



UCL Public Policy: Highlights Report

2017 – 2021

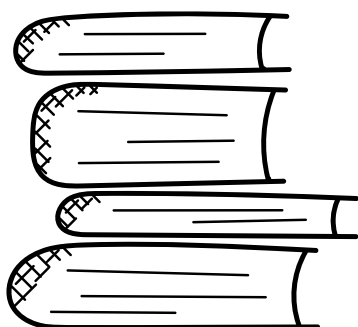
August 2021



UCL
PUBLIC
POLICY

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Foreword



The past year (2020-21) has shown the vital importance of research carried out in universities to help societies tackle and recover from COVID-19. It has also brought in to the open the significance of evidence and expertise in informing policy decisions. The increased emphasis placed on scientific and research evidence has also helped to illustrate some of the complexities and obstacles in how research, and academic researchers, can engage with the public policy sphere.

While UCL is committed to the importance of curiosity-driven research, we also seek to maximise the public benefit resulting from our research. A key component of this is ensuring, wherever possible, that our research and expertise informs public policy. However, persistent barriers to the use of evidence and expertise in public policy, and to engagement between academic and the public policy sphere, remain. The provision of dedicated support for academic communities to work with public policy professionals can help to overcome some of these barriers.

I am proud that UCL was one of the first universities to identify the need for an institutional initiative to support our researchers to engage with public policy, and delighted to see the rapid growth of academic-policy engagement activity across the sector in more recent years. As a result, there is now much greater and more widespread awareness of the barriers to such interaction, and there is still much work to do to overcome them. I believe that UCL, along with other universities, has a responsibility to strengthen our policy engagement capabilities and build an effective culture of academic-policy engagement so that our research is fulfilling its contribution to public good.

UCL Public Policy plays a central role in championing the importance of academic-policy engagement at UCL, advancing the practice of engagement, and providing dedicated support and mechanisms for the research community across UCL to engage with and inform public policy. UCL's significant impact on public policy can be seen in this report, in our impact case studies submitted to the [2014 and 2021 Research Excellence Frameworks](#), in the [Overton index of policy documents](#) – and, indeed, on an almost daily basis in the national media. We have achieved much – but there is still more we can and will achieve in the coming years in order to deliver societal benefits across London, the UK and the world.

Professor David Price

*Vice-Provost Research, Innovation
& Global Engagement*

Preface

The UCL Research Strategy set out three key aims for our vision for supporting UCL's world-leading research:

- Inspire and empower research leadership
- Cross boundaries to increase engagement
- Deliver impact for public benefit.

UCL Public Policy's support for academic-policy engagement is helping to achieve all three of those aims, through supporting researchers to explore broader concepts of research leadership via contributions to the public policy sphere; facilitating cross-disciplinary approaches to public policy challenges and championing engagement beyond the academy with public policy and other stakeholders; and increasing UCL's impact on public policy to strengthen evidence-informed policymaking.

2021 marks a decade since UCL first began to consider how to provide greater institutional support for researchers and academics to engage with the public policy sphere. UCL Public Policy grew out of a firm belief that evidence-informed policy is better policy (with an enhanced potential to result in public benefit), and that universities have a crucial role to play in enabling their researchers to engage with public policy professionals.

Over the past decade, 'academic-policy engagement' has moved from a niche practice to an increasingly mainstream activity in which a growing interest has been exhibited by universities (the Universities Policy Engagement Network, of which UCL was a co-founder, has grown to more than 80 members in the past three years), funders (with Research England directing an element of QR to support policy-focused activity over the past two years), researchers (over two thirds of impact case studies in REF 2014 included references to impact upon public policy) and public policy professionals (for example, the Institute for Government's programme of work in this area).

The past year (2020-2021) has seen the provision of scientific advice and research evidence to policymakers become headline news on a daily basis. It has also exposed some of the complexities involved in making policy decisions informed by evidence – and revealed some of the weaknesses in the UK's current systems. Above all, it has shown the crucial importance of evidence and expertise in supporting effective policymaking.

We believe that the role of UCL Public Policy, in championing academic-policy engagement across UCL, supporting the research community to engage with public policy, building strategic partnerships with policy actors, and joining up and amplifying UCL's considerable strengths, is more important than ever.

