



# Research Enrichment – Public Engagement

Notes on applying

We expect all our major research groups to engage with the public about their work.

To support this, we provide public engagement funding within our research grants. You can apply for a Research Enrichment – Public Engagement (REPE) at the time of your main application or post-award. REPE replaces our previous Provision for Public Engagement funding.

To do this, you will need to produce a costed plan for how you will inform, consult and/or collaborate with the non-academic public over the lifetime of your research project.

## **What are the objectives of REPE?**

- To strengthen capacity and provide opportunities for researchers to engage the public with Wellcome-funded biomedical science and health research.
- To stimulate dialogue and debate to enable public aspirations and concerns to be considered through the life cycle of the research project.
- To promote sustained collaboration between researchers and community or public organisations and cultural partners.

**To find out more, contact our  
Grants Information Desk:**

**T +44 (0)20 7611 5757**

**E [grantenquiries@wellcome.ac.uk](mailto:grantenquiries@wellcome.ac.uk)**

## Who can apply for a Research Enrichment – Public Engagement?

You can apply if you are the lead applicant on a research grant under most of our funding schemes. All of our schemes are eligible for Research Enrichment – Public Engagement (REPE) funding, apart from:

- Master's Fellowships in Public Health and Tropical Medicine
- Master's Awards in Humanities and Social Science
- Four-year PhD Studentships in Science
- PhD Training Fellowships for Clinicians
- Doctoral Studentships
- Biomedical Vacation Scholarships
- Seed Awards in Science
- Seed Awards in Humanities and Social Science
- Small Grants in Humanities and Social Science
- Engagement Fellowships
- Inspiring Science Fund
- Public Engagement Fund
- Science Media Studentships
- Sustaining Excellence Awards
- The Hub Award

You must be able to complete your proposed programme of activities by the end date of your main Wellcome grant.

If you are based in a research group or centre that already holds significant public engagement funding from Wellcome, you can still apply, but we would expect to see evidence that your new proposal is linked to a wider public engagement strategy, is in addition to the group or centre's own programme, and is specific to your research project.

## What activities are in scope?

A REPE will support a programme of activities during the lifetime of your research grant and should provide you with the opportunity to develop your practice in public engagement.

Engagement activities serving any or all of the following purposes (identified by the [National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement](#)) can be included in a REPE:

- **Informing:** Inspiring, informing and educating the public, and making the work of research more accessible.
- **Consulting:** Actively listening to the public's views, concerns and insights.
- **Collaborating:** Working in partnership with the public to solve problems together, drawing on each other's expertise.

Your REPE can include '**smart-to-do**' engagement activities that are useful to your research project, providing direct benefits to the research or to you as researchers. These could include:

- participating in festivals and events, working with museums, galleries or cultural venues, and collaborating with artists to stimulate interest, excitement and debate about biomedical science or gain new perspectives on your research
- involving the public as researchers (e.g. citizen science experiments or patient involvement)
- dialogue with the public and wider stakeholders to ensure research informs changes in policy and practice
- training to strengthen the capacity of researchers to communicate to and engage with the public.

It can also cover '**wise-to-do**' engagement activities that look more broadly, helping to foster a society in which research can flourish. These could include:

- workshops with schools and the professional development of teachers to inspire the next generation of researchers
- collaborating with producers of factual, comedy and drama programmes and films or games, to ensure research is part of the broad cultural conversation.

But your REPE cannot cover '**must-do**' engagement activities that are essential for the conduct of your research, such as to secure ethical compliance or recruit study participants. These count as part of your research methodology and should be included in the core research grant – not a REPE. These could include:

- community advisory forums to promote understanding and discussion around the priorities and agenda of the research
- consultation of communities directly affected by a particular piece of research to inform the research process
- building the capacity of communities affected by research to identify and communicate their needs and priorities around health
- lay or patient members of project advisory boards
- patient information leaflets and newsletters
- communicating with study participants about the research findings.

Other activities that are not in scope for a REPE include:

- symposia or other communication aimed at the academic community
- open access costs
- PR and press activities to communicate research to the public through the news media (e.g. press releases, TV and radio news, Twitter, blog posts)
- policy engagement activities that do not also engage with the public or involve the input of public perspectives
- activities where the primary purpose is to generate approval or acceptance of an institution, or to increase student applications to an institution
- support and teaching for undergraduates
- Women in Science or diversity initiatives
- websites not clearly aimed and marketed at a public audience
- health promotion or public health campaigns.

## How does REPE relate to other Wellcome funding?

REPE is distinct from our Public Engagement funding, which supports public engagement projects that are not necessarily linked to Wellcome-funded research.

