PEP TOGETHER SESSION 9TH APRIL 2020

NCCPE Updates

• NCCPE planning to run a survey after Easter to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the PE sector: on their institutions, on their own work and on the communities they work with. Please let us know if you like to help us test and pilot the survey.

• UKRI have launched a rapid response research fund for novel coronavirus research. Short term (up to 18 month) proposals are sought. All proposals will need to be able to show how progress within the period of award could make a significant contribution to the understanding, diagnosis, prevention and/or management of the 2019-nCoV outbreak.

• NCCPE has published its crowd-sourced guide to meaningful online engagement - https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/creating_and_running_virtual_events_-_april_2020_v1.pdf

PEP updates

• Mhairi Stewart – SCOTPEN is developing some training sessions for researcher and PEPs, covering (for instance) how to create online content; evaluation etc. Plans are very early stage – keen to collaborate with NCCPE to develop these

• Alina Loth – many of our ECRs are feeling at a loss so we are developing a weekly online engagement course for them which we will be keen to share more widely, and would welcome PEPs involvement in.

Online training
Sophie Duncan shared some top tips about planning online training

1. Be clear on the purpose of the event. Purposes might include:
   • Knowledge sharing
   • Learning together
   • Training and development
   • Discussion forum
   • Networking
   • Problem solving

2. Think about your participants, and bear the following in mind:
   • Experience of online participation
   • Accessibility
   • Availability
   • Needs and interests
   • Numbers – how many can you meaningfully engage with given the purpose of your session?
3. Format and approach – there are lots of options, including:
   - Presentation with Q&A
   - Small group discussion and feedback
   - Individual or pair working on set tasks on or offline
   - Audio, video use
   - Interactive elements e.g. quizzes

4. Training could be offered as:
   - Webinar
   - Interactive participatory online event
   - Mix of on and offline, synchronous, asynchronous
   - One off short session
   - Activities run over a set period of time – a day, week, month; recorded sessions with or without mentor support

5. Top tips for facilitators include:
   - Don’t assume you can just translate your current training into the online environment
   - Keep the content short and to the point
   - Ensure interactivity is purposeful, and easy to participate in
   - Consider if and when to encourage use of video
   - Participant mics off unless they are speaking
   - Ask people to close their emails and other apps, so that they are focussed on one screen and don’t have any disruptions.
   - Use the ‘hands up’ function when you want to encourage people to get involved
   - Just like normal facilitation, manage the group dynamics, ensuring that one person does not dominate
   - Encourage people to use the chat function, but make sure you have someone to manage this for you
   - Ask for permission to record the session if you want to use it afterwards
   - Practice what you plan to say
   - Look at the camera, as this will build a connection with the delegates
   - Use the private messaging function to keep in contact with your tech support, question synthesiser etc
   - Have a back-up plan that you and delegates know how to access
   - Think about linking to other online tools such as Google docs or Padlet
   - Be clear with your instructions, repeat them, and have them on a slide
   - Remember to ensure that you have instructions for late joiners if you are using breakout groups
   - Schedule regular grab a coffee breaks, and restrict online sessions to 1.5 to 2 hours in total
BREAK OUT GROUPS: WHAT ARE YOUR EXPERIENCES OF ONLINE TRAINING?

Delegates joined small breakout groups to discuss this topic: do you have top tips, have you got examples from your own practice or others of great online training, do you have any helpful ideas to share, or are there things you need help with?

FEEDBACK FROM GROUPS:

