RCUK Catalyst Seed Fund 2016-17
Final report

University of Leeds

The final report gives an overview of the RCUK Catalyst Seed Fund project, its objectives, activities and outcomes for the time period September 2016 to August 2017.

1 December 2017
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The CSF project at the University of Leeds aimed to create a culture of public engagement (PE) with research by signalling the institutional and senior management support for PE, grow the grass-roots PE activity and work, and link it across disciplines. In this second year we started to embed the institutional strategy for PE in policies, procedures and practices.

Objective 1 Communication and visibility: Public engagement is a stronger component of University life
- Professor Lisa Roberts, DVC for Research and Innovation, took over as the new PI for the RCUK CSF project.
- The PE strategy was approved by Research and Innovation Board in November 2016, went to all Faculty Research and Innovation Boards, was shared with Senate and was downloaded 39 times.
- We have reached 865 people face-to-face, have received 61 enquiries, have delivered 23 training sessions for 143 people and supported 28 proposal submissions with a combined bid value of more than £14.2 Million.
- The second research open day Be Curious was a resounding success. Over 40 research groups’ stalls (different from last year) attracted over 1000 visitors onto campus. A targeted Facebook campaign in three inner-city Leeds postcodes resulted in 10% of visitors coming from these areas.

Objective 2 Embedding: Staff and students are supported through a range of activities
- The Engagement Excellence Fellowship scheme mentored six new Engagement Fellows.
- The new network for Engagement Champions was launched and previous Engagement Fellows joined the membership network; current membership stands at 18 Engagement Champions across six Faculties and one Service.

Objective 3 Valued activity: Public engagement is celebrated, recorded and recognised in staff promotion
- 97% of staff members agreed that Be Curious had raised public awareness of the University and 85% felt it had raised the profile of their School’s research. 63% felt that the University recognised their PE work.
- Two University of Leeds projects won in the NCCPE Engage 2016 competition and one project was a finalist.
- PE activities can now continuously be logged in Symplectic by staff; serving as a personal depository to be used in academic promotions and reviews, as evidence gathering for REF2021, as a reporting tool for HESA’s annual HE BCI survey and a PE mapping tool for the PE team.
- Since the introduction of the new PE/outreach criterion 18 months ago, every 4th academic promotion application has used it (36 out of 138).
CONTEXT

Our Institution

The University of Leeds is a Russell Group research-intensive university and has over 33,000 students, including more than 9,000 postgraduate students. Our campus in the centre of Leeds accommodates over 3,500 academic and 4,800 non-academic members of staff. Our research income in 2015/16 was in excess of £144 Million. We were the University of the Year in The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2017. We are a top 10 university for research power in the UK according to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework.

Breadth of Research Areas

We offer one of the widest range of courses in the UK; with more than 560 undergraduate and 300 postgraduate courses, including a doctoral school. All of our teaching is research-based and our research areas cover:

- Science, technology and engineering
- Life sciences (including Medicine and Dentistry)
- Languages, Arts and Humanities
- Social Sciences, Education Law
- Mathematics
- Earth and Environment
- Performance and Cultural Industries

Leeds encourages open, informed debate about and understanding of major global challenges. We seek to answer the major questions of security, political upheaval, environmental change and global health through interdisciplinary research. Our academics are leaders in their field who produce powerful research with lasting international and local impact. We integrate this world-class research with education and scholarship of the highest quality. We see ourselves as and aspire to be an internationally highly respectable University attracting the best students and staff.

The University joined with local organisations and businesses to set up a Leeds school aimed at 14- to 18-year-olds interested in engineering and advanced manufacturing. The University Technical College (UTC) Leeds opened in September 2016, and the Faculty of Engineering advises on curriculum development and provides opportunities for UTC students to access specialist equipment and expertise in the course of their studies.

History of Public Engagement at Institution before the CSF Project

Having missed out on previous Beacon (2008) and Catalyst (2012) funding rounds, public engagement (PE) was not formally supported institutionally. No member of the senior management team had PE as a core responsibility and PE was not mentioned clearly in strategic documents as a priority. There was no PE team in place at any level of the University.

The training provision for postgraduate students included: Media Awareness, Blogging and Video Filming for Research Impact, Engaging Non-Specialists with Your Research, Summarising your research to an audience, Going social, Introduction to research impact, Embed impact in research, Public engagement with research, Communicating complex science to the public.

Leeds has delivered (and is delivering) significant PE activity, including areas of excellence, such as in patient and public involvement (PPI), Arts Engaged, the student volunteering programmes, provision of lifelong learning opportunities, and events and activities through the Festival of Science, the
Concert Series, stage@leeds, the Audrey and Stanley Burton Gallery, the Textile Archive, partnership with the M&S Archive, the Museum for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine and recent advances with MOOCs. Many research groups within the University have a specific PE focus, such as iMBE and water@leeds. In 2013 the University delivered more than 300 events or activities (not including outreach activity serving widening participation). The University of Leeds received institutional strategic support funds from the Wellcome Trust. These were partly used to fund public engagement activities in the Biomedical Sciences and Medical Humanities.

A PE network of people (pepnet) was founded through grass-root activity in 2013. The network has held 10 meetings up to the start of the CSF project and linked up with the Wellcome Trust ISSF PE working group. A working group chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation, Professor David Hogg, was established to produce a discussion paper for the executive group around the then position of PE at the University. Pepnet also put together a public engagement symposium at the 2014 Student Education conference. Impact Accelerator Account funds helped to run a pilot Engagement Excellence Fellowship scheme in the largest faculty (Medicine and Health) to coach and mentor engagement champions.

What was characteristic about these efforts is that they were delivered individually and therefore associated with strong ownership by the staff members involved. While this helps to deliver research outputs and impact, it leads to compartmentalisation of effort, adding to the notion that ‘one could do more if one worked more collaborative across the University’.

**Educational engagement**

The University has a very active and well respected Educational Engagement team which serves the widening participation agenda and delivers the University’s outreach activity. We distinguish between Educational and Public Engagement at the University on the grounds of its drivers; Educational Engagement’s driver is student recruitment from non-traditional backgrounds. Public Engagement is not subjected to this driver, although it might serve it.

**Cultural engagement**

The campus has a breadth of outstanding cultural attractions, resources and spaces open to the public and the public programming showcases the University’s excellent research, partnerships and teaching, celebrating the thriving creative community at the University of Leeds. A rich diversity of cultural events and opportunities are on offer throughout the year including theatrical productions at stage@leeds, concerts at the nationally-recognised Clothworkers’ Concert Hall, research-led exhibitions in The Stanley and Audrey Burton Gallery, the Treasures Gallery, the M&S Archive and ULITA, open lectures from internationally-renowned speakers, and performances from contestants in the biennial Leeds International Piano Competition, as well as a Public Art Programme of lunchtime talks, artist interviews, panel discussions public poetry readings in response to campus sculpture, with members of the public contributing their personal poetry. The University is part of the DARE collaboration with Opera North, the first partnership of its kind in the UK. Since its creation in 2006, over 107 projects have been initiated involving practitioners, academics and students from across both organisations. The cultural impact is emphasised by the partnerships with Opera North, the West Yorkshire Playhouse, the Royal Armouries, The Hepworth, Wakefield and Leeds Museums & Galleries.
Timeline of PE

- **2013**: PE practitioner network
- **2015**: Signing Manifesto for PE, CSF first year, EES for all faculties, PE strategy development, PE promotion criterion
- **2016**: PE symposium, PE working group, Engage finalists, EES pilot
- **2017**: Be Curious event launch, Funding secured for PE team, CSF second year, Annual PE awards launch, Engage winners & finalists, PE strategy launch, Engagement Champions launch
- **2018**: PE part of REF2021, Intro to PE workshop, Work with Leeds Doctoral College, Research proposal surgeries

*Figure 1: Timeline of PE milestones before and after the two years of CSF funding at Leeds. Green lines indicate CSF funding.*
The CSF Team – The PE team

The PE team is part of the central Communications team. During the first year of CSF funding, two members of staff were employed by the CSF project; one project manager (Professional, Grade 8, 0.7 FTE) and one administrator (Support, Grade 5, 0.2 FTE). The resources for the academic member of staff were provided by the University (Academic, Grade 9, 0.4 FTE); a project officer (Professional, Grade 7, 0.6 FTE) paid by Wellcome Trust ISSF funds was also part of the team. During the second year of CSF funding all team members were funded through the CSF from September 2016 to August 2017 and the project officer was fully incorporated into the PE team (changing line management to Team Lead). The time allocation for the Academic Lead was increased to 0.5FTE to reflect the increased work load due to the development of the UG Discovery module during this year. The project officer left the team in September 2016, which led to a re-assessment of the role and a different grade (Grade 6). The new PE officer joined in January 2017, who was one of the Engagement Excellence Fellows from the 2015/16 cohort. Figure 2 shows the team composition during 2016/17 paid by CSF. Altogether the PE team was 2.0 FTE strong.

Figure 2: PE team composition during the second year of funding (2016-17), including full time equivalent (FTE) and staffing grades.

Changes to the University during the project

Re-structuring of the Research and Innovation Services (RIS) was ongoing before the start of the CSF project in 2015 and was completed during 2016. It was felt that to place the PE team with RIS would have led to unnecessary complications with the on-going restructuring process in RIS. To give the PE team a fair and uninterrupted start in September 2015 it was located with central Communications. A new Director of Communications, Mark Devane, joined the University in October 2015 and has supported the PE team throughout the project.

Since the start of the CSF project it emerged that the structure of senior management was undergoing change due to the end of terms of two Pro Vice-Chancellors in August 2016. New appointments have been made and PE with research is now part of the portfolio of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation, Professor Lisa Roberts, who started in August 2016. The new Director for Research Quality and Impact, Professor Nick Plant, started in May 2017 and sees PE as an important part in the University’s REF2021 case studies.
**Strategic priorities for the CSF project**

Our longer-term vision for public engagement with research at the University of Leeds is that it is another valued activity to increase the impact of our research and that it has an equal standing with other forms of engagement. We believe that only a balance between different forms of engagement will allow universities to retain their unique selling point - and hence their value to society - as a neutral unbiased haven for experimentation and exploration at the frontiers of knowledge.

Following on from the work during the first year of CSF funding the focus for the second year was on embedding the activities started in the previous year. Hence the aims have only slightly changed.

**Aims**

- To continue with the culture change for PE with research at the University by signalling the institutional and senior management support for PE, growing the PE activity and work, and linking it across disciplines
- To implement the institutional strategy for PE in a co-productive way with stakeholders so that PE is embedded successfully in policies, procedures and practices

To achieve our aims we focus on three objectives: communication and visibility, embedding PE and PE as a valued activity. Championship is used as the vehicle to help with the delivery of these objectives as learning from examples and role models makes the message authentic and stands a better chance to eventually change behaviour.

**Objectives**

1. **Communication and visibility:**
   a. Continue to communicate the existence of institutional support for PE and the way in which this builds on the work of existing PE activity
   b. Make current PE activity more visible to internal and external stakeholders
   c. Communicate the value of PE through champions of engagement

2. **Embedding PE:**
   a. Implement the institutional strategy for PE in an iterative and co-productive process
   b. Develop support, training and resources for PE oriented at staff’ and students’ needs
   c. Develop long-term sustainability plans for PE support

3. **Valued activity:**
   a. Make PE an explicitly mentioned activity in promotion criteria for non-academic staff members and a recognised activity in work-load modelling
   b. Celebrate excellent PE activity with an award
   c. Make evaluation part and parcel for any PE activity so that PE is valuable and learning can take place
   d. Improve processes to record PE activity accurately and efficiently

These aims and objectives align with RCUK’s aims for the CSF of developing a strategic approach to supporting, valuing and rewarding PE with research and integrating it within policies, practices and procedures. They also take into consideration our institution’s current position with regard to support for PE, the activity taking place, achieving realistic progress and a good way to ensure ownership and actual implementation.
DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT

The PE team’s approach is shaped by our history and experience. We work collaboratively and provide linkage vertically and horizontally in the institution. The PE team attempts to foster a collaborative approach in the many things it does to create an authentic, open and honest culture. We aim to be a team that is known for prompt and professional delivery of added value.

The existence of the PE team itself, the signing of the Manifesto for PE in 2015, the fact that the senior champion for PE is the DVC for Research and Innovation are all far-reaching signals that PE is a valued and supported activity. During the second year it became clear that providing this reassurance of senior level approval to all staff was very important.

We continued to co-ordinate activity and assist with increasing PE’s profile, we further wove PE into the fabric of the University. During the first year of CSF funding we co-developed the vision for PE with research together with academic and other staff members. Staff were adamant that PE is part of impactful research and something that we do; it is not a separate activity. Therefore PE is integrated into and can occur at all stages of the research cycle. It became clear that being respectful to people, disciplines and ways of working is essential; that there is not one model or form of engagement that suits everyone; that other forms of engagement, e.g. business, policy or educational engagement, are appropriate forms of engagement that can lead to impact. We distilled this into our vision:

By 2020 all research projects at the University of Leeds will include an appropriate engagement activity.

Our STAR compass (Figure 3) developed as part of the strategy development has become one of the take-home messages: We embrace PE because it is our social responsibility, we want to increase the trust in our research with the community, we are accountable to the public as the funders of our research and we want to increase the relevance of our research, making it more impactful.

![STAR compass]

Figure 3: STAR compass.
The strategic plan for PE also includes deliverables that touch on: improving the quality and success rate of research proposals through earlier engagement with the public; increasing the funding for PE within awarded research grants; and raising the proportion of impact case studies submitted to the next REF that include PE. During November 2016 the plan was approved by Research and Innovation Board and has been available from our website since.

The CSF award funded all team members in 2016/17 (second year) and is described in: CONTEXT. The team lead reports to the Director of Communications, who in turn reports to the University Secretary. Through the senior level champion for PE with research and PI, the DVC for Research and Innovation, Professor Lisa Roberts, the team sends quarterly reports to Research and Innovation Board (RIB), which is the forum in which all Pro-deans for Research and Innovation come together, including the Director of Research and Innovation Service. The Academic Lead is also a member of the management committee for the University’s Wellcome Trust ISSF group and provides liaison to ensure that work and funds from both ISSF and RCUK are strategically aligned to support embedding PE.

Overall, we continue the work that we started in 2015 and have moved from a setting up phase to an embedding and implementing phase. The size of the team (2.0 FTE) and the vastness of the University (7000 staff members) have shaped our practical work. We work with people who want to work with us; we support people where we can add value. We recognise that we work with intelligent people who might not easily change their ways. We aim to create positive examples that can act as models; we aim to turn individual instances into longer stories of success and build on the pull that these stories and models create.

Our business plan set out three key objectives, which remained the same in year two:

**Objective 1 Communication and visibility: Public engagement is a stronger component of University life**

Most of our activity falls under this objective and we use a range of tools to serve this. Two years ago we did not have a team who supported PE, now we have a centrally situated team in Communications benefitting from the expertise of our colleagues. We have a dedicated website ([https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement](https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement)); 667 page views, 29% up from last year); case studies of PE have been viewed 134 times (up by 48% from last year), the Engagement Excellence scheme has seen an increase in page views by 60% to 117. We use a range of other communication channels (all staff emails, staff website, staff magazine, pepnet newsletter) and our offer of one-to-one bespoke support is always an opportunity to share our message.
We collect data about our work to communicate our value to senior management, we help staff members to maximise the promotion of their events and we have continued to run the research open day ‘Be Curious’. This year in particular has seen a rise in the face-to-face communications (Figure 4) due to sharing the new strategic plan for PE (from 513 to 865), which was downloaded 39 times. While occasionally finding staff members who have not yet heard about Be Curious (now in preparation for the third time), we find them and submissions to Be Curious are coming in from staff members who have not taken part previously. Be Curious has attracted over 1000 visitors year-on-year, the website for Be Curious registered over 5000 page views this year; the newly fashioned music, theatre and festivals site on our corporate web site has seen a traffic increase of 280% (almost 4000 page views) from 2015/16. As a consequence of the Vice Chancellor sharing an email about Be Curious with members of the senior management team letting them know how successful the event had been and how impressed he was with it, other senior managers requested to be added to the invitation list of any future events. Be Curious also featured in the University’s Annual Review 2015/16: (https://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/download/downloads/id/1403/annual_review_2015-16) Photographs of the event have been added to the internal image library, enabling staff members to use them in their own communications; e.g. a centre leader used them in a presentation to funders documenting PE activity at Leeds and postdocs in the Faculty of Biological Sciences have used them on their website.

Two projects with Leeds contribution or leadership won at the National Engage Awards and one project was a finalist. Not only was this story shared internally, we also had a pepnet meeting to celebrate our winners, giving them a wider audience and helping us to share what excellent PE looks like. Obviously, we were very pleased that one winner and the finalist had previous links with the PE team: the winner had been supported during 2015/16 through funds and the finalist is an Engagement Excellence Fellow from the 2015/16 cohort.

The network for Engagement Champions launched in December 2016 was purposefully set up as a membership scheme to secure commitment for which individuals have to ‘subscribe’ for six months. That commitment is expressed in their self-identified actions for the next six months. Having a list of champions shared with Research and Innovation Board turned out to be hugely attractive to some members while having the DVC as a member of the network ex officio was very helpful for others in convincing line managers to agree to the membership. The meetings of the network also give our DVC the chance to get to hear first-hand about success and challenges that Engagement Champions face. During the first half year we had 21 champions, covering five faculties and two services; in the second half year now we have 18 champions, covering six faculties and one service. Obviously, the creation of a network is also part of embedding PE, our second objective.
Objective 2 Embedding PE: Staff and students are supported through a range of activities

The tabling of the strategic plan for PE at Research and Innovation Board in November 2016 was a catalyst to further conversations at Faculty level; the PE team elaborated on the strategic plan for PE at four Faculty Research and Innovation Committee meetings and the plan was downloaded 39 times from the website. Together with a dedicated session at pepnet on the strategic plan with PI and DVC Professor Lisa Roberts and the Stern Report, the profile for PE at Leeds has definitely increased. The one-to-one support for research proposals has seen an increase in 55% from the previous year and enquiry levels have stayed fairly constant at 61 (69 previous year). However, there might be some under-reporting as not all email enquiries are logged. The number of training interventions provided has increased by 64% and the number of people trained has increased from 27 to 143 (Figure 6). Contributing factors were the new UG module on PE and a number of departmental workshops.

Advances to further embed the help of the PE team in the research development pipeline were slow as there is not one existing process. There are a multitude of different grant proposal processes across the institution and while we have presented to Research and Innovation Development Managers, we are yet to see any meaningful uptake. The support the PE team does deliver is down to its own activity of reaching out and people coming back based on the experience they had or informed by those who have benefited from the service.

PE is on the radar as part of the impact agenda. This is evidenced by the close collaboration with colleagues from Research and Innovation Services (RIS) looking after REF and governance. Not only did we work in partnership with RIS when establishing a recording system for PE (objective 3), we made sure the system was serving several agendas including REF. PE activities will be underpinning evidence for potential impact and the PE recording system feeds through to the REF supporting system, thereby avoiding double entry. We benefitted enormously from the input of our colleagues in RIS pointing out the linkage of the two systems and facilitating the contact with IT and the Library to bring the PE recording process to fruition. The PE team responded to the request by RIS to help with the RCUK Funding Assurance Audit around public engagement.

The new PE team member arriving in 2017 mapped the existing training provision for PE; this was somewhat difficult as the service department responsible for staff development was going through a re-orientation phase, which is not yet completed. From a staff survey for Be Curious it was apparent that staff did not feel they needed training. This was an interesting self-perception as it did not match with the perceptions of the PE team. We reasoned that the word ‘training’ was unhelpful and decided to use the quarterly workshop sessions of pepnet to upskill staff from 2017/18 onwards.
Originally, we planned to pilot a specialist and rechargeable resource to support researchers with public engagement activities, particularly on major projects, i.e. to develop costed models for the PE team’s time. After careful analysis of how much resource would have to be invested in managing this rechargeable resource and what consequences it would have on the other activities that the PE team delivers, it was not pursued further. It would have also changed the character of the work the PE team is doing from facilitating, enabling and supporting PE to doing PE for academics, contravening the ethos of PE as part of research.

