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 any time from when your main Wellcome grant has been approved for funding, but you need to be able complete your programme of activities by the end of your grant. REPE has replaced our previous Provision for Public Engagement funding.

What are the objectives of REPE?

• To engage the public with Wellcome research in a compelling way
• To develop Wellcome researchers’ public engagement skills and expertise
• To create and strengthen partnerships between Wellcome researchers and the public
• To explore different ways that engagement can enhance research
• To create ambassadors for engagement within research fields and organisations

To find out more, contact our Grants Information Desk:

T +44 (0)20 7611 5757
E 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. The only schemes that are not eligible for REPE funding are:

- Biomedical Vacation Scholarships
- Doctoral Studentships
- Engagement Fellowships
- Four-year PhD Studentships in Science
- International Master’s Fellowships
- Master’s Studentships in Humanities and Social Science
- PhD Training Fellowships for Clinicians
- Public Engagement Fund
- Seed Awards in Humanities and Social Science
- Seed Awards in Science
- Small Grants in Humanities and Social Science
- 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 proposal is linked to a wider public engagement strategy, is additional to the group or centre’s own programme, and is specific to your research project.

If your Wellcome funding is one of the following types, contact us before you apply as there is a different application process:

- a Wellcome Centre
- an Africa or Asia Programme
- a Developing Excellence in Leadership and Training in Africa Programme
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.

REPE cannot cover 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.

Essential activities not in scope for a REPE 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
How much can I apply for?

You can ask for REPE funding of between £10,000 and £250,000. You must be able to justify the amount you ask for, based on:

- the funding level and time remaining on your main Wellcome grant
- the scale and scope of your proposed public engagement programme

What costs can I use the funds for?

The award covers the cost of running your public engagement programme, which may include:

- 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 STEM Learning 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?

You can begin your application for REPE funding at any time while you’re applying for your main Wellcome grant. But you should only submit your REPE application when you’ve been informed that your main Wellcome grant has been awarded.

If you already hold a main Wellcome grant, you can apply for a REPE at any time, but you need to be able to complete your programme of activities by the end date of your main grant.

We make decisions on applications twice a year. See our website for upcoming deadlines.

How many times can I apply?

If you have made an unsuccessful REPE application, you can submit a revised programme of engagement work (similarly if you have previously 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 allow you to apply for a second award in certain circumstances.

Please contact us if you would like to be considered for a second application.
How are applications assessed?

Your application will be reviewed by our REPE committee, using external peer review for applications over £100,000.

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 reviewed for:

- the main outcomes you want to achieve during your engagement programme
- the people you want to engage with, and why you want to do this
- the feasibility of your programme
- the partners you’ll work with and how you’ll work with them
- how you’ll evaluate your programme and share learning
- how the programme will help you and others to improve your public engagement skills and expertise
- value for money

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.
Wellcome exists to improve health by helping great ideas to thrive.

We support researchers, we take on big health challenges, we campaign for better science, and we help everyone get involved with science and health research.

We are a politically and financially independent foundation.