If you want funding for a discrete engagement project, outside the scope of your REPE plans, you should apply to one of our [Public Engagement funding schemes](#).

You are also free to take part in other public engagement activities. For our part, we like to involve the researchers we fund in activities such as our public programmes and 'seasons' and offer bespoke training.

## How much can I apply for?

Up to £250,000 or 5 per cent of the funding awarded under your main Wellcome grant, whichever is larger.

## What costs can I use the funds for?

We would expect you to request the following types of costs (with each justified in your application):

- dedicated salaried posts, where appropriate
- other personnel directly related to the programme, including consultancy costs and project management fees
- the cost of a temporary research assistant/lecturer to cover research/teaching commitments
- direct activity and production costs, including venue costs, equipment and materials
- relevant training and development for Principal Applicant and those employed on the grant
- travel costs, including attendance at relevant conferences
- evaluation (including formative/development) costs
- administration costs that are not already covered by other funding
- marketing and publicity costs for events and activities
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly Criminal Records Bureau) checks for applications in the UK (*Scientists can get these free by registering to be a Science and Engineering Ambassador – see [STEMNET](#) for details*)
- contingency and inflation – as long as reasonable
- VAT on fees (*Your institution may not be able to recover all the VAT you pay. Please include any irrecoverable VAT in your budget when you apply, as we may not be able to cover it retrospectively*).

You cannot use REPE funds for:

- full economic costs
- core overheads of the applying organisation not related to the project, e.g. heating, rent, etc.
- salary costs of staff who are already funded by their organisation (*If your Wellcome award does not pay salaries, you should include time spent on public engagement in the number of hours proposed for your research project*)
- expenses incurred in submitting an application, including attending interviews
- academic courses or research such as Master's degrees or PhDs
- costs arising prior to the start date of the project.

## How and when can I apply?

If you are a new research applicant, we encourage you to apply alongside your research application. There is a separate application form on WT Grant Tracker. Your application will be reviewed as soon as you've been informed that your main Wellcome grant has been awarded. Alternatively, you can apply after you receive your award.

If you are a current Wellcome grantholder, you can apply at any time from your award date, but you need to be able to complete your programme of activities by the end date of your main Wellcome grant.

We make decisions on applications four times a year. Deadlines are on the website.

## How many times can I apply?

If you have made an unsuccessful REPE application – either at the time of your initial research proposal or since your award – you can submit a revised programme of engagement work once more as a current grantholder (similarly if you have unsuccessfully applied for a Provision for Public Engagement). Resubmissions of the same proposal will not be accepted.

If you already hold a REPE – or a Provision for Public Engagement – we may invite you to apply for a second award in certain circumstances.

## How are applications assessed?

Your application will be reviewed by our REPE committee, using external peer review as appropriate.

You will need to demonstrate that you are following your institution's ethical review process and its policies on child protection and health and safety. See this [guidance on ethical issues](#) to consider when developing a public engagement programme.

Your application will be assessed using criteria grouped into the categories of people, programme, place and proportionality:

### People

- track record of public engagement, communication and/or education of the people involved in the proposal (including consultants and partner organisations)
- feasibility of the proposal and the quality of the project management
- extent to which the proposal would promote collaboration between researchers and community or public organisations and cultural partners

### Programme

- extent to which public engagement activities are integrated into the research (i.e. do they draw on research themes, involve funded researchers and take place along the duration of the research grant?)
- potential of the activity to strengthen capacity of researchers in public engagement with biomedical and health research
- potential of the activity to stimulate dialogue and debate (health education and health promotion would not be supported)
- appropriateness of intended reach
- identification of a well-defined target audience/ participants and feasible and appropriate methods of reaching them
- relevance/suitability of the activity to the target audience/participants and the likely impact
- quality of the proposed activities (i.e. to what extent are they drawing on existing good practice?)
- extent and appropriateness of evaluation plans
- value for money

### Place

- availability of support for the researchers involved (e.g. reducing lecturing or other commitments or admin support)
- extent to which the institution values, recognises and supports public engagement

### Proportionality

- appropriateness of the plans in scale for the size of the research project
- extent to which the programme is integrated and complements engagement strategies or activities at the departmental, institutional or local level.

## How are activities monitored and how is this funding mechanism being evaluated?

We will ask you to report on progress as you would for any other aspect of your main research grant. This will be through your usual reporting tool. Submissions will be monitored by the adviser for your research grant.

To evaluate how well the REPE is working and inform how we might change it in the future, we may contact you for further information about your grant.

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