



Guidance for Beacon Bursary Funding Scheme 2021/22

Deadline: Monday 13th December 2021, 5pm

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 principles of public engagement at UCL which are:

- to listen & respond.
- to collaborate.
- to embed equity & inclusion.
- to experiment.

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

Although we are expecting less disruption to the Beacon Bursary projects this year due to mandatory social distancing rules, there are still many individuals for whom face to face contact may not be safe or comfortable. We expect all applications to consider how to make all or part of their projects accessible to these individuals.

Who this funding scheme is for

The principal applicant for Beacon Bursary funding must be a current member of UCL staff (both academic and professional services) 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.

UCL OVRIGE staff are not eligible to apply.

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.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

As part of our ongoing work to improve the inclusivity and accessibility of the scheme, we encourage applications from those who are underrepresented in the sector and at UCL including but, not exclusive, to disabled, D/deaf and neurodiverse people, LGBTQ+ people, people from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds.

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 as part of teaching

We also encourage applications from teaching fellows, where the aim of the project is to bring mutual benefit to UCL students and the public.

Funding timeline

Activities funded in this round must be completed by the end of the next UCL financial year: **Friday 29 July 2022** (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
- 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 or post-graduate research students for their time, but it is possible to pay other UCL students for small amounts of work such as data entry, photography or event hosting. This scheme does not pay for international travel.

Beacon Bursaries can be used to pay community partners for their time on the project.

Support for applicants

20 minute support and advice sessions with members of the public engagement team will be available to book by contacting publicengagement@ucl.ac.uk with the following information:

- a short sentence on your project idea
- What School or Research Department you work within
- Whether your project connects with communities in east London.
- Timeslot preference (we will assign you a 20 minute slot within this time)

Please check our [website](#) for an up-to-date list of available timeslots.

How to apply:

This year we are separating out what goes to our panel for consideration and what information we collect as UCL Engagement. So applications will have two parts:

1. The [panel application](#) document. The information collected here will be shared with the Beacon Bursary Panel. No additional information will be shared with them. Once completed, please upload using the online form linked below. For guidance with the panel application, please see the [panel application guidance document](#).
2. The [online form](#) will be where you upload the panel application and UCL Engagement will collect information that will form part of the evaluation and review of the funding scheme. This collection will be aggregated, and individual records will not be kept. This includes personal diversity information. None of this information will be shared with the panel.

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 February 2022.

If you're successful

Finance: We will begin the process of transferring the funds to a departmental account as soon as possible after confirming the success of an application. It is important we have the contact details of the finance administrator within your department to ensure the smooth transfer of funds.

Kick-off meeting: At the beginning of the funding period, we will invite you to a meeting for new bursary awardees which will include a session on evaluating your public engagement. Attendance at these meetings is a requirement of accepting bursary funding.

Keeping in touch: The UCL Engagement Team expects to be in informal contact with project leaders to provide advice, support and guidance throughout the project, as appropriate. We tailor this support and monitoring to match your needs. We also organise opportunities for people who have been funded by our various funding schemes to meet in order to share experience and provide mutual support.

Evaluation and Learning: All awardees are asked to complete a Project Learning and Impact Form at the end of their project to reflect on their experience. Completing this form is a requirement of accepting the bursary funding.