Information for applicants

Beacon Bursaries – Deadline Monday 4 November 2013

This document contains important information about the Beacon Bursary funding scheme. It is unlikely you will receive funding if you do not read this advice.

What's in these guidelines?

1) What this funding scheme is for
2) The definition of public engagement used at UCL
3) Some examples of the kinds of activities funded by Beacon Bursaries
4) How successful applications are chosen
5) A step-by-step guide to filling in the application form
6) What happens if you're successful

If you have any queries about this funding stream, or would like help with your application before the deadline, please contact the team at publicengagement@ucl.ac.uk

We have created several toolkits to help you organise, deliver, and reflect on your public activities, available here: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/evaluation/toolkits.

1) What this funding scheme is for

The aims of the Beacon Bursary funding scheme are as follows:

1) To increase opportunities for members of the public to engage with UCL research and teaching.

2) To build capacity for public engagement within UCL, encouraging staff and students at all levels to be involved.

3) To create and enhance networks between staff, students, practitioners, government bodies, external agencies, non-governmental organisations and community groups.

4) To evaluate, learn from and share UCL's approach to public engagement, internally and externally.

5) To enable staff and students to test different methods of supporting public engagement.

Bursaries are designed to support staff and postgraduate research students at UCL to engage with the public. This scheme funds public engagement activities that increase staff and postgraduate research students' activity, skills, and understanding of public engagement. Bursaries are part of a strategic programme of activities that aim to embed public engagement as a normal, valued activity for UCL staff and postgraduate research students.

The maximum bursary award is £2000. The Beacon Bursary fund gives out a total of up to £20,000 per year, usually in three rounds.

Activities funded in this round must be completed by 31 December 2014 (although funded activities may be part of an ongoing project). Applicants will be informed of the panel's decision by Wednesday 18 December 2013.

The principal applicant for Beacon Bursary funding must be a member of UCL staff or a UCL postgraduate research student. Please note that bursaries are **not** available to undergraduate students or students on taught Masters courses. If you fall into these categories, but want to work with the public, please contact UCL's volunteering team at volunteering@ucl.ac.uk.

2) The definition of public engagement used at UCL

As public engagement is a developing field, there are several different definitions. The Public Engagement Unit supports UCL staff and students involved in a range of activities, but this fund particularly supports activities like:

- 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.

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."

And a definition of 'public' developed from that provided by HEFCE:

> "The 'public' includes individuals and groups who do not currently have a formal relationship with an HEI through teaching, research or knowledge transfer."

This definition includes, for example, communities or individuals with an interest relevant to your research, but would typically exclude students at other universities, or contacts in industry such as law firms or constructors.

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

3) Some examples of the kinds of activities funded by Beacon Bursaries

Previous activities have included:

- A departmental open day part-organised by local people.
- Bringing NHS service-users into UCL to help train future medical staff.
- Developing UCL staff or postgraduate research students' public engagement skills and activity.
- Buying or developing tools and equipment (for example a mobile phone application) for UCL staff or students to use in public engagement activities.
- Workshops that give a public group access to resources within UCL.
- Development costs for an application to a larger external funding stream for a major public engagement activity (for example, a pilot study to gather evidence to support external funding).
- A research-focused participatory art project with NHS patients.
- Activities encouraging a relevant public group to share their thoughts and views on the future direction of a specific area of UCL research.
- Workshops that use UCL's links with policy-makers to enable citizens who do not usually have a voice to influence policy.
- Meetings to explore how relevant special interest groups (e.g. drivers, gardeners, sufferers of back-pain) could influence, and benefit from, your research.

To get a feel for this funding stream, have a look at previously funded bursary projects at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/casestudies/beaconbursaries.

4) What happens to your application?

Your application will be read by a member of the Public Engagement Unit, who will attach a one page review. The application and summary will then be considered by a panel of four senior UCL staff, including academic staff, with significant public engagement experience, none of them from the Public Engagement Unit. This panel will decide whether to fund your application. The panel will consider:

- Whether the project fits with the strategic aims of this fund (see above).
- Whether the project can realistically be delivered within cost and time constraints.
- The sustainability and long-term effects of the activities.
- The impact of the project on publics.
- The impact of the project on UCL staff and students.

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

Potential applicants are encouraged to discuss their application with a member of the Public Engagement Unit in advance of the deadline. To do this, contact the team at publicengagement@ucl.ac.uk.

Basic details

Completed forms must be no longer than three sides of A4 in 11pt Calibri font. **This rule will be strictly adhered to.**

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

Please note that we are unable to fund activities that will not be complete by 31 December 2014 (although funded activities may be part of an ongoing project).

Question 1

Please give a short description of what you want to use the money for. 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.

