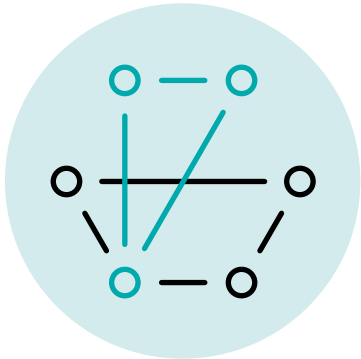
- At the end of the sign up—everyone will have their name on each wall, once. On one wall their name will be with the topic they suggested, on each of the other walls it will be linked to someone else’s topic that they have chosen
- There are then three rounds of 10 minute discussions, based on the topics on each of the three walls. Each wall is taken in turn. Read out the names of the topic hosts, and the two people who have signed up for that discussion—enabling each trio to locate one another. Each trio has a discussion based on the topic chosen. Following this, move to the second and third walls and repeat the process
- **Check out our animation to see what we mean** ➤

### Things to notice



- People might sign up to two sessions on the same wall—and they can’t participate in two discussions held in the same time frame—therefore sort this out when it arises
- People get upset if they can’t join a discussion they are interested in—however reassure people that this is about exploring ideas together, not forming project teams, and that they can pick the connection up later
- If the number of delegates is not divisible by three, you may need to make up the numbers from speakers, or facilitators. They would then need to participate fully in the process, and contribute their own idea for discussion

Morning	10.30	11.00	11.20	11.30	11.45	12.00	12.50
	Registration and coffee	Welcome and introductions	View from here	High quality partnerships	Dialogues set up over coffee	<b>Dialogues</b>	Mapping themes



## Mapping themes

### Why?

- To capitalise on the ideas developed in the dialogues, and to begin to crystallize topics for further discussions after lunch (from challenges, to specific project ideas)



### How?

- Participants are given pieces of paper/post-its to capture their ideas. One per post-it
- These are stuck on communal wall and delegates start to group them during the lunch break