The Engagement Excellence Scheme continued in its second year with Engagement Fellows from across all faculties (third cohort overall as the first round was solely run within one faculty, albeit the largest). From a PE team perspective the scheme is fairly time-intensive as each annual programme is tailor-made for the current cohort. However, this is reflected in the way the Fellows feel about the scheme:

“The scheme has been incredibly generative in a way I couldn’t have predicted. I expected the scheme to be very practical in its orientation, which it was, and in this sense it was very helpful. I also expected it to be supportive, but I didn’t expect such a level of individual discussion – it was so helpful to hear other people talk in detail about their projects, and to talk about my own and get feedback. It was hugely valuable to hear the perspectives of people not related to my field and with different levels of experience in public engagement.” Dr Lou Harvey, School of Education

The Engagement Fellows have continued their journey e.g. by joining the Network of Engagement champions, which we launched in December 2016. This network was set up to have more champions for public engagement across the University thereby making the PE team’s work more robust to potential staffing fluctuations. Champions help embed public engagement into the University’s practices, policies and procedures and act as communicators around local and institutional public engagement-related activity in a bi-lateral way. The network increases the profile of engagement champions and the work they are doing, as a report of their work and the list of champions is shared with Research and Innovation Board. The latter fact proved very attractive to some of our champions. Champions become members for six months by submitting self-identified tasks for that period. Membership is renewed after six months with a new list of self-identified tasks. It is therefore a network of committed people, who contribute to the cause on a continued basis. The first renewal took place in June and the vast majority of members renewed their membership. Currently, there are 18 champions across six faculties (out of eight) and one central service. Champions also serve the PE agenda by being panel members for Be Curious – the research open day of the University of Leeds – or the PE awards. When the network was introduced we were able to have conversations with Faculty Deans for Research and Innovation whose faculties were not represented among the champions.
Adding PE and outreach to promotion criteria for academic staff was achieved during the first year of CSF funding. During the same consultation process for non-academic staff promotion criteria PE and outreach were also suggested to be added, but this was not successful. The new promotion criteria for academic staff were launched in February 2016 and by September 2017 out of 138 promotion applications 36 had used the newly added PE and outreach criterion. This means that the PE and outreach criterion was used in every 4th promotion application at Leeds. It was used across all grades (Grade 8, 9 and 10), across all eight faculties and in all three promotion pathways (academic leadership, research and innovation and student education). This result is beyond our highest hopes. The PE team knew of one promotion during the summer 2017 of an Engagement champion and we would have been pleased to find one more. Facilitating the addition of this criterion seems to have unleashed its use across the University and we expect this to continue in the future. We do not know about the quality of the submissions and while it may be desirable to implement a certain quality control, it would most probably stifle the process in the future. Promotion applications are assessed by academics, i.e. they consider themselves to be experts in academic leadership, research and student education. To give public engagement a special status by requesting the involvement of other experts would not help necessarily with embedding its use.

The University PE awards in their second year highlighted the good practice that exists at Leeds. Categories are aligned to the main stages of the research cycle, developing research ideas, doing research in partnership and dissemination research. The alignment of award categories is a further attempt to embed the engaged research cycle and to emphasize engagement at research development and research doing stage. While we had submissions to and winners in all categories last year, we did not have any submissions to the research development category this year. All submissions were judged by a 7-person panel of four internal and three external judges (RCUK, UCL and Sheffield) either academics or PE professionals, but without any involvement of the PE team in the judging. We are very proud of this practice, as it shows and achieves a multitude of things: external peers work with us, the standard is raised by involving external peers, the award carries more credibility and objectivity is increased. We used the same practice last year. In both years Engagement Excellence Fellows won University PE awards. In

Dr Lou Harvey (winner) and Professor Lisa Roberts (PI)
2016 one University PE award winner and Engagement Fellow became a finalist in the national Engage competition (Georgina Binnie); another University PE award winner and mentor of the Engagement Excellence Scheme won the Engaging with Young People award at the national Engage competition (Sue Pavitt). This shows that our mentoring work (Engagement Excellence Scheme) leads to award winning public engagement projects on University and national level. It also shows that the mentors we work with are of outstanding calibre.

One action that we took to address the lack of engagement practice during the research development stage is to direct our small grant funding at research development engagement activities. Funding for such engagement is difficult to obtain outside health research as it tends to take place before the submission of a grant proposal and hence cannot be costed for. Because NIHR (National Institute for Health Research – a major funder of health research) requires the involvement of patients, carers and service users in the development of research applications, the practice of involvement exists in the discipline and funding for it is available through their Research Design Service. We are translating best practice from one discipline to other disciplines and the first funding round in early September is supporting seven projects. There will be two more rounds during 2017/18.

While we have developed the STAR framework (Figure 3) for PE as a first step to help with evaluation it proves very difficult to increase its uptake with staff for evaluation purposes. Even within the Engagement Excellence Scheme where we asked Fellows to identify two to three objectives for their engagement activities, it is difficult to move beyond the point of identification. We invested time into the identification stage by challenging almost each word to make sure that the objective is SMART. The next step would be to identify the measurements or indicators for the objectives, but that seems to be seen in the ‘too-hard’ box. The sheer fact of delivering an activity is seen as impact without questioning how that activity was received by the audience or whether it achieved the expected objective. The difficulty lies in making people identify an objective for their activity in the first place.

One of the PE team members has experience in developing evaluation frameworks for the third sector and also took part in an online evaluation course specifically aimed at PE. This course is well meant trying to address a gap and take away from the sheer enormity of the evaluation task as it presents itself to the individual. It can nevertheless leave an individual with the feeling that if their evaluation that is not up to social sciences standards, it is not worth doing. This seems to be an untenable position as it is unrealistic of the circumstances an academic from any discipline finds themselves in. The purpose of evaluation is two-fold; to improve and learn and to gather evidence of
impact. These are both important and add value to the engagement activity, but to do this well resource (at least time) is required, which in most cases is overlooked. In the case of the PE team we want to encourage staff to do PE and in a lot of cases that means getting started and not overloading people with additional requirements, e.g. evaluation. Within science subjects the analogy of an experiment can help in underlining the usefulness of evaluation; i.e. an experiment is the testing of a hypothesis. The result is evidence whether the experiment worked or not (improve and continued learning) and also evidence for the hypothesis (gathering evidence of impact). Ideally, we would like to offer the time to discuss and identify the objectives and measurements for each PE activity. We still have some way to go to embed evaluation practice in all PE activities across the University. We do evaluate the Be Curious research open day and have learned about the success of various communication channels. We have established the postcodes our audience comes from and have acted successfully to increase visitor numbers of under-represented Leeds postcodes. We have also learned that according to the self-perception of our staff members, training in PE for staff members is not required. As a consequence, we have stopped offering ‘training’ and use other terms like ‘workshop’ or ‘development’ instead.

To record PE activity more accurately and efficiently we have worked with the Library, IT and Strategy and Planning to amend the existing Symplectic database that is already used by academics. The idea is that Symplectic functions as a repository for an academic for outputs (i.e. published papers) and now also for PE activities. The work started mid-2016 and by working collaboratively with colleagues we made sure the process is fit for purpose. We also evaluated the interface with academic colleagues in two rounds to ensure that terminology was clear. This led to adjustments and new database fields that are now part of the form. The system went live together with an update to Symplectic in June 2017 in time for the HESA 2016-17 data collection in October 2017 and while outside the reporting period of this report, the amount of entries doubled in comparison with last year’s method. We received quite a number of enquiries in the run-up to the HESA deadline, including from our practice-based researchers about the appropriateness of using the system to log their performances. This in turn has helped the PE team to reach out to a group of researchers at the University with whom we did not have had any contact before. Because the Symplectic process is a success story, one of our case studies gives more detail.

*Temperature test at pepnet meeting 21 June 2017:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step back</th>
<th>No change</th>
<th>We have moved</th>
<th>We have moved a lot</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>signalling the institutional and senior management support for PE</td>
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<tr>
<td>growing the grass-roots PE activity and work,</td>
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<tr>
<td>linking it across disciplines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>embedding PE successfully in policies, procedures and practices</td>
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Overall, the number of different activities we have either started, continued or taken part in meant that more and more people have heard about PE from us and have participated in some way. Leeds is well positioned to continue its PE journey, which can also be seen from
these two
temperature tests
with staff members on
two occasions (pepnet
meeting in June 2017
and the PE awards
ceremony in
September 2017). The
vast majority of
people think we have
moved or moved a lot
along all aspects as set
out by the CSF project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you think it’s going?</th>
<th>Step back</th>
<th>No change</th>
<th>We have moved</th>
<th>We have moved a lot</th>
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<tr>
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<td>support for PE</td>
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<td>growing the grass-roots PE activity and work,</td>
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# Activities, Outputs & Impact and Lessons Learned

## Activities, outputs & impact year two

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<tr>
<th>CSF objective</th>
<th>RCUK CSF Objective</th>
<th>Rationale and key activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes and Impact/Legacy</th>
<th>Learning/approaching things differently in future</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 6, 7</td>
<td>Strategic targeting of audiences, e.g. Research and Development managers, University Academic Fellows, Faculty and School meetings</td>
<td>Workshop provision</td>
<td>Change of language used to make sure people listen: Emphasis on Impact. Need to develop an appropriate and efficient process for embedding PE in research proposals</td>
<td>There is no streamlined process to which we can slot in. This is far more complex than anticipated.</td>
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<td>Use membership of internal groups to help with visibility of PE</td>
<td>Culture on Campus Group membership, WT ISSF steering group membership, FBS Sci +Comm Group membership, SMT Comms membership</td>
<td>Develop and establish a shared understanding of PER, Leverage WT ISSF funds for PE team, Embed PE team as part of Comms, Become a trusted partner to deliver PE events</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1-1 bespoke support for proposals</td>
<td>28 proposals with combined</td>
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<td>PE is now part of the Communications team website, to which we belong</td>
<td>value of £14.2M</td>
<td>with PE team involvement is at 50%.</td>
<td>It takes a lot longer than anticipated for staff to make use of the available support. New staff join all the time.</td>
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<td><a href="https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement">https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement</a></td>
<td>Develop and establish a shared understanding of PER</td>
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<td>667 page views in 6 months</td>
<td>Support funding applications and plans for research projects</td>
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<td>Help to develop and support examples of embedded PER in practice</td>
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<td>We become part of the fabric and a valued part of the central Communications team. Research support teams refer researchers to us.</td>
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<td>1b</td>
<td>2, 4, 5, 7</td>
<td>Be Curious 2017 - the second research open day To provide a platform for a large number of our researchers where they can engage with the public while minimising their time commitment</td>
<td><a href="http://www.leeds.ac.uk/becurious">http://www.leeds.ac.uk/becurious</a></td>
<td>We use a 2-stage application approach and involve academic colleagues in the selection process. Learning from last year was acted on: theme for event worked well, distributed nature of event did not.</td>
<td>Improve signage and maps; clarification of who is our audience; pursue paid advertising for marketing.</td>
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<td>over 5000 website hits Photographs of the day are available to staff to be used in communications via the image library: imagelibrary.leeds.ac.uk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rationale and key activities</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Outcomes and Impact/Legacy</td>
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<td>The University of Leeds takes part in Light Night 2016, a Leeds City Council Initiative (7 October, 6-10 pm). University-submission is</td>
<td>Of the 123 photographs, 50 have been downloaded 81 times.</td>
<td>Over 1000 visitors attended. Over 40 new activities and new academics involved. Senior leaders have signed up to the invitation list for 2018. Centre leaders use BC as an example of PE in their presentations to funding councils. The Vice Chancellor thanks PE team for hard work and shares his admiration and appreciation with senior colleagues; also compliments on event as trust and reputation building. Alumni development team plans to link up its activity to high profile PE platforms. Be Curious appears in research proposals.</td>
<td>Question about how this serves our purpose of engaging the public with research. Large resource commitment, needs</td>
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<td>handled by PE team.</td>
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<td>University contribution for Light Night 2017 is planned and organised (6 October 2017, 6-10 pm).</td>
<td>communications via the image library: imagelibrary.leeds.ac.uk Of the 49 photographs, 15 have been downloaded 19 times.</td>
<td>PE team was approached by City Council and Cultural Institute building on the relationship from 2016. Leeds was successful in getting hub-status (1 of 6 across the UK). Over 750 people took part in the 10 events.</td>
<td>closer look going forward.</td>
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<td>The websites of Be Curious, Light Night and Being Human are part of the ‘Around Campus’ tab on the corporate website. The website now more fully reflects what activities are taking place.</td>
<td>Festival programme (10 events) <a href="http://beinghumanfestival.org/curators-highlights-being-human-2016/">http://beinghumanfestival.org/curators-highlights-being-human-2016/</a> <a href="https://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/4000/around_campus">https://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/4000/around_campus</a></td>
<td>Start of creating legacy of bigger events. Increase in website hits from 2015/16 to 2016/17 by 380%. Evidence from website hits that there is an external audience that wants to be served.</td>
<td>Question about link to research is part of application form.</td>
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<td>Being supportive of independent PE activities: the Pint of Science Leeds group puts on their second year of talks in May 2017</td>
<td>15 events in May, 35 speakers of which 12 are professors from UoL. The group ran one activity at Be Curious and also advertised their event then. The group engages with PE infrastructure and submits to PE awards.</td>
<td>The event is featured in the Research and Innovation newsletter sent out to businesses: PE becomes something to be proud of and of interest to other stakeholders. Many of the group members are Early Career Researchers.</td>
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<td>External communication</td>
<td>Contributing to 5 community newsletter by Sustainability team 1 newsletter for businesses by Research &amp; Innovation team 3 Leeds City Council event list 16 Eventbrite sites 140 tweets, 211 new followers</td>
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<td>Internal communication</td>
<td>16 enews emails to all staff 19 forstaff website articles 4 staff magazine articles 12 monthly pepnet newsletters</td>
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<td>1c</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 6, 7</td>
<td>The Engagement Excellence Fellow scheme welcomes its third cohort from all faculties and includes</td>
<td>Six Fellows (two from Medicine &amp; Health and one each from the Faculties of Arts, Engineering,</td>
<td>Create senior leadership and engagement champions to oversee and promote PER</td>
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The event is featured in the Research and Innovation newsletter sent out to businesses: PE becomes something to be proud of and of interest to other stakeholders. Many of the group members are Early Career Researchers.

Develop a shared understanding of PER
Develop PER resources
Contribute to wider networks supportive of PER
Provide and sign-post PER platforms and opportunities

See above

Analysis of effectiveness of different communication channels

To manage expectations on both sides terms and conditions of fellowship scheme are
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<td>monthly meetings for the mentoring and coaching programme led by two academic PE engagement champions, supported by the PE team.</td>
<td>Environment and Social Sciences) started the scheme and 5 finished it. <a href="https://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/news/article/5819/celebrating_public_engagement_success">https://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/news/article/5819/celebrating_public_engagement_success</a> 5 supported PE projects and final reports. <a href="http://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/news/article/5468/public_engagement_at_leeds_shines_at_national_award_ceremony">http://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/news/article/5468/public_engagement_at_leeds_shines_at_national_award_ceremony</a> Each project presented their submission and reflected on the success and challenges of their project. Launch meeting in December with a list of 20 champions. This list is available on our website to act as a resource for colleagues looking for people near them to talk to about PE and was also shared with RIB.</td>
<td>Develop and establish a shared understanding of PER Create internal networks to share good practice, support staff and celebrate PER One Fellow wins PE award 2017 and joins the Engagement Champion network. Create internal networks to share good practice, support staff and celebrate PER</td>
<td>Sharing the list with RIB/senior management made the proposition very attractive to champions.</td>
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<td>The two winners and one finalist of the national ENGAGE 2016 competition were celebrated in a news item on the for staff website, in the staff magazine and in the December pepnet meeting.</td>
<td>To have more champions for PE across the University, the network for Engagement Champions (necnet) was formed in December</td>
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| 2016.         |                    | Working and communicating with the PI and senior champion for PE | 3 PI meetings  
                Be Curious attendance  
                Ex-officio member of necnet | http://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement/people-development/  
June meeting with champions focussing on what went well and what was difficult. This fed into the Q4 report back to Research and Innovation Board. | bi-lateral way.  
Coming together as a network increases the profile of engagement champions and the work engagement champions are doing.  
Identified barriers: some had been **actively discouraged by senior staff members to do PE**; that resourcing PE activities is a challenge, that **PE work is valued as part of promotion but not as part of REF**; that the ad-hoc nature of opportunities make it difficult to plan and that they feel **pulled in lots of different directions** making it difficult to allocate time for PE. | Being strategic in involvement of busy senior member of staff. Continue to have regular meetings. |

**Identified barriers:**
- Some had been actively discouraged by senior staff members to do PE;
- Resourcing PE activities is a challenge,
- PE work is valued as part of promotion but not as part of REF;
- The ad-hoc nature of opportunities makes it difficult to plan;
- They feel pulled in lots of different directions making it difficult to allocate time for PE.
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<td>2a</td>
<td>3, 4</td>
<td>DVC for Research and Innovation Professor Lisa Roberts is the <strong>new PI for the RCUK CSF</strong> project taking over from Professor David Hogg. There was a risk that the new PI may not take over the role. Pepnet session in December to launch PE strategic plan</td>
<td>Strategic plan for PE (<a href="https://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/downloads/file/1408/strategic_plan">https://www.leeds.ac.uk/forstaff/downloads/file/1408/strategic_plan</a>) Lisa Roberts suggests tabling of strategic plan for PE at Research and Innovation Board (RIB; 25 senior members) meeting in November. Lisa Roberts as new Senior Champion for PE attends the session.</td>
<td>As RIB papers disseminated to Faculty Research and innovation committees, the PE team attends four (out of eight) for further conversations on PE. The conversations lead to further actions. PE strategy is also mentioned in Senate. Raised awareness of PE</td>
<td>The tabling of the paper was very helpful for the trickle-down effect it caused. Stern report mentioning PE positively has helped us internally to raise PE’s profile.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td>To map the <strong>training provision for PE</strong> and develop plans how we can Together with colleagues from OD&amp;PL (i.e. staff development) Plan to develop an introductory workshop session on PE which</td>
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<td>make sure people are equipped to deliver quality PE is the task for the new PE officer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>areas of demand and need were identified, including how we can engage postgraduate researchers with PE activities further.</td>
<td>links to specific calls, e.g. Being Human Festival.</td>
<td>For working with the Thackray Medical Museum researchers funded by Wellcome Trust ISSF funding, Cancer Research UK or Yorkshire Cancer Research will be particularly encouraged.</td>
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<td>Museum University PE programme (MUPEP): the aim is to enable effective training of researchers for engaging the public and providing opportunities to engage with specific audiences.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Launch at pepnet#18 21 June 2017 <a href="https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement/event-planning-resources-and-communication/">https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement/event-planning-resources-and-communication/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>To share and enable staff to deliver PE activities we have launched PEELS (Public Engagement equipment lending service) in May 2017: online list of equipment one can borrow from us.</td>
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<td>Point 4 on this list: <a href="http://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement/event-planning-resources-and-communication/">http://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement/event-planning-resources-and-communication/</a></td>
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<td>4 pepnet sessions Engagement Excellence scheme</td>
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<td>23 interventions training 252 people</td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and establish a shared understanding of PER</td>
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<td>Research development funding scheme: to provide funding for research idea development stage with non-academic stakeholders (modelled on NIHR practice)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Three annual funding rounds First submissions due 5 September 2017</td>
<td>7 applications</td>
<td>Be clear that this is a PE opportunity not a research opportunity to work with a museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>2c 3, 4, 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>PE team structure has changed by moving line management for PE officer to the Head of PE/project manager</td>
<td>New member of PE team since January 2017.</td>
<td>Separate funding pots have been aligned to support the work of the PE team.</td>
<td>Effective structures need to be created.</td>
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<td>PE officer role became vacant in September 2016; this was used as an opportunity to review the job role.</td>
<td>Continued Wellcome Trust contribution for PE work for the next 3+2 years</td>
<td>Building on PE officer’s expertise of training in PE.</td>
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<td>Application for Wellcome Trust ISSF 2016 was successful.</td>
<td>Input into HEIF proposal</td>
<td>The team’s input into the proposal led to a positive outcome, contributing to continued sustainability for PE team.</td>
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<td>Using opportunity to leverage funding for PE work via HEIF proposal</td>
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<td>Successful HEIF bid, contributing to continued sustainability for PE team. At least two more years of further funding.</td>
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<td>Different use of terminology across different funding bodies can make building the case for PE more difficult.</td>
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<td>Annual budget for 2018/19 and 2019/20 adapted to guarantee further support</td>
<td>New budget</td>
<td>Senior management understand HEFCE’s strengthening of PE as part of REF</td>
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<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>3, 5, 6</td>
<td>Input into non-academic staff promotion criteria review in July 2015.</td>
<td>New criteria have been agreed. <a href="http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/info/8/promotions/299/promotions_process/3">http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/info/8/promotions/299/promotions_process/3</a></td>
<td>PE and outreach are not specifically mentioned. All criteria are formulated in a fairly general manner.</td>
<td>Given that PE is linked with research the outcome is not too surprising.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Follow up with HR who has made used of new promotion criteria for final report</td>
<td>Number of successful promotions using PE criterion since new promotion criteria have been introduced in 2016: 4 based on Academic Leadership 17 based on Research and Innovation 15 based on Student Education = 36 successful promotion applications using PE criterion</td>
<td>Make changes to promotion criteria Provide evidence of promotions including PE</td>
<td>Seize opportunities when they arise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>2, 4, 6</td>
<td>Call for PE with Research awards has gone out in June 2017. Award presentation followed in September</td>
<td>3 glass trophies</td>
<td>Last year’s winners submitted to the ENGAGE competition: Georgina became a finalist; she</td>
<td>We made sure this time the senior champion for PE is available to present awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSF objective</td>
<td>RCUK CSF Objective</td>
<td>Rationale and key activities</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Outcomes and Impact/Legacy</td>
<td>Learning/approaching things differently in future</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017 by senior PE champion DVC Professor Lisa Roberts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>received further funding enabling her to be paid for her work. Sue Pavitt and the Dentistry team won; they are using a similar approach to tackle other dental topics; Their relationship with the high school has developed into research ambassadors and one the pupils is applying for dentistry as a result; the theatre production will feature as a plenary session at this year’s INVOLVE conference; Dentistry at the University of Melbourne as well as the Salford Lung study is interested in the approach used.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c 2, 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Be Curious has evaluation planned in for adults, children and staff</td>
<td>Evaluation report from Be Curious compiled for internal consumption.</td>
<td>2016’s data collection allowed us to design a targeted postcode campaign on Facebook for Be Curious 2017. Targeted advertising via social media works as 10% of visitors came from targeted inner-city postcodes.</td>
<td>Improve signage and maps; clarification of who is our audience; pursue paid advertising for marketing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSF Objective</td>
<td>RCUK CSF Objective</td>
<td>Rationale and key activities</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
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<tr>
<td>3d</td>
<td>3, 4, 5</td>
<td>The team helped in collating the data for the HESA 2015/16 BCI survey in collaboration with colleagues in RIS.</td>
<td>HESA 2015-16 BCI Table 5</td>
<td>Example of where the team contributes to University reporting</td>
<td>We need a better process of accomplishing this.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CSF Objectives**

1. **Communication and visibility:**
   
   a. Continue to communicate the existence of institutional support for PE and the way in which this builds on the work of existing PE activity
   
   b. Make current PE activity more visible to internal and external stakeholders
   
   c. Communicate the value of PE through champions of engagement
2. **Embedding PE:**
   a. Implement the institutional strategy for PE in an iterative and co-productive process
   b. Develop support, training and resources for PE oriented at staff’ and students’ needs
   c. Develop long-term sustainability plans for PE support

3. **Valued activity:**
   a. Make PE an explicitly mentioned activity in promotion criteria for non-academic staff members and a recognised activity in work-load modelling
   b. Celebrate excellent PE activity with an award
   c. Make evaluation part and parcel for any PE activity so that PE is valuable and learning can take place
   d. Improve processes to record PE activity accurately and efficiently

**RCUK PER CSF Programme Objectives:**
1. Facilitate taking stock of your Institution’s support for public engagement using the NCCPE’s self-assessment EDGE tool and appropriate base line surveys (this will include looking at senior level commitment and engagement with PER principles).
2. To enable all CSFs to start to create a shared understanding of the purpose, value, meaning and role of public engagement to staff and students within your organisation.
3. To help CSFs develop a longer-term strategic approach and forward plans to embed public engagement with research across the institution within strategies, policies, structures and processes.
4. To help secure high level leadership and buy-in in the form of a senior champion(s) for public engagement with research, able to drive strategic and operational change.
5. To aide implementation of any areas you can quickly and efficiently target action to make a significant longer-term difference in embedding public engagement with research within your institution
6. To enable consideration of how you will develop the public engagement capacity and capabilities of your researchers through support, training and development.
7. To build on the HEI’s strengths in public engagement and complement other sources of support (e.g. Impact Acceleration Accounts, Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) and the Wellcome Trust’s Institutional Strategic Support Fund (ISSF).
8. To help CSF HEIs take on board learning from the Beacons for Public Engagement, RCUK PER Catalysts and the NCCPE in developing best practice to realise culture change.
**EDGE Tool assessment**

Baseline assessment was carried out at project start in September 2015 (three assessors from PE team), then in January 2016 (two assessors from PE team), in August 2016 (end of first year; two assessors from PE team) and finally in June and September 2017 (two assessors from PE team and five assessors from Engagement champions). Figures show the Baseline assessment in 2015 and end of CSF project in 2017 through the lens of the PE team, complemented by the end of CSF project assessment by the five Engagement champions in June 2017.

Due to the short timeframe and the focus of our CSF project, progress along all dimensions of the EDGE tool was not realistic. While we assessed the University at the start of the first year on all 37 dimensions of the EDGE tool, we did not continue assessment on five dimension under the ‘People’ heading.

While the EDGE Tool provides a useful assessment that attempts to allow monitoring progress within an institution over time and possibly also comparison between different institutions, we have always felt that it is an almost impossible task to arrive at an ‘objective’ assessment. The reason is that individuals who are asked to assess have a good understanding of their local environment e.g. within a School or Department. However, the local situation may not be representative for the entire institution. Very few people have an overview about a particular aspect of work across the entire institution. To counterbalance this local bias one would have to have a very big sample for such an assessment. We did not feel that it was either appropriate or realistic to roll out an assessment campaign involving as many staff as possible as there was little in return of value to the individual staff member. We have therefore opted to ask our Engagement champions for an additional view of the progress.

For dealing with different assessments by different assessors we associated different levels of ‘embeddedness' with scores: embryonic =1, developing = 2, gripping = 3 embedded =4. Scores were added and divided by the number of assessors, which explains non-integer scores.
**Purpose**

Figure 7 shows the assessment results for the dimensions under the ‘Purpose’ heading of the EDGE tool. By the end of the second year progress had been made along 10 out of 11 dimensions, with ‘strategic planning’ showing the biggest progress. While overall the scores by the PE team are higher than those by the Engagement Champions, the small number of assessors involved in each sample does not allow a comparison between the two groups of assessors. It would probably be more instructive to look at a mean score across both groups.

*Figure 7: Assessment results for dimensions under the heading ‘Purpose’ of the EDGE tool. Black circle symbols and lines: baseline assessment in September 2015 by PE team; grey diamond symbols and lines: end of CSF assessment in September 2017 by PE team; blue square symbols and dashed black line: end of CSF assessment in June 2017 by Engagement champions.*
**Process**

Figure 8 shows the assessment results for the dimensions under the ‘Process’ heading of the EDGE tool. By the end of the second year progress had been made along 13 out of 14 dimensions, with ‘Effective networks’, ‘PE in promotion criteria’, ‘PE activity is celebrated’ and ‘PE is encouraged’ showing the biggest progress.

**Figure 8:** Assessment results for dimensions under the heading ‘Process’ of the EDGE tool. Black circle symbols and lines: baseline assessment in September 2015 by PE team; grey diamond symbols and lines: end of CSF assessment in September 2017 by PE team; blue square symbols and dashed black line: end of CSF assessment in June 2017 by Engagement champions.
People

Figure 9 shows the assessment results for the dimensions under the ‘People’ heading of the EDGE tool. By the end of the second year progress had been made along seven out of 12 dimensions, with ‘Awareness’, ‘Access’ and ‘Infrastructure’ showing the biggest progress. The student dimensions of the EDGE tool were not a priority area for the CSF project.

![EDGE tool assessment: People](image)

**Figure 9**: Assessment results for dimensions under the heading ‘People’ of the EDGE tool. Black circle symbols and lines: baseline assessment in September 2015 by PE team; grey diamond symbols and lines: end of CSF assessment in September 2017 by PE team; blue square symbols and dashed black line: end of CSF assessment in June 2017 by Engagement champions.

Across all 37 dimensions, we made progress on 30 and the mean progress across all dimensions is 1.4 levels after two years.
SUSTAINABILITY PLANS

Financial sustainability
Building on the approval of the Public Engagement with Research Outline Strategic Plan and Business Case: 2016-2020 by the University’s senior management group (UEG) end of May 2016, we have worked with the incoming PI in 2016 and DVC for Research and Innovation Professor Lisa Roberts to find an acceptable budget from September 2017 until August 2019, which allows to continue with the current set-up beyond the CSF project. HEIF, Wellcome Trust ISSF and institutional sources are continuing to fund the PE team and its work. This means that the CSF funding for two years has resulted in continuing funding for further two years, doubling the length of original funding. We are planning for PE to feature strongly in our 2020-25 strategic plan development, which is about to start and therefore we will have clearer sustainability plans within the next 18 months.

Project sustainability
Our strategic plan for PE will ensure that the work started under the CSF project will continue. The aims of the strategic plan for PE are to create a culture for PE with research at the University that has institutional support for PE through a senior-level engagement champion; that offers training and mentorship; that values evaluation for continuous learning; that celebrates outstanding performance through awards; that recognises quality PE within promotion criteria and workload models.

Processes and projects that have been developed during the CSF projects that will continue:

- Senior champion for PE
- PE part of academic promotion criteria
- Symplectic system for logging PE activity by staff
- Be Curious – research open day
- bespoke support for research proposals around PE/pathways to impact
- Engagement Excellence Fellowship mentoring scheme
- Engagement champion network
- PE network and workshops
- PE part of UG curriculum
- Museum University PE programme
- Small PE project funding
- PE awards

Other areas that we have started work on are

- PE and the REF
- Working with the Doctoral College on a training platform for postgraduates
- Working with the Alumni team to develop audiences for public engagement activities
- Involvement in the development of PPIE strategies of affiliated groups
- Using Symplectic PE activity data to be displayed on staff websites similar to publications
CASE STUDIES
We present two new case studies.

Collaboratively developing a system that allows logging of PE activity on an on-going basis university-wide
The University of Leeds like all other universities has to report to the Higher Education Statistical Authority (HESA) for its Business and Community Interactions (BCI) survey which includes PE activities. To capture PE activity in the past a process developed by the PE practitioner community pepnet was used in the form of an annual survey using a google form. This process was limited to the members of pepnet and also to an annual collection, which made it more likely that people forgot to report an activity. For a short time the PE team offered all academic staff members at Leeds to collect their PE activity in a database if staff members emailed the PE team such activity. In the long run this was unsustainable because of the time resource involved and also because this data was not accessible to staff members who submitted it in the first place. If such data has no benefit to the individual, it is unlikely that individuals will provide it and hence the University will considerably under-report on PE activity.

To increase the accuracy of the reported data the solution had to fulfil a number of requirements:

- Be a University-wide existing system
- Allow for the ongoing collection of data to combat under-reporting
- Make sure that all BCI relevant data is collected
- Make the data accessible to staff so that they can use it for promotion application, academic review and REF case studies
- Data needs to be accessible by institution for HESA reporting from a central database

To address the requirements the PE team worked with colleagues in the Library, IT and Strategy and Planning to find a suitable system. We realised that amending Symplectic - an existing database that is already used by academics for the collection of published papers- would be adequate.

- University-wide existing system
Symplectic is an existing database system used by academic staff as a repository for publications. It is available to all members of staff through a personal login.

- Ongoing collection to combat under-reporting
Because of its availability all year round, colleagues can input activity as and when it occurs. This helps with decreasing under-reporting. Deadline rushes are minimised.

- Collection of BCI relevant data
Our colleagues in Strategy and Planning provided a list of BCI survey requirements, which were implemented by colleagues in IT by amending a tab under ‘Professional activities’ in Symplectic.

- Accessible data for individuals to use for promotion applications, academic reviews and REF case studies
Because PE is promotion relevant since February 2016, a system that supports individuals in collecting evidence of activity will be viewed more positively and increase its use. Symplectic also feeds through to IRIS, the system that supports the University’s REF submission, minimising the need for academics to input several times over.

- Data needs to be accessible by institution for HESA reporting

Symplectic is accessible by the institution (unlike Researchfish for example) and hence submitted data can be processed by colleagues in Strategy and Planning for the HESA return without further time commitment from academics.

In developing this solution we have worked with many stakeholders from the beginning; we tried to be mindful of the academic mind set and most importantly tried to minimise involved resources including time and money. The University’s galleries and museums will still need to be approached individually for their data, but this is a small number of contacts.

The new PE activity collection went live in June 2017 and for 2016/17 we have used this new process as the University’s way to collect data for part of the HESA-BCI return. Colleagues from Internal Communications helped us to get the message out across the University. Initial indications of data collection via this route are very encouraging as over 335 entries were submitted, which is double the number of entries of last year via the old system.

‘Postcards to RCUK’

At the end of the second year of CSF funding we asked staff from across the University to tell us what they thought has changed in terms of public engagement due to the CSF work. We asked for personal narratives and reflections about change in relation to public engagement. As we asked for comments back after the summer we framed it as a postcard writing exercise to our funder. The call to staff went via the PE-network email list and also featured on the staff website. We then took the responses and collated them as postcards for this report. People commented on different aspects; promotion, network, engagement platforms, and the reassurance of a team.
My job involves a lot of advising and supporting people who are new to engagement. People often ask me about how they can access development opportunities. In the past, I sometimes struggled to know what to tell them. However, I can now point them in the direction of PEPNET so that they can hear first-hand about relevant events and resources I hand out about events and what people also feel like I know more about what people are doing around the university, particularly outside of my faculty, so I can put people in touch with each other. Engagement now feels like less of a lonely role.

Thanks,
Della Muir, Clinical Trials Unit and Wellcome Trust Engagement Fellow

Hello,

I’m still having a great time inspiring 6th formers from a local school that science can be fun! Always helps if the experiments work first time, if only that happened for us! Still amazes me that something we do every day they find so different and exciting, extremely humbling and rewarding. I guess that’s why we arrange these events. It’s also great that each event has attracted more and more PhD demonstrators – word must be spreading. To top it off, I’ve actually had it added to my job description, so I’m now the ‘go-to’ person for public engagement.

Hope all is going well with yours.

Marie Parker, Lab manager, St. James Hospital Campus

To RCUK CSF Funding team,
Research Councils UK,
Polaris House, North Star Avenue,
Swindon, SN2 8ET

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For me quite a lot has changed. This summer I have been able successfully to apply for promotion to Grade 9 based mainly on my impact and public engagement activities, although I was also able to demonstrate that I am research active with an international reputation through a series of articles and other metrics.

Public engagement with research was key to my REF2014 impact case study but became a struggle to evidence how PE could be of wider benefit to society. It was thought that promotion back then wasn’t possible without a research monograph.

I have much more recently—over the last year or two—public engagement has begun to be taken seriously across the university and within my own discipline of history. I am in the position to embed both PE and impact much more thoroughly in my department as I have been Director of Impact throughout 2016/17. I know that historians have always done a lot of PE but it used to be much less respected than policy influencing. What we have shown, however, is that PE can have a longer term effect on policy makers if you keep doing it. Starting to do PE at postgraduate level—learning the skills, becoming more confident, getting used to communicating with a wide range of people—is really making a difference with job applications. There is an expectation even for fixed-term jobs that Leeds wants impact-ready people and that this means PE to a very great extent in my discipline.

Iona McCleery, History

I have been working with the RIC dance company since March 2017, and it is refreshing to see our research have a real connection with city and non-academic life. Refreshing = Making research relevant and taking ideas in different, unexpected directions.

Best wishes
Andy Stafford, French/LCS

To RCUK CSF funding team
Research Councils UK
Polaris House, North Star Avenue
Swindon SN2 1ET
Thank you for funding the University of Leeds' Engagement Excellence Scheme (EES).

As a past Fellow of this scheme (2015-2016) I am now one of the University of Leeds's Public Engagement Champions. I successfully completed a Healthy Diet and Healthy Heart cake making workshop as part of a local community called Chapeltown (Chapeltown Arts Festival 2016). Since then I have had verbal and written feedback from community members who attended, based on how much they enjoyed the workshop and that the community needs more engagement activities like this one. From this workshop, I have developed a mini-workshop (focusing on portion sizes) to engage with school children and young adults as part of an annual University of Leeds Discovery Zone event. I have also continued to further develop an element of this workshop, a video production of researchers talking about their heart research and the importance of a healthy balanced diet. This video has recently been complete and will soon be launched onto the University of Leeds YouTube channel for public viewing, and for further use during student Open Days. In addition, I have recently obtained a new post and a new career as a Project Manager (Cancer Patient Record, etc.) with a proposed element of novel patient engagement activities aimed at under-represented patient groups and big data linkage. Please continue to support our EES, in order to further foster more creative and successful engagement activities between universities and their public.

Regards,

Dr Kathleen E. Wright, Biological Sciences
As part of Be Curious 2017, I demonstrated my research in Virtual Reality (VR) and crowd analysis. The VR demo attracted 95% of the attention in comparison to a poster on crowd analysis. It was apparently more engaging across the whole demographic from children to adults. Long queues formed throughout the whole day. In reflection, there are several points that are worth mentioning from the perspective of public engagement of research.

First, Be Curious is a wonderful place to let the public know about the on-going research. It raises the awareness of the importance of research, helps the public to see the value and strengthens their faith in higher education. These are especially important for the young children who could be inspired to be future researchers. Second, the general public needs very intuitive understanding of research. This is shown by my VR demonstration. Although my crowd analysis research is also intuitive, it is not as graphical and engaging as the live VR demos. This is especially true for children. At the end of day, I might have unintentionally helped to sell more VR kits for Christmas than explaining my research. The intuitiveness is the key. Lastly, I realised that the public is far more behind about VR research than I expected. VR is a technology that has had more than 20 years of history, but the public was still unaware of the research and its applications. It shows a big gap that needs to be bridged. He Wang, Computing
I secured funding from the Royal Academy of Engineering in 2013 for a project to create a graphic novel about the future, visualising climate change and the transition to a low carbon society. We wanted to produce another graphic novel as a sequel; however, it was a major challenge to secure new funding. Around this time I became engaged with peernet and attended the forums. Through liaising with the PE team, I was successful in securing more funding which enabled the second ‘Dream of a Low Carbon Future’ to be produced.

I’m sure that in 2013 this would not have happened, but by 2016 there had been a seismic shift in the appreciation of public engagement at the University. The appointment of staff coordinating forums and major events has catalysed public engagement efforts at the University, and our group has been a major beneficiary. Just knowing that you have high-level support, and a network of like-minded people with lots of different skills and expertise available is a tremendous asset.

James MacKay, CDT manager
Communicating and sharing the PE strategic plan launched in 2016 has acted as an enabler to work more closely with sites remote to central university campus, which we had not reached previously. The NIHR Leeds Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) at Chapel Allerton Hospital is part of both the University of Leeds and the NHS trust. The centre's business manager was successful in securing further funding for the group including funding for a PPIE manager. Because of the existence and sharing of the PE strategic plan BRC wanted input from the PE team to help recruiting an appropriate person with experience in PE/PPIE. They liaised with the PE team about the job description, the requested grade of the job, the person specification and a member of the team was on the appointing panel. This allowed the PE team to build a relationship with the team at BRC and with the new member of staff. Since appointment, the PPIE manager has been to meet with the central PE team and we have discussed the strategic plan and a variety of resources that are available. We have discussed pop-up and getting more people from BRC to attend and join the mailing list. There has also been direct contact from researchers at BRC with the central PE team, asking for advice on PE based activities. Overall, the writing and adopting of a co-produced PE strategic plan for the University has contributed to a mutual understanding for PE and PPIE across different disciplines and remote research centres across the University resulting in closer working relationships.

Best Wishes
Charlotte Haigh, Academic Lead for PE and Associate Professor, Biological Sciences

To RCUK CSF funding team
Research Councils UK
Polaris House, North Star Avenue
Swindon SN2 1ET
PI of CSF project Professor Lisa Roberts, DVC Research and Innovation

I started my role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation at the University of Leeds just over a year ago. To say that I have been impressed with the level and breadth of public engagement at Leeds, and the outcomes achieved, would be an understatement.

Leeds quite clearly has a real commitment to public engagement right across all disciplines, it seems to be within our DNA. Last year, not long in post, I attended the annual awards ceremony for our public engagement champions and was taken aback by the quality and variety of PE projects that our researchers were involved in. I had not seen this before at other institutions. What struck me was the embedding of PE within research projects; here it is not just an “after thought” about communication of the outcomes of a research project, but engaging with the public is truly integral to our research and the whole process, whether that be about helping shape and frame the research we do, for the public to actively participate in our research projects and finally, to disseminate the results of our research in very novel ways.

Earlier this year we held the “Be Curious” event and what a wonderful day this was to showcase the breadth and depth of our research to old and young alike and see them immersed in demonstrations and live experiments.

Finally, it is so pleasing to see that public engagement is truly recognised and rewarded in the University as an important academic activity, and this is reflected in appraisal and promotion processes.

The PE leadership team has such energy and dynamism and I am sure that we will go from strength under their guidance.

Mark Devane, Director of Communications

I attended the Be Curious event at the University in March 2017 with my two young children. While I have attended museums and exhibitions with them in the past, I hadn’t attended a University event specifically based around research before. While they have always shown an interest in science, I was surprised by how strongly positive their reaction was. The interactive and “bite size” nature of the exhibits (they particularly enjoyed the VR glasses) worked particularly well for them. I have noticed a marked increase in their interest in science since and I would definitely return again in the future.

More generally, the public engagement team sits within my division and I would observe that, thanks to the efforts of the team, the importance of interaction with the public is now more evident across the University. It appears to be more part of the dialogue when people are considering research bids and is being factored into strategic planning around aspects like our REF impact return at an early stage. I think the integration of the PE team into communications is working well and is spurring my team to think more about public engagement as part of the broader communications mix.
Project manager of CSF Dr Alexa Ruppertsberg
At the end of last year I compared our efforts to erecting the PE tent: “we’ve put some stakes into the ground; some need more work before they are firmly placed and next we can start to pull up the tent sheets.” I am very proud to say that after two years of CSF funding PE has a home at the University of Leeds.