This ‘highlights’ report, setting out UCL Public Policy’s achievements between 2017–2021, showcases a panoply of UCL’s academic-policy engagement across faculties, centres and institutes. The UCL Public Policy programme has helped to strengthen researcher and professional staff skills, provide engagement opportunities, support dialogue and knowledge exchange across the policy ecosystem, showcase and mobilise a wide range of UCL’s research expertise in response to policy demand, and build external partnerships to examine key topical issues. This is, of course, a small snapshot of UCL’s impacts – alongside UCL Public Policy, individual academics and departments across UCL are informing public policy on a daily basis.

COVID-19 has necessitated some adjustments to the delivery of the UCL Public Policy programme but our commitment to supporting UCL’s research base to play a significant role in informing public policy is stronger than ever. In this regard, our investment in the Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement (CAPE) programme (see p.27) promises to provide insights into what effective academic-policy engagement looks like in different institutional, geographical and policy contexts.

At the same time, there is a clear imperative to diversify the academic-policy engagement field. Alongside inclusive approaches to engagement, we have been considering how to encourage more diversity of thought and actors within the system – including through some of the training provision described in this report, as well as working with external policy stakeholders to increase the diversity of expertise with which they engage.

We hope this report provides some illustration of how we have been able to work with colleagues across UCL and with external policy partners to mobilise knowledge in response to crucial societal challenges and ensure that UCL’s research is fulfilling its potential to inform policy development and decisions.

Sarah Chaytor

Director of Research Strategy & Policy

Dr Olivia Stevenson

Deputy Director of UCL Public Policy

UCL Public Policy 2017 - 2021

SUPPORT

Awarded over **£300k** in seed funding to a diverse range of academics, disciplines and policy challenges.

Led/contributed to **18** grant applications across college, bringing in **£14m** in external awards to support UCL research.

23 Policy Fellowships to **14** policy organisations between research and public policy.

Delivered training programmes in how to engage with public policy to over **400** researchers in 2021.

Developed **eight** digital how-to guides for researchers, viewed more than **570** times from January 2020 - May 2021.

ENGAGE

544 meetings with policy professionals and engagement with over **27** UCL academic units to exchange knowledge through roundtables, workshops, sandpits, public events and conferences.

34 cross-disciplinary academic-policy roundtables, with external policy partners.

34 responses to **14** parliamentary Select Committees and responses to **5** government and public body consultations.

Three UCL Public Policy Commissions completed.

18 evidence notes, cited in government and parliamentary scrutiny reports.

COLLABORATE

Lead partner in the three year, **£10m 'Capabilities in Academic Policy Engagement'** (CAPE) project.

Part of **£2m ESRC International Public Policy Observatory** (IPPO), led by UCL STEaPP – focused on mitigating the social impacts of COVID-19 and accelerating the UK's recovery.

University of Manchester and UCL policy engagement summer school programme with over **300** students and **43** policy organisations participating.

The **Net Zero Innovation Network**, with the Local Government Association - supporting **12 researcher-local authority partnerships** across England.