### Things to notice

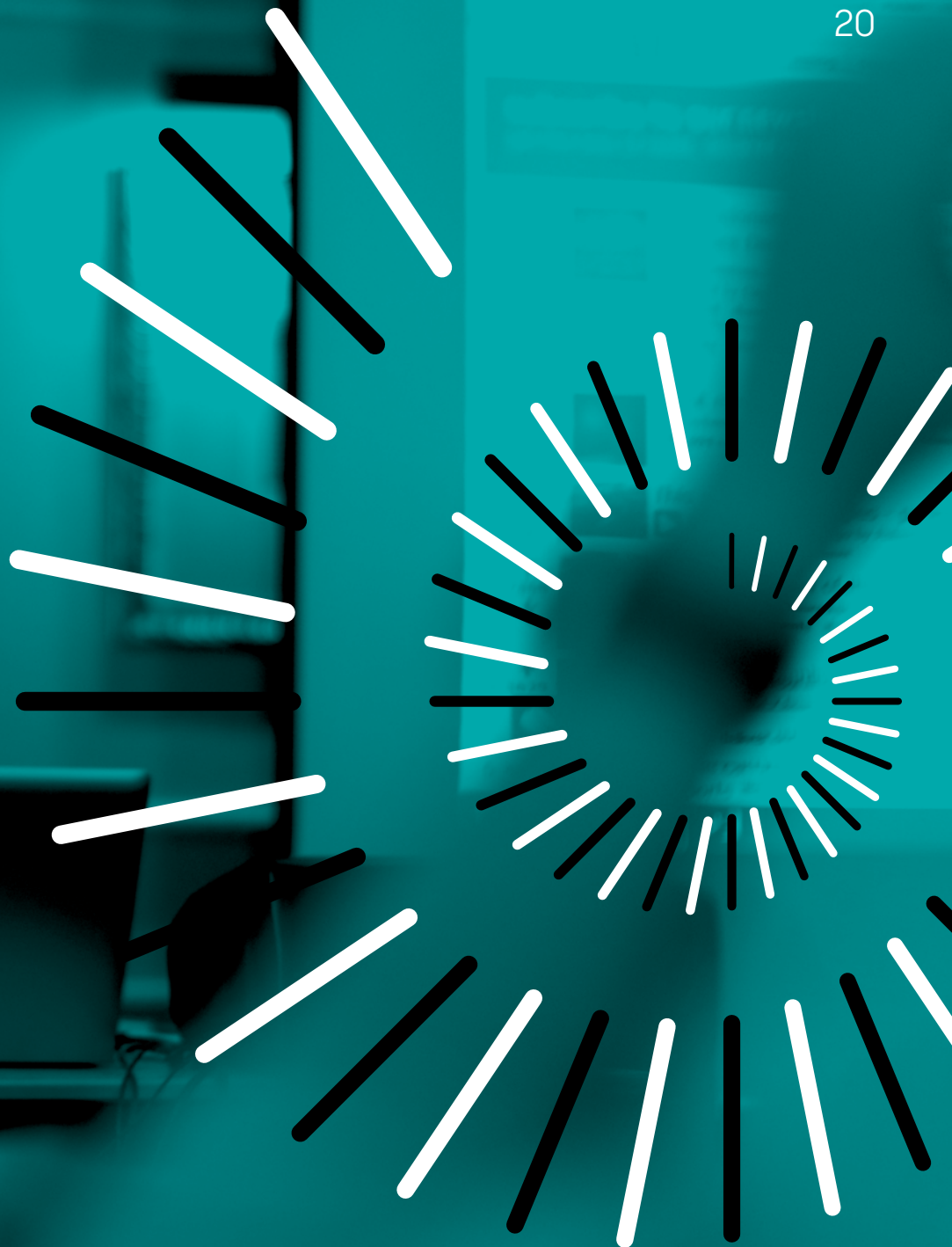


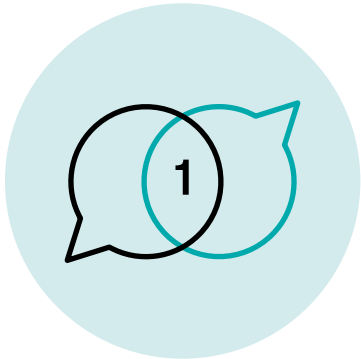
- Some people find the match environment less conducive. Create places people can go to reflect and think

Morning	10.30	11.00	11.20	11.30	11.45	12.00	12.50
	Registration and coffee	Welcome and introductions	View from here	High quality partnerships	Dialogues set up over coffee	Dialogues	<b>Mapping themes</b>

---

## Afternoon Sessions





## Group discussions 1

### Why?

- To get discussion started, and offer the opportunity to develop ideas for partnerships

### How?

Using the grouped themes, teams are formed who want to discuss specific ideas/themes.

There are several rules:

- Two people are enough to make a discussion!
- Partnership development needs to involve at least one museum and one university—but multiple partners can be involved
- Big groups can split into smaller groups to help develop new ideas
- If you have contributed all you want to a group—you can move on to another group

### Things to notice

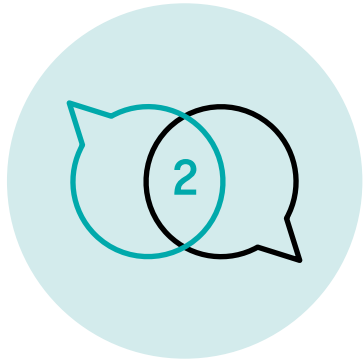


- People are often too polite to move away from a conversation they are not interested in. Create opportunities for people to move on throughout the afternoon
- Some people won't have found potential partners, or may not want to bid for funding. Ensure you identify where people can be encouraged to get involved, meet a potential match, or have a constructive conversation without the need to link it into funding

Afternoon	1.00	1.30	2.15	3.00	3.15	3.50	4.00
	Lunch	<b>Group discussions 1</b>	Group discussions 2	Coffee	Pitches	Final reflections and evaluation	Close

## Running a Match Event

### On the day



## Group discussions 2

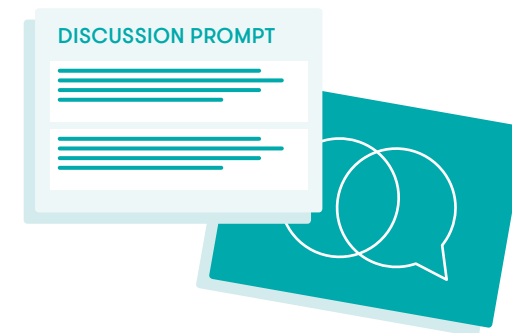
### Why?

- To help groups form, and to ensure people wanting to participate can join in

### How?

- Each group shares where they have got to, in case others want to get involved
- Individuals who have ideas they want to explore, or who have not yet found a relevant group can share ideas to encourage others to join them

- Groups reconvene, often with new participants; new groups form
- Facilitators work alongside people not engaged, to explore if and how they could be involved
- A set of **group discussion prompts** ➤ are shared to help focus discussion



Afternoon	1.00	1.30	2.15	3.00	3.15	3.50	4.00
	Lunch	Group discussions 1	<b>Group discussions 2</b>	Coffee	Pitches	Final reflections and evaluation	Close

# Running a Match Event

## On the day



## Pitch planning

### Why?

- To support groups developing a 3 minute pitch for funding, whilst also supporting those not wanting to pitch to continue their discussions



### How?

- Participants are invited to state if they hope to pitch on the day, to get idea of number of projects
- Pitching details determined by numbers wanting to pitch—but is usually around 3 minutes—which is plenty
- Teams wishing to pitch are given questions that their pitch should address and a **pitch pro-forma** capturing who is involved, title and the amount of funding being applied for



Afternoon	1.00	1.30	2.15	3.00	3.15	3.50	4.00
	Lunch	Group discussions 1	Group discussions 2	Coffee	<b>Pitches</b>	Final reflections and evaluation	Close



## Pitch planning [Continued]

- Those not wanting to pitch are supported to develop their ideas in discussion with other delegates
- This forms part of the group 2 discussions and we usually invite people to consider this about 30 minutes from the end of the session, to avoid it being a focal point of the discussion

