



National
Co-ordinating
Centre for
Public Engagement

Governance of Public Engagement at UK CEH

Created as part of the UKRI SEE-PER programme

In delivering their RCUK funded SEE PER programme, UK CEH developed robust governance arrangements. This included the creation of PE Champion roles, the establishment of a PER sub-committee, reporting to the Science Board, and the creation of a set of PE-R Principles and KPIs to underpin all of the activity at the Centre.

This resource provides details of these arrangements

Governance of public engagement at UK CEH

Governance structures for PER have been formalised and approved by UKCEH's Executive Board. The roles and responsibilities of site-based Champions and the Terms of Reference for a PER Sub-Committee have been agreed and documented (see below). The PER sub-committee reports to the UKCEH Science Board. This Governance structure recognises PER as a core activity with clear objectives and criteria for judging performance.

UK CEH PER Sub-committee to Science Board:

Terms of Reference

Key Objectives: *Develops, implements and evaluates CEH's strategic approach to PER and associated annual PER Delivery Plan.*

Core Responsibilities

1. Review CEH's strategic approach to PER, including application of the NCCPE EDGE Tool, thus periodically reviewing and developing CEH's PER Principles.
2. Define central resource requirement and champion budgetary requests to Infrastructure Management Team and Science Board as appropriate, and inform allocation and direction thereafter.
3. Oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of annual CEH PER Delivery Plans, ensuring strategic implementation of CEH PER Principles.
4. Support large-scale CEH-wide PER CWI proposal development and delivery.
5. Receive and review annual PER activities informing contributions to CEH's Annual Review and other communication channels for the promotion and celebration of PER both internally and externally.

Exclusions

- Science Communications, including CEH Press Office.

Membership (Annex B)

- The Chair of the PER Sub-committee is the CEH Director of Impact & Innovation.
- A CEH Academic PER lead.
- Site-based PER Champions.
- Head of Communications & Engagement.
- Secretariat support will be provided by Impact & Innovation PA Support.

Governance

- The PER Sub-committee's principal reporting body is the Science Board.

Meetings

- A meeting will be organised on a biannual basis.
- Non-members will be invited to attend on an ad hoc basis when additional expertise is required, including Reports from External Communications Manager and Public Engagement & Events Coordinator.
- Agenda and associated Papers to be circulated no later than five working days prior to meeting.

PER Champion: Terms of Reference

Key Objectives: *Provide Site-based advocacy for PER, supporting the planning and delivery of PER activities aligned with CEH's PER Principles, identifying local opportunities for PER and flagging PER constraints and highlights.*

Core Responsibilities

1. Identifiable Site-based advocate for PER aligned with CEH PER Principles.
2. Provides expertise to facilitate planned, funded PER activities, achieving excellence with impact.
3. Identify and lead local PER opportunities and promote CEH-wide/national-scale opportunities.
4. Signposts PER resources at Sites and flag excellent PER activities with impact to Communications & Engagement Team.
5. Member of PER Sub-committee to Science Board.

Resources

Champions are allocated 4 days pa to fulfil the role, including membership of the Sub-committee.

UKCEH Principles of Public Engagement with Research

A INTRODUCTION

These principles are designed to sit alongside and complement UKCEH's Strategy 2025 and to support effective delivery of that strategy. They set out how UKCEH wants to lead the way in public engagement with research, building on our existing strengths in citizen science, public dialogue and community engagement. They define UKCEH's approach to public engagement with research, outline the support that UKCEH offers scientists to engage with publics, and set out UKCEH's expectations of how scientists carry out excellent public engagement. This document is intended for use by the UKCEH community only, including staff and students.

What is public engagement?

The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) defines public engagement as “the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.”

What are the benefits of public engagement with UKCEH's research?

Benefits to UKCEH researchers include:

- Ensuring our research has impact.
- Ensuring the relevance and public acceptability of research.
- Shaping, defining and delivering research.
- Developing networks to carry out citizen science.
- Enhancing our reputation for societally-relevant research.
- Career development and job satisfaction for researchers.

Benefits to UKCEH publics include:

- Co-producing research that is relevant.
- Having a say in how local landscapes and ecosystem services are shaped.
- Realising increased direct economic, environmental or social benefits from research.

- Engaging in dialogue about controversial technologies and infrastructure developments.
- Participating in protecting, restoring and creating sustainable ecosystems.