Introduction

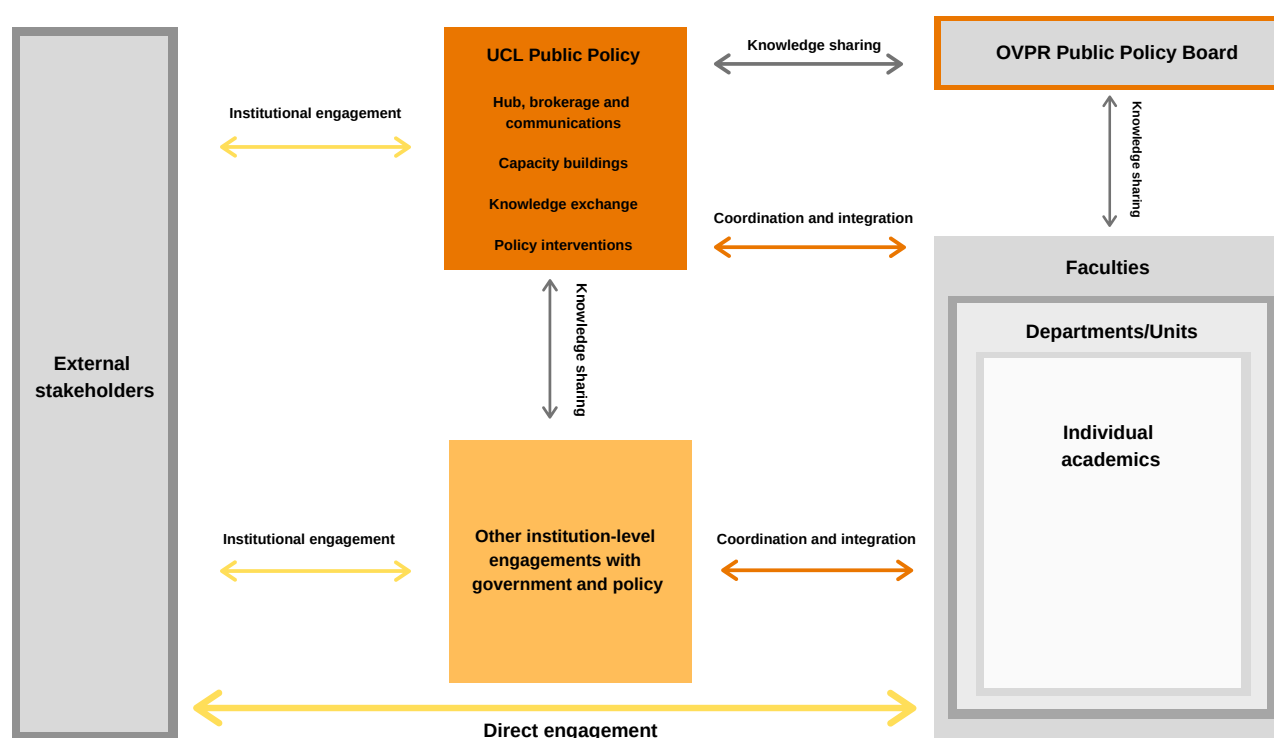
UCL's engagement landscape

At UCL, we support a rare breadth and depth of knowledge and expertise drawn from world-leading research. We can be proud of how UCL research is changing the world for the better - making it fairer, healthier, and more sustainable. To maximise the potential of our research, UCL recognises that it is essential that we engage with public policy stakeholders and decision makers.

There are many individual UCL academics and centres of expertise that are highly engaged in the public policy sphere, including in transport, health, energy, environment, planning, political science, law and engineering. Our engagement with and impact upon public policy was reflected in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, with just under a third of our impact case studies related to public policy. We expect to see a similar volume in REF 2021.

We need to continue to strive to find effective ways to connect our insights with those positioned to implement and benefit from them, and champion the role of expertise and evidence in public discourse. The UCL Public Policy Strategy recognises that UCL's strong culture of cross-disciplinarity enables us to inform public policy from multidisciplinary perspectives and ensure a multifaceted approach to policy challenges. It champions UCL's mission to stimulate disruptive thinking as a force for positive social change.

The UCL Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation & Global Engagement) is responsible for public policy engagement agenda at an institutional level, supported by the UCL Public Policy initiative as illustrated in the diagram.



About UCL Public Policy

UCL Public Policy plays a critical role in delivering key aspects of our institutional ambitions. It works across the institution to build engagement between UCL researchers and public policy professionals, promote a coordinated approach to UCL's extensive range of public policy-focused activities, develop strategic partnerships with policy stakeholders, and support the development and delivery of evidence-informed policy. Through this approach we position UCL to make timely and well-informed contributions to policy development and raise our profile with the public policy community.

To be effective public policy needs to be informed by evidence and expertise. However, the persistent barriers to academic-policy engagement mean that dedicated support is required to enable academic communities to work effectively with policy professionals. UCL Public Policy therefore seeks to enable greater understanding amongst UCL researchers of how to engage with public policy and facilitate greater awareness amongst policy professionals of UCL's research capability.

We work with individual academics and researchers to support their engagement with policy, creating responsive solutions that make policy engagement accessible and useful for both researchers and policy professionals. We also work closely with UCL's faculties, helping them to plan and facilitate research and policy networks, and build capacity for policy-related activity. In addition, we foster and promote dialogue and debate on topical policy issues, and look to increase UCL's responsiveness to policy demand.

We collaborate with UCL's network of public policy brokerage and research impact specialists such as Faculty Impact Managers, the Research Impact team, and the Faculty of Engineering Sciences Policy Impact Unit, as well as senior leaders including the UCL Pro-Vice-Provosts, Deans and Vice-Deans, to ensure an integrated approach to academic policy engagement. We are a co-founder of the Universities Policy Engagement Network (UPEN), a UK wide network of 80+ members committed to increasing the impact of research on public policy.

UCL Public Policy seeks to be responsive to both the external policy landscape and to internal demand. We prioritise four key areas of activity to deliver our strategic aims:

Coordinating across UCL:

- Maintaining a strategic overview of policy-related activity across the university, and acting as a single point of contact for external policy professionals who wish to access UCL expertise.
- Expanding our external policy networks and deliver strategic activities to draw on UCL's strengths with external partners.