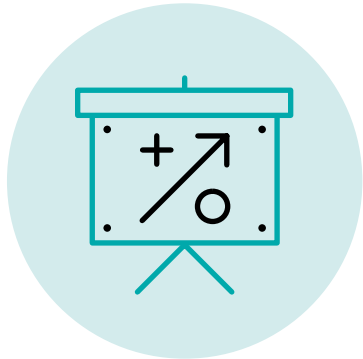
### Things to notice



- People being put under pressure by others keen to get them involved in their project
- People who need more time to consider and reflect
- People not pitching—it is important to recognise that applying for funding isn't always possible or desirable for some participants. Make sure you provide a positive atmosphere that encourages those not pitching to continue their discussions, and to share where they have got to

<b>Afternoon</b>	1.00	1.30	2.15	3.00	<b>3.15</b>	3.50	4.00
	Lunch	Group discussions 1	Group discussions 2	Coffee	<b>Pitches</b>	Final reflections and evaluation	Close





## Pitching

### Why?

- To allocate funding to allow emergent partnerships to invest in follow up activity after the event. This ‘thinking time’ is a critical stepping stone to achieving purposeful, mutually beneficial partnerships. Experience suggests that it can often lead to the partners developing successful bids for further project funding



### How?

- 3 minute pitch to ‘judging panel’ – usually made up of event partners and other delegates. It helps if pitches are recorded, as a prompt following the event – but don’t forget to ask for permission to record
- Funding decisions taken after the meeting, with decisions communicated a week later
- Delegates then need to formally apply for the funding using a short form asking them for the detail of what they hope to do
- An option to apply for funding within a month of the Match Event, to support those who need sign off at their institution to apply for money, or those for whom pitching wasn’t the most comfortable way to apply for money

Afternoon	1.00	1.30	2.15	3.00	3.15	3.50	4.00
	Lunch	Group discussions 1	Group discussions 2	Coffee	<b>Pitches</b>	Final reflections and evaluation	Close



## Final reflections and evaluation

### Why?

- To draw the event to a close, share what happens next, and encourage participants to consider next steps; to evaluate the event

### How?

- Sharing circle—asking each person to capture one thing they learned to share with the rest of the group
- **Evaluation cards** with three relevant questions—to capture initial thoughts about the event



Afternoon	1.00	1.30	2.15	3.00	3.15	3.50	4.00
	Lunch	Group discussions 1	Group discussions 2	Coffee	Pitches	<b>Final reflections and evaluation</b>	Close

## Running a Match Event

### After the event

- Contact delegates—share contact details; evaluation form; and application form for post match funding
- Contact successful projects (ensuring you include all those mentioned on the pitch pro-forma) with decision, funding awarded, and formal application process
- Send contract to project lead, sign contract, and award funding
- Support projects as they develop, including helping support funding applications for future work
- Have light touch reporting process, proportionate to funding allocated, but to capture learning
- Evaluate whether the process leads to lasting partnerships, whether funded or not
- Support all those involved, and who applied to be involved e.g. through setting up an email list or LinkedIn group
- Reflect with your partners on what worked well, and less well, and share the learning



---

You can access a range of these resources via the NCCPE website: [www.publicengagement.ac.uk/MUPI](http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/MUPI)

- Draft publicity material for Match Events
- Application form
- Guidance for applicants
- Joining instructions
- Venue brief
- Triologue cards
- Case study postcards
- Pro-forma delegate instructions
- Group discussion prompts
- Tick list of necessary resources
- Judging forms–outlining key criteria
- Pitch prompts
- Pitch pro-forma
- Evaluation template
- Template contract
- Reporting process guidelines

- 
- Badges
  - Flipchart
  - Magic Whiteboard
  - Pens and post-its
  - Agenda—indicating when breaks are
  - Triologue cards  
(40 cards—one per delegate)
  - Case study postcards  
(40 cards—2 sets of 20)
  - Group discussion prompts  
(10—enough for one per group. For MUPI the minimum was 5 and the maximum 9 pitches)
  - Judging forms—outlining key criteria  
(4 forms per sheet; 3 sheets per judge)
  - Pitch prompts  
(10—enough for one per group.)
  - Pitch pro-forma  
(10—enough for one per group. )
  - Evaluation template  
(40—one per delegate)

The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) is internationally recognised for its work supporting and inspiring universities to engage with the public. We work to change perspectives, promote innovation, and nurture and celebrate excellence. We also champion meaningful engagement that makes a real and valued difference to people's lives.

The NCCPE is supported by the UK Higher Education Councils, Research Councils UK and Wellcome, and has been hosted by the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England since it was established in 2008.

The Museum-University Partnership Initiative (MUPI) was supported by public funding from Arts Council England. It sought to enable museums and universities to meet together and develop mutually beneficial partnerships. A range of resources have been created, drawing on the learning from the MUPI project. You can find all these resources on the NCCPE website.

---

**National Co-ordinating Centre  
for Public Engagement**

Tel 0117 328 7190

Email [nccpe.enquiries@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:nccpe.enquiries@uwe.ac.uk)

Twitter @NCCPE

[www.publicengagement.ac.uk](http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk)