



Guidance for Beacon Bursary Funding Scheme 2020/21

Deadline: Monday 19th October 2020, 12pm (midday)

This document contains important information about the Beacon Bursary funding scheme. Please read the guidance carefully before you prepare your application, along with the application form guidance. If you have any questions about the scheme or would like support and advice on your application before the deadline, please contact the Engagement team for advice and resources at publicengagement@ucl.ac.uk.

Aims of the Beacon Bursary Funding Scheme

In line with the mission of UCL's Engagement team, the aim of this scheme is to advance the practice and culture of public and community engagement within UCL by enabling UCL staff and postgraduate students to:

- Explore mutually beneficial engagement between communities and UCL research and teaching
- Be innovative in their engagement
- Evaluate, learn from and share their engagement activities.

The Beacon Bursary panel will be looking at how these aims are reflected throughout your application.

The Beacon Bursary funding scheme supports [UCL's Public Engagement Strategy](#) which aims to embed public engagement as a normal, valued activity for UCL staff and students. Projects supported by the scheme should also align with the key characteristics of public engagement at UCL which are:

- a focus on collaborative models of engagement
- involvement of diverse public groups, particularly those whose voices are heard less often
- a spirit of experimentation from which learning can emerge.

Definition of Public Engagement

UCL uses 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."

A note on Covid 19

We expect all applications to consider alternatives where face to face contact may not be possible, and subsequent accessibility implications for engagement activities such as digital poverty

Who this funding scheme is for

The principal applicant for Beacon Bursary funding must be a current member of UCL staff or a UCL postgraduate research student. If you are at UCL on an honorary contract, your proposed project must be related to UCL research or teaching.

Bursaries are **not** available to undergraduate students or students on taught postgraduate courses.

What the funding scheme is for

Beacon Bursaries are designed to support staff and postgraduate research students at UCL to engage with public groups. This scheme funds public engagement projects that increase and enhance staff and postgraduate research students' activity, skills, and understanding of public engagement like:

- Creating knowledge in collaboration with communities and interest groups outside the university
- Supporting communities with our expertise in a mutually beneficial way
- Creating opportunities for people outside the university to contribute their research and knowledge to our programmes
- Taking part in dialogue about the direction of our research and teaching.

Previous activities have included:

- Piloting activities to develop long term relationships between UCL staff and students and communities of interest
- Challenging existing academic models of engagement
- Sharing the finding or results from research with communities in inventive, practical and interactive ways, such as participatory art workshops, exhibitions, events etc.
- Involving community groups in the co-production of media (e.g. film, music, art) to facilitate conversations on research
- Including public voices in developing digital data projects and guidance
- Meetings to explore how relevant special interest groups could influence, and benefit from, your research.

Public Engagement with east London communities

We particularly encourage applications for projects in east London as UCL is aiming to expand its engagement activities there and develop relationships with local communities as the UCL East campus.

Public Engagement and UCL Culture

Within UCL Culture we offer support and specialist skills in public programming, museums, theatre, public art and performance. We encourage applicants to consider how your project may benefit from wider cultural engagement. This year the Culture team are focusing on the following themes – if these strike your interest please get in touch with publicengagement@ucl.ac.uk to discuss how theatre, performance or collections could be involved with the bursary project.

- The Environment
- Eugenics and its legacy at UCL
- Disability and Technology

Funding timeline

Activities funded in this round must be completed by the end of the next UCL financial year: **31 July 2021** (although funded activities may be part of an ongoing project).

What the funding scheme is not for

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

- Activities that are primarily about communication between professionals and academics in a particular subject area
- University 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 that focus on widening participation in higher education or enrichment of school curricula.

How much funding is available

The maximum bursary award is **£2,000**.

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. This scheme does not pay for international travel.

What happens to your application?

Your application will be reviewed by a member of the UCL Engagement Team, who will complete a one-page review for the Beacon Bursary panel. The application and review will then be considered by a panel chaired by the Head of Public Engagement, and including a cross-section of senior UCL staff with significant public engagement experience. 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 potential impact of the project on public groups
- The potential impact of the project on UCL staff and students
- The sustainability and long-term effects of the activities.

Applicants will be informed of the panel's decision by December 2020.