Providing engagement mechanisms:

- Convening knowledge exchange activities that bring together researchers and policy professionals to discuss topical issues and facilitate dialogue and networking.
- Managing a policy fellowships scheme to enable UCL researchers to spend time in policy organisations and for policy professionals to spend time with UCL colleagues.

Enhancing UCL's policy engagement capacity:

- Offering funding to stimulate public policy engagement activities among UCL researchers.
- Providing support for strategic public policy-focused activities initiated by departments and faculties.
- Providing support and training for researchers who wish to engage with public policy via channels such as government consultations, Select Committee inquiries, Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology projects, advisory committees and learned societies, and through other means.

Communicating UCL research:

- Providing accessible research summaries and evidence for policy professionals through evidence notes, blogs and podcasts.



The UCL Public Policy team

We are comprised of a dynamic team of public policy specialists with knowledge and policy expertise honed from working in both the public policy and university sectors. Our team's focus on mechanisms for policy engagement means that we make connections across UCL, work beyond traditional subject boundaries and embed policy knowledge in research.



Evie Calder
Communications Officer



Sarah Chaytor
Director



Dr Robyn Parker
CAPE Project Manager



Professor Graeme Reid
*Professor of Science
and Research Policy*



Kayleigh Renberg-Fawcett
CAPE Coordinator



Dr Olivia Stevenson
Deputy Director



Audrey Tan
*Public Policy Engagement
Facilitator (LMS)*



Katherine Welch
Head of Partnerships

Support, Engage, Collaborate

UCL is committed to deploying its breadth and depth of knowledge and expertise, drawn from world-leading research, to address complex policy challenges in order to drive positive social change.

UCL Public Policy works across the breadth of UCL to deliver our university's vision for public policy engagement. The collaborative and responsive nature of our work means that we evolve our priorities and activities in order to address the needs of the research and policy communities with whom we work. We apply three lenses to structure our programme:



Support

1. Support researchers to feel confident to participate in academic-policy engagement, and provide mechanisms and funding through our Fellowship scheme, seed funding support scheme, and through training.



Engage

2. Engage policy stakeholders, academics, and professional services to build networks that stimulate knowledge exchange, deliver reciprocal benefit and increase diversity and inclusion in engagement activities, including public debate.



Collaborate

3. Collaborate with internal UCL and external policy partners to enable our cross-disciplinary expertise to address complex policy challenges; and contribute to the wider academic-policy ecosystem through partnership development.

Support

Support | *Training, funding, and capacity building*

Experience and understanding of how to engage with policy professionals amongst researchers varies. A lack of know how is a significant barrier to academic-policy engagement. To reduce these barriers and help researchers develop their engagement skills, UCL Public Policy offers several support mechanisms, which include:

Training, Guidance and Advice

- A four-part Masterclass series for under-represented groups focused on building skills to achieve policy engagement, which included Four Up Close & Policy sessions designed to provide practical insights and know-how for achieving effective academic-policy engagement. Throughout 2021-2021, over 400 researchers took part with **60%** from underrepresented groups. Over **80%** of attendees said they found the sessions useful and that they provided them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to engage with public policy for themselves.
- A suite of online materials aimed at supporting researchers to engage with public policy, including 'how to' videos, which have had a total of **789 views** from June 2020-2021.
- Launched a pilot Policy Engagement and Impact Fellowship programme for early career researchers from diverse backgrounds. Six fellows received in-depth training and support across a range of academic-policy engagement techniques.

Funding

- **Seed funding** schemes for academic-policy engagement. Since 2017, we have awarded over **£300k** in grants, supported by UCL's HEIF, Wellcome Trust and Impact Acceleration Account funding, to a diverse range of academics, disciplines and policy challenges.
- Led or contributed to **18** grant applications across college, bringing in **£14m** in external awards to support UCL research. This includes: CAPE project (Research England, £4m); Behavioural Science Policy Research Unit (NIHR PRU, £4m); International Public Policy Observatory (ESRC, £2m); UKRI Interdisciplinary Circular Economy Centre for Mineral-based Construction Material (UKRI, £4.4m); Catalyst Policy Summer Schools, (HEFCE, £400k).

Policy Fellowships

- **23** Policy Fellowships for researchers to **14** policy organisations to strengthen connections and understanding between research and public policy.
- **Nine** Policy Fellowships for professionals from local, national and international policy organisations visiting UCL to learn from research expertise across the institution.
- Hosting the Department for Education Immersion Programme 2019 to give DfE civil servants greater insights into the working of the higher education sector.

Policy Fellowships 2017-2021

Ernest Lo (Department of Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering) to the Greater London Authority's Regeneration and Economic Development team on a project to develop an open data platform for urban services in London.

Dr Jo Hale (UCL Centre for Behaviour Change) to the All Party Parliamentary Climate Change Group to curate a zero carbon essay collection.

Mojtaba Malekzadeh (Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering) to the Department for Transport to develop a benchmarking model that drives greater efficiency and productivity across the transport sector.

Dr Danielle Lamb (Division of Psychiatry) to the Department of Health and Social Care to enable improvement projects in complex health systems.

Ross Welham (UCL Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering) to Department for Transport working on future technologies in the rail industry.

Dr Emma Lawrence (Department of Surgical Biotechnology) to Policy Connect, working to develop Parliamentary awareness of Cell and Gene Therapies.

Dr Helena Titheridge (UCL Transport Institute) to Department for Transport looking at transport and ageing.

Emma Laycock (UCL Cancer Institute) to The Royal Society and worked on emerging technologies relating to human augmentation

Dr Ilias Krystallis (Bartlett School of Construction and Project Management) to BEIS to assess the design of future housing and healthy ageing.

Dr Mike Fell (UCL Energy Institute) to Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), assessing the evidence for the economic impacts of open science.

Mikael Maes (UCL Geography) to Defra, working with the Environment Analysis Unit to develop an official environmental

Emily McBride (Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care) to Department for Health and Social Care's Collaborate initiative bringing insights from behavioural sciences to support the development of evidence into

Johanna Buechler (UCL Molecular Cell Biology) to Defra leading a study on indoor air quality.



UCL Public Policy provides communications support, translates complex research into robust policy friendly messages and uses our channels to amplify research as a route to engaging with public policy professionals. We have:

- Published 75 informative pieces on UCL Public Policy's Policy Postings blog, which received more than **10,400** views and over **4,000** reads since September 2018.
- Produced nine episodes of the Parliament and Me podcast (2017 and 2018), with over **2,800** total listens.
- Contributed to a number of blogs and op-ed pieces with over **26** individual members of UCL staff for a range of publications including THE, Wonkhe, The Conversation, CBI and UPEN blogs. A 2019 piece published in The Conversation, [*How the language we use entrenches inequalities*](#), has been read by over 14,000 people - whilst a piece published in July 2021, [*We asked 7,000 people how the UK should build back better – here's what they told us*](#), was read by over 9,000 people in less than 24 hours.
- Established a network of **30** policy champions across nine UCL faculties and Vice-Provost and Professional Services offices embedding policy understanding at UCL.
- Created a community of **3,300** followers on Twitter, with an average of **1,000** impressions per day.
- Grown our newsletter subscribers to **over 2,500** people, with an average newsletter open rate of **34%** (in line with industry average).

ucl
policy
champions
network

Evidence Notes

Up Close & Policy

UCL
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Policy postings

Support Case Study | Masterclass Series

Training provision to build skills and capabilities and diversify academic-policy engagement

The reliance on the ‘usual suspects’ for evidence and advice to inform policy can lead to a lack of diversity of perspective and insight within the policy process. Limited specific support inside universities for early career researchers (ECRs) and people from under-represented groups to take part in academic-policy engagement does nothing to rebalance the system.

UCL Public Policy has therefore increased its focus on diversifying the academic-policy engagement landscape at UCL. Collaborating with the Nesta foundation, we launched a four-part Public Policy Masterclass Series in June 2020 for people from under-represented groups and ECRs. The series aimed to increase skills, knowledge and confidence to participate in academic-policy engagement for these groups.

The course was designed to support those with limited prior experience. It comprised:

- introductory modules to ensure a common knowledge base
- ‘how-to’ conversations with UCL academics through our flagship Up Close & Policy seminars
- sessions on pathways to engagement
- communication skills.

Each module was delivered via an online platform, and designed to be highly interactive using polls, Q&As and small group exercises. The course materials were framed to ensure that examples featured people from different backgrounds as a way to showcase the achievements of a variety of UCL academics.

Over 350 people have taken part in the course sessions so far, with over 60% of attendees from each session indicating they were an ECR and/or from an under-represented group. Feedback has indicated that participants have found the sessions useful and have since applied the knowledge, skills and confidence gained in undertaking public policy engagement.

Recordings of each of the Masterclass sessions are now available on the UCL Public Policy [YouTube channel](#) (465 views), and blogs from the Up Close & Policy seminars can be found on the Policy Postings blog (410 views).

Support Expert Engagement Award | Engaging with Care Leavers' Rights in the Development of Public & Voluntary Sector Record-keeping Protocols (2017 – 2018)

Seed funding co-production to deliver impact across local government, regulators and civil society.

This project addressed the lack of engagement with the needs and experience of care leavers to develop record-keeping in public and voluntary sector institutions that met their corporate parenting responsibilities. The project was led by Dr Anna Sexton and Professor Elizabeth Shepherd (UCL Department of Information Studies). The intended policy audiences for this work were the Care Leavers Association (CLA), London Borough of Merton, Information Records Management Society, and the Centre for Archives & Records Research.

The project facilitated dialogue between care leavers, professionals responsible for managing social care records, and academics with expertise in record-keeping policy in order to co-produce recommendations on record-keeping for children in care. Project engagement activities included:

- **Interviewing** information and social care professionals from Merton to build up a baseline for data for developing a set of learning points around record-keeping protocols of children in care in local authority settings.
- Holding **facilitated workshops** with key stakeholders to develop mutual understanding and bridge polarised viewpoints across the stakeholder group in order to **co-produce record-keeping recommendations**.
- Inviting feedback on the recommendations from all stakeholders engaged and iterating this feedback into the final guidelines.

The project team were able to develop new relationships with social care professionals, and from this to reach more associations and other bodies who represent social care professionals, with whom engagement continues.

By creating a three-way dialogue to develop policy-driven best practice for current and future children in care, the project team met their objective of improving record-keeping policy and practice. Key outcomes include:

- Improved guidance for care leavers making subject access requests by the LB of Merton.
- A report and related guidance on record-keeping practices was developed by the CLA.
- The development of a larger AHRC-funded research project 'MIRRA (Memory – Identity – Rights in Records – Access)' into which the results of the public policy engagement fed directly and which took forward the co-production of the record-keeping protocol and model.

[Impacts continue](#) through the 'MIRRA' project and include changing practice in Local Authorities, regulators and civil society groups. This work has also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the voices of care-experienced people are heard and can influence individual case planning, as well as wider service planning.

Support Case Study | Dr Ilias Krystallis: Placement with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

Fellowship funding to provide opportunities to develop policy literacy and apply engagement skills first-hand.

“Like most scientists, I am driven by curiosity. I wanted to find new ways of adding value to my research — and accelerating its impact — by putting my research into practice. One way of doing this was by embedding myself in a policy team through a secondment. From March to September 2019, I worked as a policy advisor for the Grand Challenges team as part of the UK’s Industrial Strategy flagship policy programme at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).



A scientist secondee has two main goals for their secondment: to better understand the policy environment in practice and to identify pathways to achieving impact.

During my secondment, I worked directly with a policymaker, and she monitored my progress for the duration of my time there. Together, we planned how many projects I should be involved in and what they would cover.

Undertaking a secondment can be a useful opportunity for academics to examine their own field from a different angle — and can also act as a chance to explore where their career might take them next.

They can help you to become an active contributor in an area of interest, enable you to gain access to an important network of policymakers, and allow you to develop close connections within the policy world.

Although I’m now back in my academic position at UCL, I’m currently collaborating on another exciting project with the policy team I got to know during my time at BEIS - and am looking forward to exploring the fascinating field of policymaking in greater depth in future.

Being seconded to BEIS was a great experience for me. Being curious about how policy works, it gave me a good overview of what it’s like working for the Government, and I have now a good sense of what policymakers are doing and a greater understanding of how they work.

By understanding their way of working, I can better contribute to policy work through my research, and I would definitely recommend a secondment to other scientists, no matter which stage they are in their career.”

Support Case Study | Hosting the Department for Education's Immersion Programme

Coordination for policy visits to UCL to support knowledge sharing and research insight

In 2019, as part of our engagement with the Department for Education's (DfE) Higher Education Immersion Programme, UCL Public Policy hosted five officials from the department.

This strategic visit provided DfE an immersive, first-hand experience of life at UCL, enhancing their overall understanding of the sector and the impact of their own work upon university performance and student outcomes.

Over the three days, DfE civil servants met with UCL's leadership teams and Professional Services to discuss topics at the forefront of higher education, including student numbers and planning. They also gained research insight from senior colleagues at the UCL Institute for Education on their research into student funding, access, and apprenticeships/work-based learning. The cohort also had opportunities to tour UCL's facilities and meet with students to discuss the benefits of university driven innovation support for start-ups and understand how the student experience is impacted by DfE policies. The visit concluded with demonstrations from entrepreneurs as part of UCL's Base-KX start-up hub.