Approaches people have tried
- Action learning - small group discussions facilitated online to get deeper into specific topics. Format helps, as people know when it is their turn to share a challenge, and the process enables people to learn together.
- Participation is often aided by supporting individuals to express their ideas in interesting and personal ways. Sterility of online documents - really bland, try to imagine other ways to share e.g. creating a powerpoint slide with images etc.
- Encourage people to have a fidget tool e.g. teddy, elastic band etc; helps people not get distracted by email, and resist clicking keyboard.
- Interesting ways of doing the quiz e.g. did drawing in felt tip and showed them to the camera. Facilitators taking screen shots to collect images. Use Whats app to send images. Series of activities where people had 5 mins to create a things and show it to others e.g. festival outfit, something yellow.
- Trainer standing up brings energy to session
- Working with teachers on cascade learning (from teacher to student to student...)
- Short presentation with Q&A – quiz rather than breakout groups for a smaller overall group
- Virtual staff room for gatherings, facilitate networks and connections between departments that are more difficult in the building
- Offering follow up sessions where needed – as one on ones?
- Listen to and develop opportunities post training with external partners, e.g. local authorities, education departments, parents
- Linked to this: Ask audiences (parents, etc) what they need – how to reach them?
- Capture attention – not the fault of the recipient, e.g. never underestimate the value of narrative and storytelling even in the context of training (NB facts don’t move us, emotions do), have a series of hooks you can use iteratively. See Helen Obee Reardon TEDx on the power of stories
- We liked the taster session, giving an opportunity to explore the platform, so participants know to what to expect and what to do.

Other lessons learned
- Accessibility important to consider from the start.
- Lots of people are trying to do new things, but it is necessary to explore what is already out there that is good
- Part of process is exploring all of the different platforms available – this is a real challenge (especially as some HEIs are restricting which ones you can use)
- Self-guided online training is quite tough, even if audio and visual. Having transcripts for speed can help. One and a half, 2 hours max is helpful
• Lots of people are using blackboard collaborate for teaching - so maybe more people can use it.
• Face to face trainers have felt that exploratory online training session was a bit flat
• Something really good may take time to develop
• Online usually works much better if participants know each other
• Some activities translate easily online, others much less so. It helps if there are really clear ground rules / structure, e.g. advice services work really well online
• Highlight the skills beyond communication and ticking a box - SPELL IT OUT! This also helps justify the time in training.
• Link to other units, e.g. admissions careers, comms
• People are going to be ok with a loss of quality (video, sound) and it's better to get stuff done than for it to be perfect

Some challenges
• A number of people had not much experience of online training before this current COVID-19 situation apart from basic webinars and passive training (that logs literal time watching content)
• Online safeguarding
• Questions about personal/social media in a professional environment
• Reliable internet connections, access to hardware and software
• Many community groups don’t use the online channels
• Nice to be able to be more engaging and work within a big group
• Only used basic functionality of Blackboard and not aware of how it’s possible to do breakout sessions and then come back together.
• Convincing people this is time well spent away from their lives in this current situation
• Not making things longer than they need to be
• Steep learning curve for those moving from in person to online - facilitators and participants. Technical side is a challenge initially.
• Access (permissions for what you can create online is restricted to certain individuals) and learning to use these new platforms effectively. Different institutions have licences to certain platforms - some are not effective for online training.
• Would be helpful to create a list of things you cannot do.

Ideas in development
• 3 minute thesis programme - an existing programme, considering whether to take this online
• Trying to set up training for Institute, tagged as PE and comms and aiming to develop a new public-facing website section
• Consulting researcher representatives about what online training would be appealing and what format/platform to use
• Keen to work with groups online and maintain networks and connections

Other things to think about
• What are the most practical things people need training in? e.g. strategic planning, or technical sessions for learning all the new tools. Less useful to have training in hands on, for example, where people can’t put into practice for a while
• Researchers are being encouraged to do lots of training while they are out of the lab
• Lots of researchers are getting into their ‘new normal’ routine, and we may miss an opportunity to reach them once they are already in their new normal pattern of work but, there may not be a window to miss - it is worth taking time to do things properly
• Other groups within research centres may already be running training for researchers and could share tips and tricks for what has been working internally
• We don’t want to put too much pressure on people's shoulders as they are already getting lots of messages about improving
• Lincoln has online components to their PER training before developed during SEE-PER, this could be a valuable resource for PEP network to draw on
• This is a great opportunity to trial things
• Would be great to create a guide for moderating chats so the second person can support the presenter
• What does this mean longer term when we can be face to face again?

UPCOMING #PEPTOGETHER EVENTS

Thursday 16th April: We won’t be meeting due to the Easter Break
Thursday 23rd April: Community engagement – what communities are looking for?
Thursday 30th April: Stories of experience – PEPs story telling session. Could you contribute?
Thursday 7th May: Ethics of engagement – what do we need to think about?

Don’t forget to fill in our survey with feedback and topic suggestions: 
https://t.co/enuZXGo6ck?amp=1