Who are our publics?

We want to focus our public engagement with research on those publics who are most relevant to the planning, delivery and impact of our science. Our publics include:

- Targeted segments of the public relevant to research e.g. wildlife enthusiasts, members of relevant clubs and societies, groups relevant to specific projects such as dog walkers or anglers in a particular geographical area, local businesses such as tourism and fisheries etc.
- Local communities e.g. grassroots engagement around science projects in specific communities in developing countries for Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) work e.g. forest workers, community health workers.

When does public engagement happen in the project lifecycle?

We recognise that research is a dynamic and iterative process, rather than a linear one, and that public engagement with UKCEH's research may be appropriate at any stage of the research cycle and will vary from project to project. Relevant stages include:

- As research is being developed: engaging publics in the development of research questions and projects, both in the UK and overseas. Understanding their knowledge and interests from the outset, and what we can learn from them that will be of value in designing the project. This will include applying the latest techniques of participatory research.
- As research is being conducted: engaging publics as collaborators, developers, and participants, including citizen science for example. Thinking through what outputs we will share as the project progresses, and the two-way benefits of this process.
- Once research is concluded: informing and inspiring publics, including young people, with the outputs of research, and influencing people's knowledge, understanding, decisions and behaviours.

We expect that public engagement with research will be led either by UKCEH researchers and designed as part of their research projects, by the UKCEH public engagement team or defined Partners.

The public engagement context

As an independent, not-for-profit research institute, we want to continue to carry out public engagement in a way that is aligned with UKRI. We will collaborate with UKRI and with specific research councils and research institutes to engage publics, and to shape and share best practice across UKRI and beyond. We are committed to being part of a community which is dedicated to developing best practice in public engagement, including NCCPE and a broad network of public engagement professionals.

B UKCEH'S COMMITMENT

At UKCEH we commit to undertaking and supporting excellent, intentional public engagement with our research. We see public engagement as essential in ensuring our research is both relevant and impactful.

This applies to UKCEH's whole research portfolio, including research carried out as part of our National Capability programmes, research funded by UKRI grants, and research funded by other Customer Groups through Competitively Won Income. Public engagement is therefore integral to, and essential for delivery of, UKCEH's Science Strategy 2025.

UKCEH's core capabilities in public engagement with research

As an organisation, we want to be world leaders in specific areas of public engagement, building on our existing strengths. We want to build our capabilities in these areas and will provide central support and coordination for the following types of activities:

- Gathering data via volunteer recording networks e.g. engaging publics with spotting species via conservation trusts, or engaging landowners to support data gathering on their land, more generally known as "citizen science".
- Community engagement delivering landscape management and restoration e.g. managing water bodies to deliver multiple ecosystem services such as water supply and sustainable fisheries.
- Public dialogue around the environmental impact of high profile developments or controversial technologies e.g. major infrastructure developments or potentially damaging pesticides.

- Engaging a segment(s) of wider publics as experts, accessing local knowledge in support of environmental science and management e.g. tapping into local knowledge of the environment.

Having priorities for public engagement will help us to focus our partnership development, attract funding, and build our capabilities in a way that is aligned with our strategy.

Working with partners

We want to foster public engagement with research both in the UK and around the world, and will work with others as intermediaries to publics, including relevant charities and conservation trusts; policy makers, civil servants, public sector professionals and regulators nationally and internationally, international NGOs and International Financial Institutions (IFIs).

Where appropriate and possible, we will encourage scientists to think about engaging with appropriate partners to achieve public engagement with research at scale and / or in depth (for example projects involving engagement with local communities). The UKCEH core public engagement team will facilitate engagement at scale and / or in depth by building appropriate partnerships and capabilities.

Extending the reach of our public engagement may involve working with media partners e.g. BBC Citizen Science. While we see science communications as distinct from public engagement, we will ensure that public engagement is joined up with communications where appropriate.

The boundaries of our public engagement with research

Public engagement activities should focus on public engagement with UKCEH's active research portfolio. We do not have the resources or remit to carry out public engagement with science more broadly. The time and resources of the core public engagement team will go towards supporting priority activities aligned with these principles. This will mean that, while activities such as individual schools visits, while valuable, will be supported through generic resources rather than bespoke work.

Support for scientists: public engagement with research champions

UKCEH commits to having a core public engagement with research team, including public engagement with research champions on each Site who can advise scientists on best practice in

public engagement with research and can serve to mentor, support and inspire early career scientists.

