

Information for candidates

Public engagement fellowships – Deadline Monday 2 September 2013

This document contains guidance about how to apply for a public engagement fellowship.

What's in these guidelines?

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The Public Engagement Unit (PEU) has created several toolkits to help you organise, deliver, and reflect on your public activities. You will find these resources useful in planning your fellowship: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/evaluation/toolkits>

1) What public engagement fellowships are for

The aims of these fellowships are to:

- increase the impact, through public engagement, of UCL research in engineering, mathematical and physical science areas
- change culture with respect to public engagement in UCL faculties, departments and institutes that carry out research in engineering, mathematical and physical sciences.

The fellowships are delivered by the UCL Public Engagement Unit (PEU) as part of UCL's Impact Acceleration Account from EPSRC.

Around £20000 is available per Fellow to pay the salary of staff bought in to cover the Fellow's research or teaching commitments for the duration of the fellowship. This sum is calculated on an estimate of buying in staff at grade 8, spine point 42, at 0.4FTE (2 days a week) for 12 months. Alternative periods of time, grades, or FTE at similar costs will be considered. Activities must be completed by summer 2015.

These sums of money cover salary and on-costs only, and do not cover estates or indirect costs (i.e. we cannot pay Full Economic Costs).

In addition to support and guidance from the PEU and its networks, Fellows will also be able to access small amounts of funding for public engagement-related activities.

Fellows are expected to:

- carry out innovative public engagement activities that could lead to impact from research
- promote the value of public engagement as part of the strategic role of UCL
- champion public engagement as a pathway to increase the impact of research
- be part of a network of Fellows, sharing public engagement ideas, experiences and learning.

What exactly Fellows will do will depend on the department, institute or centre that each Fellow is working in. We do not want to be prescriptive about the activities of the Fellows, but we do want the fellowships to:

- generate case studies of good practice in public engagement
- be based on plans that include clear, practical aims and objectives
- be based on plans that include and affect more than just one person in an institute, department or centre
- be models of change that can be copied by others at UCL
- consist of innovative, creative approaches to public engagement
- involve activities that are good value for money.

We are looking for Fellows who are well-connected in their departments, and who are supported in their activities by their Head of Department/Institute/Centre. We are not looking for Fellows who wish solely to develop their own, or their department's, media profile (the Public Engagement Unit supports media engagement in other ways).

2) Eligibility

Proposals will be accepted from academic/research staff at UCL in the Faculties of Engineering and Mathematical and Physical Sciences, as well as academic/research staff in other faculties whose research falls within engineering and the mathematical and physical sciences.

Honorary and visiting staff are not eligible. Funds cannot be used to extend the hours of a part-time contract, to extend a full-time contract that is ending or to create a new short-term post.

3) The definition of public engagement used at UCL

As public engagement is a developing field, there are several different definitions used in Higher Education. The Public Engagement Unit supports UCL staff and students involved in activities defined in the UCL Public Engagement Strategy:

- Taking part in dialogue about the direction of our research and teaching.
- Supporting communities with our expertise.
- Creating opportunities for people outside the university to contribute their research and knowledge to our programmes.
- Creating knowledge in collaboration with communities and interest groups outside the university.
- Nurturing a society in which the next generation wants to take part in research, teaching and learning.
- Telling public groups about our work.

We also use the definition of public engagement developed by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (<http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/what>):

“Public engagement describes the many ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.”

You can find UCL’s Public Engagement Strategy, which was developed by a cross-section of UCL staff, here: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/publicengagementstrategy>

4) How successful proposals are chosen

Proposals will be read and shortlisted by members of the PEU. 8-10 candidates will be shortlisted and asked to attend an interview (date, in mid- to late-September, to be confirmed as soon as possible).

Candidates will be interviewed by a panel of 4-5 senior UCL staff, including academic staff, with significant public engagement experience. None of them are from the PEU. The panel will select up to six Fellows based on:

- Whether the proposal is likely to increase the impact through public engagement of the Fellow’s own research, research in the Fellow’s department (or equivalent) or more broadly at UCL
- Whether the proposal is likely to change culture with respect to public engagement in the Fellow’s department (or equivalent) or more broadly at UCL.
- Whether the fellowship aims can realistically be achieved within cost and time constraints
- The long-term effects of the fellowship
- The impact (or potential impact) of the fellowship on publics

5) A step-by-step guide to filling in the proposal form

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposal with a member of the PEU in advance of the deadline. To do this, contact Dr Hilary Jackson at hilary.jackson@ucl.ac.uk.

Basic details

Completed forms must be no longer than six sides of A4 (excluding CV and letter of support) in 11pt Calibri font. **This rule will be strictly adhered to.**

At the start of the form, we ask for information about you and how we can contact you. This information will help us to administer the fellowship if it is funded, and to monitor whether we are receiving proposals from a cross-section of people within BEAMS. We also ask for details of your finance administrator and departmental account prefix so that we can arrange a transfer of funds if your proposal is successful.

