

UCL Engagement – Training Report for Organisational Development

At UCL Engagement we enable brighter ideas through deeper connections with our community partners. A key element is our Training programme, one of the core aspects of embedding Public Engagement within UCL Research & Teaching. Over the last few years, together with the support and in partnership with Organisational Development (OD), the team has delivered training programmes which have evolved from year through reflection, evaluation, and learning, and the need to be responsive to both the needs of UCL Staff and post-graduate students and the 2020 / 2021 lockdowns.

Developing Courses on UCL eXtend

Throughout 2019 / 2020 UCL Engagement developed four asynchronous online Public Engagement courses. This was funded through an EPSRC IAA. The idea was these would complement our face-to-face training, usually limited due to limiting resources, and help extend our reach across the university. During the pandemic, these courses were used to complement our live training programmes with differing success.

- Four online modules on Public Engagement are now available on the UCL eXtend platform and have been accessed by 480 trainees since launch.
- The modules have supplemented live online training programmes, including PE:SP and T&E.

Train & Engage (T&E) – Our Postgraduate Student programme

T&E is a set programme, traditionally formed of three in-face seminars that include challenges and discussions. UCL Engagement then provides a supported funding programme for those who take part. In 2019/20 T&E moved online halfway through the programme. 2020/21 was the first opportunity to approach the programme as a fully online experience, in particular a blended approach using live online seminar sessions and asynchronous course content on the UCL eXtend platform. (These were adapted specifically for T&E from existing material).

- Course run for six weeks over the summer of 2021 with 70 students registering, 59 students attending at least one session and over 35 of them completing the course, making them eligible for follow-on funding. 64% of participants registering were from the faculties within LASH.
- Most participants stated that the course **increased their confidence in understanding engagement and approaching their own small projects.**
- 12 applications were received for follow-on funding, with [8 being successful](#). This follow-on funding is provided from UCL Engagement's core budget as it is an essential component of the training programme.

'The tutors were amazing. So knowledgeable, enthusiastic and passionate about public engagement and all had such interesting experience. The online course materials were accessible, clear and very informative - I will refer back to them often and continue to learn from them. The activities were varied and interesting and it was clear how much thought and energy had gone into designing the programme. It's by far the best resourced course I have engaged with at UCL.'

Public Engagement: Skills & Practice (PE:SP) – Our UCL Staff programme

PE:SP started as an in person training day for UCL Staff, where the morning was an introduction to Engagement followed by an afternoon of modules they could select from. In 2020 this was moved entirely online as live seminars in response to lockdown. Six modules were offered twice. For 2021, UCL Engagement chose to expand.

- PE:SP delivered 26 live, digitally sessions covered nine key themes related to public engagement. These were attended by 479 participants (359 unique individuals) who represented a cross section of UCL Professional Services and Research staff and students. 78% of participants came from faculties within BEAMS or LMS, with BEAMS being overrepresented compared to overall UCL staff share.
- The core project team brought in 22 delivery partners/collaborators from across UCL and externally to help design, develop and deliver the 26 sessions.

- The participant's knowledge against multiple Researcher Development Framework domains has increased, their motivation and sense of agency to apply that learning to their current and future projects has increased, they would recommend the sessions to their colleagues and reported that *'Everyone should go on this course'* and *'In the session I was actually typing prompts into my work papers regarding making sure our practice is inclusive'*.

Additional Training from UCL Engagement

UCL Engagement offered bespoke training when there is sufficient demand from a department, faculty, domain or network. These are tailored to those attending. These are some highlights from 2020/21.

- 14 single sessions delivered across the University, with 250 UCL staff & students attending.
- Most of these had a focus in early career researchers and postgraduate students, and were at an introductory level.

UCL Engagement also supported the development of the IHE Impact Fellows, a training programme for early career researchers within the Institute of Healthcare Engineering. This programme is now being carried out across different parts of the university for 2021/22. Full details of the [2020/21 IHE programme can be found here](#).

UCL Engagement has also developed training for UCL Staff that has been entirely designed and delivered by Community Partners in east London.

Looking Ahead to 2021/22 and beyond

This academic year the team decided to pare back on training delivering to consolidate learning from the previous few years of innovation. PE:SP will deliver eight modules once, with an evaluation that focusses on the UCL Staff journey. T&E will return in the summer of 2022. UCL Engagement will also continue to deliver bespoke training targeted at various parts of the UCL Staff & Student communities. As part of our core ideas around training, we will continue to add value through our funding programming and sourcing additional opportunities within and outside UCL so those participating can put their training to practice. This involved partnering with both other Professional Service partners across UCL and our community partners.

Looking at 2022/23, there is scope to grow PE:SP again, however this would need to be done in a sustainable manner, together with partners within OVPRIGE and beyond we could deliver an integrated training programme around Engagement, Impact and Partnerships, but this would require bespoke staffing within OVPRIGE to oversee links to OD, across delivery partners and ensure a smooth journey for UCL Staff taking part in the course.

Full reports and case studies can be found in our [Reports folder on the UCL Engagement SharePoint](#).