Planning your public engagement activities: Step by step guide

1. Planning
- **Audience**: Consider the main stakeholders: Which public groups or organisations are most likely to be interested in your research?
- **Methods**: Consider the best ways to engage them: What methods, activities, formats or locations are most useful?
- **Collaboration**: Consider partners who are engaging your audiences already e.g. patient or youth groups, charities, museums, arts orgs or broadcasters
- **Impact on Audience**: Consider the intended outcomes: What will everyone involved gain from participating and how will you evaluate this?
- **Impact on Research**: Consider integration with your research plans: How could this add to your research and benefit you and your colleagues?

2. Resourcing
- **Audience**: Be realistic and choose one or two specific audience groups or stakeholders to work with
- **Methods**: Consider staff time and applying for funding. Does your team need additional training or support from your institution’s public engagement staff?
- **Collaboration**: Consider your partners/colleagues’ resource needs and how they could benefit from being involved
- **Impact on Audience**: Conduct a formative evaluation: Were there any unexpected outcomes? What needs to change to improve your activities?
- **Impact on Research**: Reflect on your research plans: What aspects could be changed to ensure maximum benefit to stakeholders?

3. Piloting
- **Audience**: Did your pilot reach your intended audiences effectively? Has it revealed other audiences you would now like to consider?
- **Methods**: Could you adapt your methods, activities, formats or locations to better suit your audience? Would different methods be better?
- **Collaboration**: Consider what you’ve learnt from beginning to work with your partner: How can you build on the successes of your collaboration?
- **Impact on Audience**: Are the outcomes of your work continuing to meet everyone’s aims and objectives? Is their mutual benefit for all parties involved?
- **Impact on Research**: What can you share about the progress of your research at this stage? Have new things emerged that you could build into your engagement plans?

4. On-going development
- **Audience**: Continue to work with your chosen groups, keep listening and think of secondary audiences
- **Methods**: Keep adapting your methods and reflecting on their value
- **Collaboration**: Has the feedback from partners, collaborators and participants highlighted any other potential stakeholders or interested groups?
- **Impact on Audience**: What will everyone involved gain from participating and how will you evaluate this?
- **Impact on Research**: What connections and networks can your collaborators/partners offer to share your research and engagement learning?

5. Final evaluation
- **Audience**: Reach: Consider numbers of primary and secondary audiences reached as well as unintended audiences, colleagues and peers
- **Methods**: Quality: Did you produce high quality outputs? Did the audience enjoy participating? How could methods be improved for the future?
- **Collaboration**: Impact: Was your collaborative process successful? How will you build on these relationships in the future?
- **Impact on Audience**: Impact: Did you achieve a good depth of engagement with the science? Did you achieve your intended outcomes?
- **Impact on Research**: Impact: Did your engagement work impact on your research? Has it had an impact on your peers, institution or field of work?

6. Wider dissemination
- **Audience**: Share the outputs with a wider audience: How could you broaden the reach and lay the foundations for future work?
- **Methods**: What methods could you use to disseminate your evaluation findings more widely? How can you share your learning?
- **Collaboration**: What connections and networks can your collaborators/partners offer to share your research and engagement learning?
- **Impact on Audience**: Could you continue to provide resources, links to further information and connect your audiences to other organisations?
- **Impact on Research**: Work with your institution’s public engagement staff to share your evaluation with others inside your institution and beyond.