We have set the direction for PE at Leeds, developed the vision and strategic plan and worked effectively with our colleagues in Communications, Alumni, Conferencing, HR, Strategy and Planning, the Library, IT, RIS, Finance and the Leeds Doctoral College. We had a number of new initiatives launched during this year (PE strategy, Engagement champions and their network, PE activity log, PE as part of the UG curriculum, Museum-University PE programme), while at the same time we have continued to deliver our support, communication and people development work with a small but extremely dedicated team. My role changed as I became line manager of the PE officer as well and had to manage staff change at the start of the second year. Given the overall size of the team (2.0 FTE) missing 0.6 FTE for more than a quarter of a year is a sizeable gap. I don’t think though that our customers or our project delivery suffered from that during the time. That it was possible to pull through is largely down to the extremely positive and supportive work environment the PE team enjoys in its service department Communications. Being in a generally supportive, warm, enthusiastic work environment is very motivating. Being also able to feed into existing communication channels, to access design expertise, to learn from colleagues in digital communications and to be in constant contact with colleagues who face a similar challenge to find the right audience for a press story (or we for a PE activity) is the right environment for us in Leeds. We all work on reputation and relationship building with our communities and we all benefit from each other’s contributions.

The unique relationship that our academic lead Charlotte Haigh and I have is another reason for what we have achieved at Leeds. It’s a mixture of job share and great minds thinking alike without needing to talk about it. This relationship allows us to work independently and collaboratively, flexing with the needs and interests and playing to our strengths.

Some things could go better; the demand for research proposal support could be higher (although it is up 55% from last year), and evaluation being part of more PE activities. Other activities did go rather well (e.g. PE strategy approval, PE activity log, PE promotion criterion, engagement champions, Be Curious) and other unexpected things happened too: e.g. to work with Alumni, for our colleagues to win national awards, to be singled out and congratulated by the RCUK Funding Assurance Audit team, to be asked to add all senior team members to the invitation list for Be Curious in 2018.

The outlook? Confident! REF2021 is on the cards and we will continue to evolve and adapt to the changes ahead. One thing I am very sure of is that the importance of external engagement will grow.
CONCLUSION
The RCUK CSF funding for two years enabled the University of Leeds to establish institutional support for PE, building on the many grass-root PE activities that have taken place for a long time. The opportunity of the funds provided much needed focus at senior level and at the same time senior management did recognise the importance of PE for Leeds.
After two years of CSF at Leeds:

| Public engagement is a stronger component of University life |
| Staff and students are supported through a range of activities |
| Public engagement is celebrated, recorded and recognised in staff promotion |

Cumulatively, the work of the PE team has touched a large number of different processes (provision of support, training, mentoring, engagement platforms, networks, promotion criteria, data collection) which inevitably involved collaborating with colleagues across the University. The most notable effect after two years of this work is that people come to us and ask ‘why PE is not part of this?’ or ‘why do we not more strongly express the University’s contribution to the community?’. This is profound as it shows that people think about public engagement and its role. It is also a sign that we - as a University - have to realise our contribution we make to the community and become better at bringing together our large range of existing activities beyond teaching and research. This is easier said than done. Within senior management we have leaders for research, student education and international. There is no one senior owner for what one might call external engagement. The next logical step is to map our non-student audience and their needs and wants and then to bring together service heads and academic leaders to analyse what aspect of their existing activities touch this external non-student community. This process will show all of us much better, how the University delivers already part of its societal impact beyond our more immediate impact of educating the next generation of students.

Recommendations for funders
- Continue to be a resource of expertise and engage willingly to be of help.
- Senior managers need to hear messages from different sides; keep repeating what public engagement means to you and how important it is.
- External funding is important to keep the work going; however short-term funding risks compromising project delivery because it leaves little time for reflection and discussion.
- External surveys to which universities have to respond can help to strengthen the role of PE teams.
- Overcome the spend requirement by March, which is the funder’s tax year end. Currently, the spend requirement requires the teams to deliver and spend 50% of the project within the first half of the project, which would work if projects were equally intensive across all time periods within a tax year, but they are not. A solution could be to start funding in April rather than the autumn.
Currently pathways-to-impact (P2I) funding is not separated from research funding in a research council proposal, which makes it difficult for the funder and the individual university to assess whether P2I funding requests meet suggested levels of 2-20% of the entire proposal value. If P2I funds were separate, it would also be possible to ring-fence them to make sure the funds are only spent on the intended purpose, i.e. P2I. This could help to embed culture change for PE (Wellcome Trust is already doing this to a degree that if the PE-plans are not satisfactory Wellcome will not fund that part of the proposal and hence assures with this policy that PE-funds will only be spent on good PE).

**Recommendations for other HEIs**

- Find good team members: people who are passionate about PE, people who have experience in PE, people who think strategically and see the bigger picture, people who understand the external and internal environment of a university, people who can translate and move seamlessly between academia and central support, people who are creative, are happy to cover new ground, who like to listen, share and talk.
- Collaborate: whatever one tries to tackle, work with others and invite comments and opinions. It is applying the principles of PE to the work itself: “It’s a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.”
- Getting a message out to academics from the top down is a challenge. An approach from as many avenues as possible is vital.
- The EDGE tool provides structure for progress monitoring, however it is not an objective tool as different assessors will inevitably arrive at different assessments. The individual’s bias comes from incomplete knowledge of the institution and is compounded by situations where different parts of the University are at different levels of progress but the assessor is forced to arrive at a single assessment.
- Reaching all parts of the university takes time as well as understanding the diversity of different disciplines. This is immensely challenging in a large institution, do not set yourself unrealistic targets.
- Clarity of purpose cannot be overstated. Because PE means a lot of different things a framework is helpful.
- Teams with different capabilities and kudos are essential to progress the case. Involve as many as you can with a clear message.
- Other HEIs and the NCCPE can provide useful sounding boards for ideas and sharing experiences is a reassuring and necessary process.
- Other HEIs’ experiences provide tried and tested examples along with information about the environment in which they were implemented.
Evaluation report Be Curious

Summary of learning

- 87% of staff thought it had been a valuable experience and 82% would participate again.
- 63% feel the University values their PE work.
- The PE team did an excellent job of organising the event – 97% of staff agreed. Visitor comments were overwhelmingly positive.
- Over 1000 people entered via Parkinson main foyer, but others entered through side entrances. Signage asking everyone to enter at the main doors or a welcome marquee outside under the arch may make it easier collect accurate numbers.
- 20% were first time visitors to the University. Word of mouth was the most frequent way visitors had heard of the event.
- Facebook and the website were other successful promotion routes. The targeted Facebook postcode campaign brought in 10% of all visitors from those postcodes. Twitter did not perform well for visitor numbers although posts were retweeted well.
- 40-64 and under 15 were the most common age ranges. Numbers in the 16-18 and 19-25 ranges were very low. Promotion via student networks (for all the universities and colleges in Leeds) and targeting local schools may increase this audience and bring their families.
- The dome and the children’s treasure hunt were the most popular activities. The microscopes, VR, climate change and the Health Zone were common favourites.
- Visitors want more of the same next year – in particular more hands-on science experiments, engineering, robotics and VR, geophysics/volcanoes/fossils, animals and more on local history, art/sculpture were popular suggestions for next time.
- The business talks had low numbers.
- Several staff commented on the diversity of the audience and how this could be broader in future.
- Parkinson Court filled steadily all morning with peak visitor numbers entering at 1pm. All other zones were quiet until after 11am and later for Michael Sadler Zones.
- An issue generating most comment by staff was around signage and visitor flow to Michael Sadler and upstairs in Parkinson. Asking student hosts to proactively direct people to Michael Sadler after 1pm significantly improved visitor flow. Students at the dome-end of Parkinson, directing down the Baines corridor and students welcoming and directing in Michael Sadler foyer, were effective.
- 88% of stall holders thought the student helpers were very effective. Students said that stall holders could have made more use of them at the beginning and end of the day.
- The student hosts enjoyed the day and said instructions and duties were very clear. The carpark needed helpers outside to direct visitors rather than inside by the pay machines. The chalk arrows worked well to help visitors get back to Parkinson. Carpark helpers felt they missed the event and would be more motivated if rotated with other duties part way through the day.
Be Curious 2017 Evaluation Report

Introduction
The 2nd Be Curious event (BC17), on Saturday 25th March 2017, hosted exhibits by 48 research teams, under the theme of ‘About Leeds and Yorkshire’. The aim was to engage a wide public audience in the research that takes place within the University.
Held in the Parkinson and Michael Sadler Buildings, the event divided the research into 5 zones: Health and Cities zones, based in Parkinson; Climate/Water, Culture and Science/Engineering zones in Michael Sadler and Business Talks in the Baines corridor. Parkinson Court held 10 stalls, showcasing research from each of the zones, and the inflatable dome showing a 10 minute virology film.

Methods of Evaluation
Adult visitor feedback was collected through postcards on exit (113 were filled in representing the views of 380 people from respondents’ parties) and 30 children were surveyed with an iPad questionnaire on completion of the ‘Let’s go Viral’ treasure hunt. Staff participants were surveyed using an online survey tool and face to face interviews. Five student helpers were interviewed about their experience of the day. Data on visitor numbers was also collected by student helpers in each zone during the event. Facebook, Twitter and website metrics were also analysed post-event.

Staff Survey
A staff evaluation was conducted using the Bristol Online Survey tool. Staff who had participated in BC17 were asked 15 questions and asked to provide extra comments. The response rate was very good at 69% of possible respondents and all the zones were represented. Three staff agreed to be interviewed for more detailed feedback.
Staff felt very positive about their experience of BC17, with 97% agreeing that the event had raised public awareness of the University of Leeds and 85% feeling it had raised the profile of their/their school’s research. Overall 87% of participants said Be Curious was a valuable experience for them personally and 82% would participate again.
Satisfaction was lower when asked about the layout of the event across the two university buildings, with only 48% agreeing (or strongly agreeing) that the location of the zones worked well. The layout of the stalls within the rooms was said to work well by 51% with 36% feeling neutral. Staff comments shed some light on this:
“The morning was very quiet for us. It helped that more people were ushered into the water zone in the afternoon, but unfortunately the set up didn't work very well”
“Our basement location felt a bit out of the way and I feel visitor numbers to our stall were lower than last year”
“As we were in a different space, and the route of access was not as we expected, we were entirely dependent on student hosts to point people towards us. When they did we were busy, when they didn't we had nobody.”
“As there is so much on offer, it is difficult to direct people to different locations in different buildings. You have a better sense of the overall distribution and interest, but in the Culture Zone we could have had more footfall. I have no solution, but perhaps eventually a single location is the best option”
It appears that the zones in Michael Sadler were much quieter than Parkinson until the afternoon, to the frustration of some staff, as shown in some of the comments. An interviewee from the Cities
zone confirmed that this was true for upstairs in Parkinson also – her comment was that visitors were attracted to the Virtual Reality activity in the next room and they benefitted from that while people were waiting for their children to finish on the VR. Tally sheets by the student hosts indicate that this was true, although the Health zone had significantly higher numbers at each counting point. The response to the PE team’s organisation of the event was excellent, with 97% of respondents agreeing that the event was well organised and 94% that they had been kept well informed throughout the process. The majority of participants (82%) felt they would take part in Be Curious again, only one said they would not.