Fellowships must start during the 2013-14 academic year and be completed within a year of starting.

We expect candidates to have the support of their Head of Department (or equivalent for institutes, etc.), in the form of a letter of support and signature at the end of the form. So that our panel can find out more about you and your experience, please include a three-page (max) curriculum vitae with your proposal.

Question 1

Please give a short description of what you want to do during the fellowship. If your proposal is funded, this description will be used on our website, so make sure that it can be understood by a non-specialist, non-university audience.

Question 2

This question is all about your reasons for doing the project. What are you trying to change about UCL, your department or the public?

You might also find that using bullet points to answer question 2 is helpful. In the Public Engagement Unit we sometimes use this matrix:

	Empowerment /enabling	Skills	Attitudes	Awareness
Project team (UCL staff/postgraduate students)				
Public participants				

Very few, if any, Fellows would aim to make changes in all of these sections, but thinking about which changes you want to make with this fellowship can help you to describe what you’re trying to achieve. If you can’t fit your project outcomes into any of these boxes, it might not be appropriate for a public engagement fellowship.

Please do not include a completed version of this table in your proposal; it’s just a useful tool for working out how your activities fit with the programme.

Please note that the panel do not particularly focus on the number of public participants in any proposed activities, but instead take into account the quality of engagement and the impact on participants during and after the activities.

Question 3

Why are you the best person to carry out this fellowship? Please give details of **relevant** experience, skills and/or experience that will help you with your fellowship. Will you need any training as part of the fellowship? You can access further funds to develop relevant skills if necessary – please make a note here if you would like to pursue this.

There is no need to list publications or talk about your research/teaching achievements at length unless it is relevant to your fellowship.

If you are planning to work with external partners, please mention them, and any relationships you or your department already have with them, here.

Question 4

Please describe any expected outcomes and outputs of the fellowship. Outputs can be defined as direct, measurable results of activities undertaken (e.g. number of participants in an activity, number of reports produced). Outcomes are the changes resulting from such activities, (e.g. what has changed, why it has changed, how changes relate to activities and how these changes fit within the aims of the programme).

Question 5

How will you assess whether your fellowship was a success? This answer shows the panel how you’ll know that you’ve achieved your aims. Most fellowships will change and develop as they go on, and you will be expected to reflect on your fellowship both as it progresses and after activities are complete. Although we recognise the inherently emergent nature of fellowships, we do expect you to have an idea of what success looks like.

The PEU provides guidance about evaluating public engagement activities on our website:

www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/evaluation/faqs

If you have clearly laid out your aims in Question 2, you will probably find Question 5 easier to answer. A good evaluation will be closely linked to a project's aims and objectives. If you are new to evaluating this kind of activity, or would like some new ideas, you will find this guide particularly useful:

http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/documents/evaluationtoolkits/evaluationmethods/Before_you_start.pdf

You can also get guidance on this from the PEU: contact our evaluation officer, Dr Gemma Moore gemma.moore@ucl.ac.uk.

Question 6

Please explain how you will share what you learn during this fellowship with others at UCL (within your department, faculty, and the university more widely) as well as beyond UCL.

Question 7

Please note how much of your time per week will be spent on fellowship activities, and how much it will cost to buy in staff to cover your usual activities.

As noted above, around £20000 per fellow is available, covering on-costs to buy in staff to cover your responsibilities while you are carrying out your fellowship.

You are likely to need to discuss this answer with the person responsible for finance administration in your department.

Question 8

Please include a brief timeline of when planning and any activities will happen. Depending on the fellowship, include details of any planned public or internal activities will take place.

Question 9

It is a requirement that you are supported by your department, and that the department is willing to administer the arrangements to transfer and account for funds as well as arrange cover for your usual activities while you carry out the fellowship. If you, or anyone in your department, have any questions about this, or anything else in this document, please contact hilary.jackson@ucl.ac.uk.

6) If you're successful

The panel's decision will be communicated to applicants within one week of the interview date. Funds will be transferred to the relevant account in each Fellow's department.

At the beginning of the project we will invite you to a meeting of all Fellows. Attendance at this meeting is a requirement of accepting your fellowship. Fellows will be expected to support one another and work and reflect together on their fellowships as they proceed. As part of this, Fellows will be expected to attend informal meetings with other fellows and with the PEU.

The PEU will provide support and guidance throughout each fellowship. If you become a Fellow, you can expect experienced staff from the PEU not just to monitor your progress but also to support you as you carry out your activities, providing advice, guidance, and contacts as appropriate. We will tailor this support and monitoring for each Fellow in order to match your needs.

If you are awarded a fellowship, we will send you a short form for you to complete at the end of the fellowship, asking you to reflect on how it went. Completing this form is a requirement of accepting your fellowship.