



Guidance for Beacon Bursary Funding Scheme 2022/23

Updated 13th September: *What cannot be Funded by a Beacon Bursary* section revised to clarify payments in relation to community partners.

Application Deadline: 17:00 Wednesday 19th October 2022

Funding available: Up to £2,000 per award to be spent by Friday 28th July (funded activities may be part of an ongoing project and continue after the spending deadline).

This document contains important information about the Beacon Bursary funding scheme. Please read the guidance carefully before you prepare your application. 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

The aim of this scheme is to advance the practice and culture of public and community engagement within UCL by enabling UCL staff, researchers and doctoral students to:

- Explore mutually beneficial engagement between communities, UCL research and teaching.
- Evaluate, learn from and share their engagement activities.
- Listen to communities and voices heard less often.

Your application will be assessed against how these aims are reflected throughout your application.

Definition of Public Engagement and Community Partners

UCL uses the definition of public engagement developed by the [National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement](#):

“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.”

Community partners are members of the public acting as experts of experience, participants in your engagement activities, community groups/charities providing services/venues etc.

Eligibility

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. Staff based in the Office of the Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation & Global Engagement) and undergraduate students or students on taught postgraduate courses are **not** eligible for this funding. If you are an undergraduate student or are not currently based at UCL, you are not eligible to apply as the lead applicant, but can be listed as a co-applicant.

What Can a Beacon Bursary Fund?

Beacon Bursaries are designed to support staff and postgraduate research students at UCL to engage with public groups. We encourage applications to be innovative in their engagement and to experiment with engagement across diverse 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.
- Paying UCL students (not involved with the project) for small amounts of work such as data entry, photography or event hosting.

Paying Community Partners

Community partners can be paid from the Beacon Bursary for their involvement in your project. Community partners, if listed as co-applicants on the application, cannot receive funds directly from UCL Engagement if awarded. However, you as the primary applicant can pay them from the Beacon Bursary you receive that will be transferred to your home department. Payments should be made with consideration for engagement good-practice, such as the context, justification, budget and strong links to UCL research and teaching for the project overall.

Public Engagement with East London Communities

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

Public Engagement as Part of Teaching

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

Previously Funded 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 and developing new curriculum.
- Sharing the finding or results from research with communities in inventive, practical and interactive ways, such as participatory art workshops, exhibitions, events, film screenings etc.
- Involving community groups in the co-production of media (e.g. film, music, art, diaries, oral histories) 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.

What cannot be Funded by a Beacon Bursary?

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.
- Activities that could be described as student or staff recruitment, widening participation, 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.
- UCL staff, post-graduate research students or UCL alumni for their time.
- International travel.
- Community-based co-applicants cannot receive funds directly from UCL Engagement.

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.

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.

Application Process

We are separating out what goes to our panel for consideration and what information we collect as UCL Engagement. The application process consists of two sections:

1. The [Application Form](#). The information collected here will be shared with the Beacon Bursary panel. Completed forms should be uploaded using the Application Submission Portal.
2. The [Application Submission Portal](#). The Portal will collect project and applicant information, as well as additional diversity information that UCL Engagement will use for internal monitoring of the scheme. This diversity data will not be shared with the panel and this collection will be aggregated, and individual records will not be kept.

Support for Applicants

There will be five online drop-in advice and support sessions throughout September and October with members of the Engagement team. **No** pre-booking is required. Simply join the relevant Teams meeting link at any point within the designated hour to speak with staff about your application. You are welcome to drop in at more than one session.

1. Monday 12th September; 11:00-12:00 – [Teams meeting link](#)
2. Tuesday 20th September; 10:30-11:30 – [Teams meeting link](#)
3. Wednesday 28th September; 14:00-15:00 – [Teams meeting link](#)
4. Thursday 6th October; 15:00-16:00 – [Teams meeting link](#)
5. Friday 14th October; 10:00-11:00 – [Teams meeting link](#)

What Happens to Your Application?

Your application will be independently reviewed by two colleagues from UCL Culture. Shortlisted applications will then be considered by UCL Engagement and community partners with significant public engagement experience.

The review of your application will assess:

- 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 the week commencing 14th November 2022.

If You are 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 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.