While 60% would like more opportunities for PE within the University, 30% were neutral on this question and 3 respondents did not want more. A good 63% felt that the University valued their PE work, with only 13% disagreeing.

The issue of more training opportunities before PE events like Be Curious was the question that generated the most disagreement. Only 12% agreed that more training would be good, while 45% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 42% felt neutral about more training. This result is interesting in the light of one of the staff comments that highlighted the need for better training of PGRs in speaking with children, a teenage visitor observation that at a few stalls the adult in the party was spoken to rather than the adolescent, and a general observation that highly technical conference research posters were on display at several stalls.

The staff survey provided many constructive comments, mainly around two issues – the location of the event on campus and the type of ‘public’ the event attracted. Nine of the seventeen comments focused on the uneven spread of visitor numbers across the event, with stall holders in the Culture Zone in particular feeling that numbers had been limited by location. Some offered possible solutions:

“Using the two buildings worked well and if some outdoor activities were available between the two, it could increase the numbers in the Michael Sadler stalls.”

“Please provide some check list for the visitors, to encourage them to visit all the locations. Also, it would be good to have some posters saying something like: "Welcome to the Building 1, here You can find 10 different rooms, dedicated to Natural Sciences", and on the exit from the building: "Thank you for visiting the Building 1! You might also visit Parkinson Building, Building 2 and Building 3”

Parkinson Court is the largest single indoor space on campus and easy to locate for visitors to campus and so remains the best venue for the event. Finding additional capacity within Parkinson is difficult because of the number of un-bookable rooms, so for an event of this size, additional rooms nearby do need to be used. Michael Sadler has larger and more easily accessible rooms downstairs than other buildings near to Parkinson, making it a practical choice. Better direction of visitors to the activities in Michael Sadler and upstairs in Parkinson could be achieved by making clearer guide maps for each of the buildings in the event booklet. Also much larger, perhaps banner sized signage at the Baines corridor end of Parkinson, may be more visible to visitors. Alternatively the suggestion to have the registration desk under the entrance arch outside (weather permitting), between Parkinson and Michael Sadler may help to spread visitors more evenly from the start of the day.

Several staff commented that the public was not as wide an audience as they had hoped and that university employees and their friends/family were over-represented.

“My only comment was that it was mostly university staff and their children. We collected data on the day and asked for highest academic qualification - virtually everyone was educated to degree level or above.”
“I think the event was well attended however I do not believe there was a broad audience. Specifically, the target demographic for the research project that I work on was not well represented. It seemed to me, that the majority of attendees were friends and family of university staff. With hindsight, I could have sent an email to the volunteers in my project database to invite them to the event. Maybe this is something to consider asking research groups to do in the future. This would broaden the audience for all the research groups. In terms of public engagement I think the event did not represent different sectors of the general public very well.”

“Most of the limited number of visitors were staff and their families- there was very little sense of us reaching an external audience where we were. Much better hosted somewhere in the heart of the city.”

For next year’s event the possibility of marketing through wider Leeds city channels such as paid advertisements in newspaper and other events listings could be explored. Expertise and learning around connecting to wider audiences can be gained from our newly established museums partnerships. Defining potential audience groups more specifically and targeting through their most appropriate channels is likely to be most resource efficient. Communicating with staff and managing expectations around the type of public groups most likely to attend any event held at the University (evidenced from available research literature/museum data) could help future participants. If one of our objectives for Be Curious is to welcome the public onto campus, then venues in the city centre would not be appropriate, however we may have to accept that certain public groups will be harder to attract as a result.

Visitor Data

Over 1000 visitors attended, with 847 counted in through Parkinson main entrance, while others entered direct into Michael Sadler or via other Parkinson entrances. The visitor peak was reached at 13.00.

Overall visitors came from 21 different Leeds postal areas, six Wakefield and three Bradford postal areas, as well as visitors from Sheffield, York, Calderdale, Huddersfield and further afield in Yorkshire and beyond. In total, 68% of visitors came from Leeds postcodes.

Evaluation postcards on exit were collected from 113 respondents representing the views of their parties, totalling 380 people. There were 77 first time visitors to the university (20%). Facebook or ‘online’ were the most frequent responses for how those first time visitors had been reached. Several said they had found out via school (leaflet, letter) and others via staff members of the university. Overall word of mouth was the most frequent way to hear about the event, followed by the website and Facebook. Posters, leaflets/flyers were the least useful.
The Facebook campaign, centred on three target Leeds postcodes which were not represented by visitors last year, was successful in attracting 37 survey respondents accounting for 10% of all visitors with their parties from these areas.
Visitor feedback from the postcard survey was very positive. The children’s treasure hunt was popular as was the virus film in the dome. The comments indicated that practical science/hands on activities were most popular with both adults and children. Highlights mentioned multiple times by visitors were the electron microscopes, the cycling skeleton, VR, flood and fluid flow demonstrations and tribology. Several visitors listed health information, climate, local history and the Brotherton Treasures as their highlights. After the treasure hunt, children enjoyed the food/chocolate eating and brain making activities. Generally people want more of the same next year. A few indicated that better signage would have made finding different buildings, and zones, easier.
The age range data shows that children of all ages, from <8yrs to 15 came to the event. The largest number of adult visitors were in the 40-64 age range. The lowest numbers were in the 19-25 and 16-18 ranges.
Student Host Experience

Twenty-two student hosts, recruited from the student ambassador and educational engagement lists were assigned to oversee zones, the welcome desk, car parking, the business talks, the dome and general helping duties. Staff stall holders thought that the student hosts did an effective job (88%). Stationing student hosts in the Michael Sadler foyer, Baines corridor and at the dome end of Parkinson after lunch was important in increasing the flow of visitors to the zones in Michael Sadler. Five student hosts were interviewed for their experiences and views, providing useful insight into the running of the day. They were stationed in the carpark, Health Zone, Science Zone, the Dome and as a lunch runner/general help. All the students interviewed had enjoyed the day and the chance to interact with visitors.

Feedback from the carpark was that it was best to be stationed outside the pedestrian entrance rather than next to the pay machine because no one needed help with the machine but visitors did appreciate being given directions. The chalk arrows from the car park to Parkinson worked well and children in particular liked this. The students felt that directing people under the EC Stoner arch with the help of arrows and guides would be a better way to direct visitors (if no pavement on carpark road next year). Carpark helpers felt they missed out on the event and suggested that next year carpark attendants could swap for an indoors duty at lunch.

Students in the Health and Science/Engineering Zones both fed back that their rooms were very quiet until after 11am. Most of their time was spent directing children to the stickers and speaking to visitors about the event. Looking round the stalls in their rooms before the event helped them to direct visitors. Stall holders did not interact with the student helpers/ask for help until the close of the day.

The dome was one of the most popular activities of the day. The three students quickly developed a rota of short stints inside/outside the dome and on the ticket desk which worked well. They made use of the general student helpers stationed at that end of Parkinson at very busy times, with the general feeling that 3.5 people was optimal. Later in the day they introduced extra shows to accommodate demand. In retrospect, they feel deciding on a strict maximum capacity at the start of the day and working out the maximum number of film shows possible in an hour would be best next time, as it was frustrating to turn people away earlier in the day.

One of the general helpers/lunch cover student hosts interviewed fed back that while on carpark lunch cover he had had more visitor interaction at the carpark road entrance (barrier near
Parkinson) than near the carpark itself. Signposting to the Michael Sadler building was an issue – many visitors he approached in Parkinson were not aware and had not spotted the signs for the other zones.

All the students suggested that the event is marketed more to students as many who live locally would encourage family and friends to attend. This echoes the visitor age data which indicated that the 19-25 age range was the lowest.

**Promotion and Marketing**

The event was widely advertised via free university channels, social media and press release to local external media. Plasma screens around the university and in Millennium Square carried adverts from early March. Flyers and posters were distributed to schools involved in the Festival of Science, Scout groups and local shops and businesses in Ilkley/Otley and some schools where staff had children. The University of 3rd Age, Mumsnet, Leeds Princes Trust were also contacted. The West Yorkshire Women’s Institute featured the event in their newsletter. The Yorkshire Evening Post Online wrote a piece the day before the event and the print version included a small mention at the end of a piece about another event.

From the visitor survey postcard data, posters were the least well performing promotion media. Leaflets performed less well than people walking past the University and seeing the banner, however ‘school letter’ may include leaflets sent home – this is not clear from the data. Direct email and views to the website (University or Be Curious website is not specified) also brought in significant numbers of visitors. Returners from last year’s event also formed a significant group, although it is unclear how they found out about the date this year.

Overall, we had more people from Leeds, Wakefield, Sheffield and Huddersfield and lost (compared to last year) in York, Halifax, Harrogate and Bradford this year. The targeted Facebook campaign of selected postcodes successfully brought in visitors. The Facebook posts via the University of Leeds may have gained visitors also, as the Social Media Report for 21-27th March reports good engagement before/on the day with between 117-292 reactions/comments/shares to the two posts. The boomerang style video post on the 22nd March gained only average engagement.

Few visitors cited Twitter as the way they found out about the event despite the reported good engagement levels of our tweet posts and a good level of retweeting.

The largest number of visitors came through word of mouth, which if put together with the ‘staff medium’ category, confirms the point raised in the staff survey that many visitors either had an existing connection to the University or know someone who does. It may be useful in future to know more about these visitors and which public groups they belong to, so that those wider groups can be targeted independently of staff contacts. Asking stall holders to promote to their wider audiences could be part of the participation brief in future years.

For next year, more targeted Facebook campaigns would seem worth the cost. The Alumni network, a group already interested in the university, but not now connected with it, would be an extra audience to target directly. The staff survey indicated that the educational attainment level of visitors was high. Is this the audience we want to attract and if so what new strategies can we adopt to reach more of them? Advertising through the networks of the other Leeds universities and colleges may help. Targeting local primary and secondary schools directly and using our museum contacts to more effect may increase numbers as these are all audiences that value learning. Promoting to the student audience, via the social media channels most used by them could increase engagement from this age group and bring in friends and family not associated with the university.
For wider audience groups, advertising in more public places, such as train stations and events listings in local media may be worth considering if we have a budget set aside for this purpose.

**Links to Data Sources**
All the original data can be found at:
S:\Wellcome Patient Public Engagement\Communication\Platforms ours\BeCurious2017\Evaluation
The staff survey data is available through BOS