The bespoke visit generated significant and positive outcomes, with DfE officials stating:

I thought the visit was excellent all round and I was very grateful that so many people gave up their time to support the visit. The level of discussion was excellent.

The visit has given me the confidence to reach out and speak to experts in the sector.

This week I have had discussion with Office for Students around a variety of topics and other HEIs. [The visit] provided me with both a little background and the ability to at least better appreciate their views. I think the views on Brexit particularly at this time will be useful in discussions.

As a result of this visit, UCL Public Policy was requested by the DfE to host another cohort, although this has been postponed due to COVID-19.

Engage

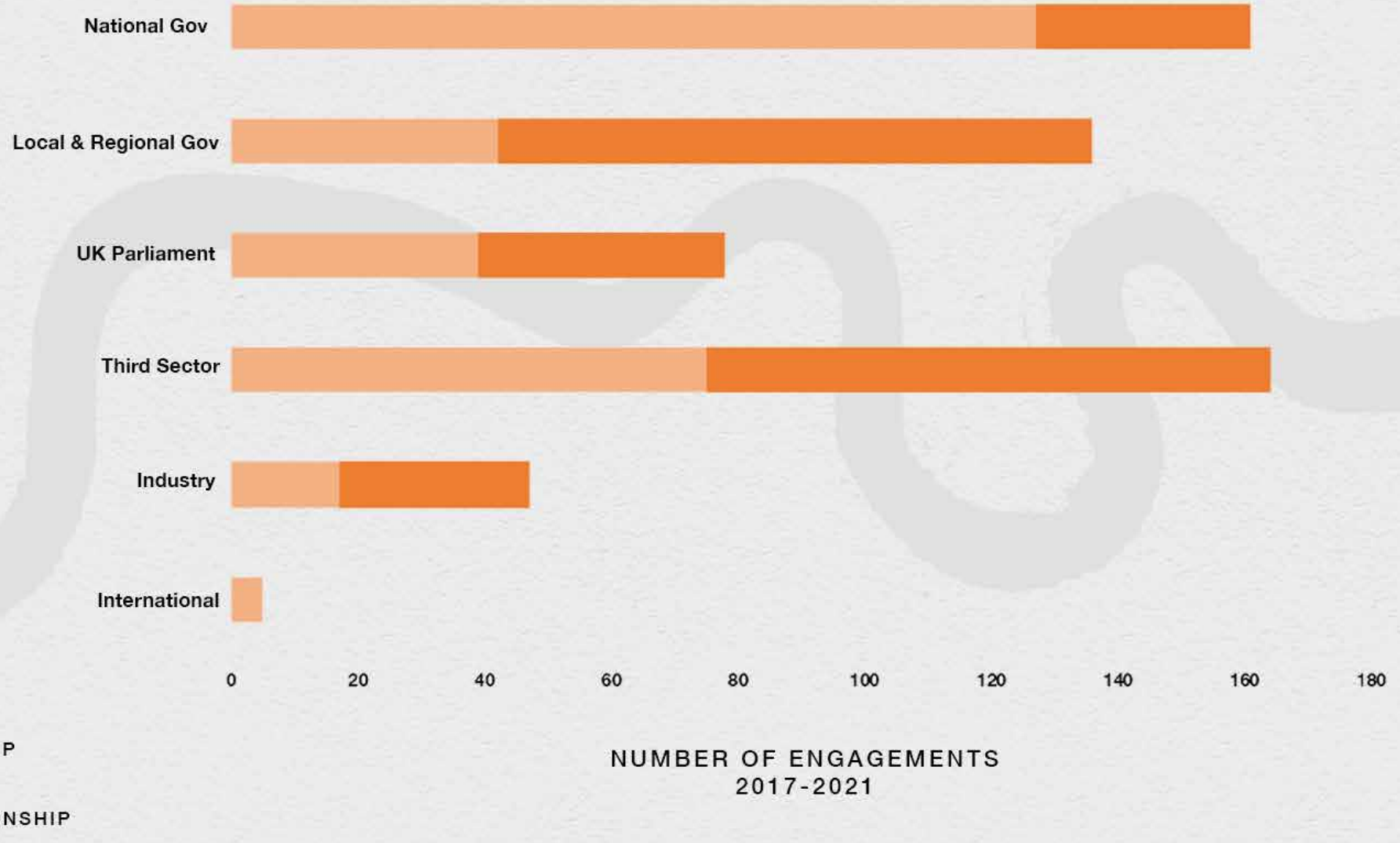
Engage | *Connect researchers, evidence and policy professionals*

