Thanks to UCL Advances, ASE’s approach to public engagement has now been completely transformed.

Archaeology for all
How can archaeology get more into the public eye? With a PhD that focuses on the public perception of archaeological sites, this is something that Dr Hilary Orange (Archaeology PhD 2012) knows a lot about. Through the UCL Advances Knowledge Exchange Associate (KEA) programme, she linked up with Archaeology South-East and applied her expertise to the challenge of achieving wider public engagement for UK archaeological institutions.

Archaeology South-East is one of the largest contract archaeology teams in Southern England. It works with communities, developers, local government, academics, specialists and local residents. Hilary’s role as a KEA was to identify the challenges it faced in public engagement and create new ways of raising its profile.

Time for change
To do this, Hilary comprehensively evaluated ASE’s current activity. Believing that archaeology has huge potential appeal to the public, she rolled out a national survey on attitudes towards public engagement within the archaeological profession. Its results showed that the biggest impediments are lack of money and training, but that most respondents are also keen to do much more public engagement.

In response, Hilary’s strategy was to develop platforms for ASE on Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia and academia.edu. She helped push the ASE brand into the public sphere and charted its impact. So far, it’s been a success. Her strategies include promoting ASE via Twitter and Facebook, via, for example, a ‘Photo of the Month’ competition, ‘On This Day’ tweets and Facebook posts. The ASE feeds link to the most up-to-date news in the media about archaeology too. Hilary has also established a team approach to content creation, a cultural and systemic change within ASE that means a 10-person team now manages this ‘Micro-PE model’ together.

Archaeology for the 21st Century
Thanks to UCL Advances, ASE’s approach to public engagement has now been completely transformed. Dr Dominic Perring, Director of Archaeology South East, says:

“Hilary’s hard work has made us immeasurably better placed to build lasting beneficial relations. We are particularly grateful for the progress she’s made in building up our use of social media, in better understanding the potential of our existing workforce, and in locating this work within wider research and outreach initiatives.”

Hilary hopes that this is the start of a vibrant future for public engagement: “I believe that archaeology is a universal heritage that’s owned by everybody,” she says, “and it’s knowledge that should be out there. The KEA gave me the chance to put this belief into practice.”
About UCL
UCL (University College London) was established in 1826 and is ranked as one of the world’s top-ten universities. The university is a modern, outward-looking institution, with more than 4,000 academic and research staff committed to engaging with the major issues of our times. It has a global reach, with 34% of its students coming from outside the UK, from almost 140 countries.

www.ucl.ac.uk

About UCL Advances
UCL Advances, UCL’s centre for entrepreneurship and business interaction, helps anyone who wants to learn about, start or grow a business. It’s primary role is to promote a culture of entrepreneurship on campus and engagement with entrepreneurs and small businesses beyond UCL’s boundaries. It works to support start-ups and small businesses across London by helping them to access the technical and business expertise of UCL’s staff and students through a series of programmes to help support ambitious young companies.

UCL Advances is affiliated with UCL Enterprise, which provides UCL’s structures for engaging with business for commercial and societal benefit.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances
www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise

About Business Support
UCL Advances provides direct business support for internal and external organisations through a variety of programmes and activities such as 1-1 advice, problem solving through student consultancy, student internships, mentoring and others.

• We help London-based businesses grow and develop by analyzing business needs and connecting them to relevant interventions such as industry mentors;
• Through pairing teams of UCL and LBS students with businesses we deliver short-term consultancy projects addressing specific organisation needs;
• We broker relationships and fund exchanges between new and aspiring entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs in another member state of the European Union;
• Individual angel investors connected to UCL provide seed investment to SMEs engaged with UCL Advances programmes; and
• We offer fully funded SME Internships where UCL students spend eight weeks in a London SME working alongside the director(s) to deliver real results and lasting impact in the host organization whilst learning about enterprise.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/business/support

About Student Engagement
UCL Advances does more to help students learn about, start or grow businesses than any other UK university. UCL Advances takes students on their entrepreneurial journey from learning about the basics of business to growing a profitable company.

One of the initiatives developed to help students learn about business is the Knowledge Exchange Associate (KEA) programme. Frequently, PhD students in the final stages of their research are producing specialist knowledge that would be of real benefit to small or medium-sized companies. The KEA allows the students to act as conduits for knowledge transfer from academia to business. It is a 6-9 month paid programme that gives postdoctoral students the chance to work with a company that will benefit from exposure to their specialist knowledge and research.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/support/kea