There is space in the answer to question 2 for you to explain the aims of your activities. If you want to use a bursary to fund just part of a bigger project, please be clear about what parts of the project the bursary will be used for. Please note that activities funded by this scheme must be complete by 31 December 2014.

Question 2

This question is all about your reasons for doing the project. What are you trying to change about UCL, the project team or the public? You might find the information about aims and objectives in this guide useful:
http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/research/toolkits/Event_Evaluation

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

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

Very few, if any, projects would aim to make changes in all of these sections, but thinking about which changes you want to make with this project 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 be better funded by a different scheme.

Please do not include a completed version of this table in your application; 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 a project, but instead take into account the quality of engagement and the impact on participants during and after the activities.

Question 3

Who is the audience for your project? Who, outside of your project team, will be involved in the project? If you're putting on an event, what sorts of people are likely to participate? Will they be defined by age group, profession, or a shared interest? Where will they come from? If you're working with a specific community group, who are they?

This is also a good place to provide information about how you will contact your intended participants. If you already have any contacts among the groups you plan to work with, mention them here. The panel will give preference to applications that include a plan of how audiences will be reached, as well as those with a realistic idea of which audiences might be interested in the activities.

Please note that some audiences and activities do not fit this scheme's definition of public engagement:

- this funding stream is not intended for activities that are primarily about communication between professionals/academics in a particular subject area.
- UCL staff and students, and UCL alumni, are not considered public.
- activities that could be described as student or staff recruitment, promotion of higher education or of a particular area of study are outside the definition of public engagement. **Proposals for work with schools should be discussed with a member of the Public Engagement Unit before submission.**

Question 4

Please give a short summary of relevant experience held by the project team. This answer tells the panel why you are the right team to run this public engagement project. For example, have you done work with the public before? You can budget to improve your skills if necessary.

Give a very short description of the team's relevant experience. There's no need to list publications or talk about your research/teaching achievements unless they are relevant to your public engagement activity.

If, as most successful project leaders do, you plan to work with other people, please tell us who they are, what relevant experience they bring, and what involvement they'll have. Are there people from outside UCL involved in planning and delivering the project? Are representatives of your target audience involved in planning and delivering the project? What relevant experience do they bring to the project? Do you need to pay them from the bursary?

Question 5

Please give a brief timeline of your project, giving the major planning and delivery milestones and when they are likely to happen. If you have any questions about how to do this, please contact the team at publicengagement@ucl.ac.uk.

Question 6

Please provide a budget listing each item or group of items (e.g. catering, external trainer fee, etc) to be paid for. If the bursary is paying for one part of a larger project, please also tell us how much money is coming from other sources and what it will be spent on. We'd also like brief details of other things that are going to be used on the project that aren't money, eg staff time, UCL spaces, etc.

Try and keep the breakdown to a similar length to your other answers.

Beacon Bursaries can't be used to pay UCL staff for their time, but it is possible to pay students for small amounts of work such as data entry, photography or event hosting.

NOTE: This scheme **does not** pay for international travel.

Question 7

How will you assess whether your project was a success? This answer shows the panel how you'll know that you've achieved your aims. We don't expect evaluation and monitoring to take up a large proportion of your time. However, we expect you to have a clear idea of what success looks like, and for your plans to include reflection by the public, as well as the project team, on the activities, including planning if appropriate.

A guide to evaluating projects is available on the UCL Public Engagement Unit website: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/public-engagement/evaluation/toolkits

If you have clearly laid out your aims in Question 2, you will probably find Question 7 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 Public Engagement Unit: contact publicengagement@ucl.ac.uk.

Question 8

Because bursary funds are relatively small, we're aware that you might want to use them to make an existing project better, or to help it reach a wider audience. This answer tells the panel how much difference the bursary will make. It's also a chance to describe your plan B – what will you do if you don't get a bursary?

6) If you're successful

The panel's decisions will usually be communicated to applicants by 18 December 2013.

We'll transfer the funding to your department, where a new account code will be set up for the sole use of this project. This account should only be used for this fund, and will be closed when the project ends, or on 31 December 2014, whichever is sooner.

At the beginning of the project we will invite you to a meeting of all new bursary awardees. Attendance at this meeting is a requirement of accepting bursary funding.

We'll also be in contact informally throughout the project to provide advice and support. If you are funded, you can expect experienced staff from the Public Engagement Unit not just to monitor your progress but also to support you as you carry out your public engagement activities, providing advice, guidance, and contacts as appropriate. We tailor this support and monitoring for each project in order to match your needs. We also organise opportunities for

people who have been funded by our various streams to meet in order to share experience and provide mutual support.

If your application is funded, we'll send you a short form for you to complete at the end of the project, asking you to reflect on how it went. Completing this form is a requirement of accepting the bursary funding.