Support for scientists: the role of the core public engagement team

UKCEH's core public engagement team will act as an incubating hub, developing a community of PER active researchers: facilitating excellent public engagement with research, ensuring best practice, supporting skills development, cataloguing and signposting resources, working with L&D to provide training, recording PER activities, evaluating success, and planning for and reporting on public engagement with research at an organisational level, for example by providing regular reports to the Science Board on KPIs, and contributing to UKCEH's Annual Report and Accounts.

The core public engagement team will also consider the best ways to resource public engagement and to enable scientists to have time to focus on public engagement, including building PER systematically into Pathways to Impact for science programmes and projects. Each year, the core public engagement team will put in place an implementation plan setting out plans for continuing to embed PER and for continuous improvement in the practice of PER.

Support for scientists: training in public engagement

Training for public engagement research will include a focus on best practice in general and on specific capabilities that fit UKCEH's strategic priorities e.g. public dialogue around controversial science, building and managing volunteer networks, engaging local communities, and evaluation of public engagement with research.

Support for scientists: funding for public engagement

In addition, UKCEH's tender support team will provide support to researchers when bidding for funding for public engagement with research thereby extending the reach of PER; UKCEH's Public Engagement Coordinator will support researchers with the planning, delivery and evaluation of public engagement activities; and UKCEH's business development team will support researchers to extend and realise income from public engagement where appropriate.

Reporting and evaluation

We expect scientists to report on the impact of public engagement activities, including lessons learned for the future and to share their learnings with colleagues. We will keep a bank of 'lessons

learned’ which scientists can draw on and provide training and guidance on best practice in evaluation as it evolves.

Reward and recognition

UKCEH will reward and recognise public engagement with research against these principles, coincident with other activities focussing on delivering impact: commercialisation, environmental management practices and informing policy.

Rewards and recognition may include: impact awards, acknowledgement by line managers, successes reported in science area and director’s updates, and activities included in the Grapevine internal newsletter. Performance in public engagement may constitute part of the case for merit promotion.

C UKCEH’S EXPECTATIONS

Excellence in public engagement with UKCEH’s research

We are committed to excellence in public engagement. This means that, with appropriate support from UKCEH:

- We expect public engagement with research to be planned as part of funding proposals and as part of the “pathways to impact” where relevant and possible, including National Capability (NC) programmes and Competitively Won Income (CWI) projects.
- We expect public engagement with research to have clearly defined publics that scientists are able to describe, quantify and reach.
- We expect plans for public engagement with research to have SMART objectives and include a rigorous evaluation plan – for example, with a focus on reach, impact and value, and covering quantitative and qualitative measures as appropriate.
- We expect public engagement to be forward looking and innovative and to incorporate new approaches and techniques where appropriate, for example digital communications or participatory research techniques.

UKCEH’s public engagement team and champions (see above) can advise scientists how to develop suitable plans, objectives and evaluation plans.

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs: Widening Participation

1. Record PER activities in a spreadsheet and monitor the increase or decrease in the number of activities over time.
2. Identify which activities are around our core capabilities as outlined above and monitor the increase or decrease over time.
3. Record the journey of scientists with PER from initial activity onwards via same spreadsheet, tracking improvements in excellence and scale where appropriate.
4. Record enquiries and the nature of those enquiries to communications and tender support relating to public engagement and monitor increase or decrease in enquiries over time.

KPIs: Partnerships

1. Report qualitatively on progress with partnerships and outputs from these.

KPIs: Excellence and Continuous Improvement

1. Record alignment of activities with our core focuses i.e. citizen science, public dialogue around restoration or remediation, public dialogue around controversial technologies or infrastructure developments, community engagement in designing science projects.
2. Record objectives, defined publics and metrics for each activity.
3. Review lessons learned and ensure they have been applied to future plans and activities.

KPIs: Income

1. Record number of PER grants applied for and won, and income generated.
2. Record inclusion of public engagement with research in broader bids.

KPIs: Impact

1. What difference have we made through PER? Case studies and stories.
2. Inclusion of PER cases in Centre Evaluation and KEF.

KPIs: Focused Support, Reward and Recognition

1. Record engagement with training materials and training sessions.
2. Record recognition activities e.g. Director's quarterly update, impact awards.