Systematic alignment between policy needs and evidence production does not happen automatically. Whilst there is increasing recognition of the importance of evidence informed policy, considerable barriers to engagement between academics and policy professionals persists. UCL Public Policy works across the institution to build engagement between UCL researchers and public policy professionals to overcome these barriers and support the development and delivery of evidence-informed policy. Between 2017 and 2021, UCL Public Policy has:

- Held **544** meetings with policy professionals and engaged with **over 27 academic units** to exchange knowledge through roundtables, workshops, sandpits, public events and conferences.
- Held **over 300 meetings** with government (including national, regional and local), **78** meetings with UK parliament, and **164** meetings with the third sector.
- Held **34** cross-disciplinary academic-policy roundtables convened with external policy partners on topics including: industrial decarbonisation, AI and emerging medicines, and implementing an inclusive economy in London.
- Supported engagement between academic experts, policy professionals and other stakeholders through the UCL Policy Commissions, including [Green Innovation](#) (led by Professor Paul Ekins), [Communicating Climate Science](#) (led by Professor Chris Rapley), [Mission-Oriented Innovation and Industrial Strategy](#) (led by Professor Mariana Mazzucato) and [Transforming Tomorrow](#) (led by Professor Henrietta Moore).
- Supported **34** evidence submissions to **14** parliamentary committees and written responses to **five** government and arm's length body consultations, achieving significant recognition. Including:
 - UCL and its researchers received 11 mentions in the Lords Artificial Intelligence Select Committee (2017-19) final report 'AI in the UK: ready, willing and able?'
 - UCL was mentioned on 5 occasions in the [final report](#) of the Commons Liaison Committee on the Effectiveness and Influence of the Select Committee System. UCL Public Policy's recommendation for the generation of 'Areas of Evidence Interest' have been taken up by the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology and the Scrutiny Unit.
- Published **18** UCL Public Policy evidence notes addressing topical public policy areas, from crime to health and environment to society.
- Undertaken research engagement with public policy in important social, economic and cultural areas, through working with the UCL Pro-Vice-Provosts for London, UK and AI, the UCL Grand Challenges, Research Domains, [Climate Action Unit](#) and UCL Climate Hub.

Key highlight

UCL has been cited as the most active university in regard to academic engagement with policymaking, according to policy impact tracking website Overton.



Engage Case Study | Green Innovation Policy Commission (2018 – 2021), Professor Paul Ekins, UCL Institute for Sustainable Resources

UCL Policy Commissions bring together researchers from across a number of disciplines to consider pressing public policy challenges and explore solutions.

The [UCL Green Innovation Policy Commission \(GIPC\)](#), was a business-led Commission set up and supported by the UCL Institute for Sustainable Resources, UCL Public Policy and Green Alliance. The Commission was chaired by John Cridland with research direction from Professor Paul Ekins (UCL Institute for Sustainable Resources) and included high-level business leaders from a range of sectors, environmental experts and academics.

The GIPC built on the UCL [Green Economy Policy Commission](#) to assess how green innovation can contribute to strengthening the structure and development of the UK economy. The Commission comprised academic analysis of the drivers for green innovation, sectoral roundtables focused on five sectors of the economy, policy engagement with government and parliament, and business visits.

The Commission's final report, '[Innovation for a Green Recovery: Business and Government in Partnership](#)', concluded that a comprehensive, cross-government focus on green innovation must be at the heart of planning for the UK's economic recovery. Alongside the report, the Green Alliance published '[How to fast track innovation for a green industrial revolution](#)', which summarised the main recommendations to policymakers.

The report was discussed in an online event '[New solutions for a green recovery: unlocking the UK's innovation potential](#)' with speakers the Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP (Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth) and Angela Francis (Chief Advisor, Economics and Economic Development, WWF-UK) - as well as GIPC's John and Paul.

Over two years, the GIPC engaged with parliament, providing several responses to select committee inquiries. In summer 2020 the BEIS Committee conducted the '[My BEIS inquiry](#)', inviting pitches from the public. Four of these were taken forward, including one by Paul on 'Institutional arrangements to meet net zero'. The BEIS Committee has now launched an [inquiry](#) based on Paul's pitch.

Since the report launch, members of the GIPC have: discussed findings at a seminar hosted by Cleantech London; had an opinion piece published on the World Economic Forum website on '[Why the UK government must do more to boost green revolution](#)'; called on the Prime Minister to replicate the "incredible success and speed" of the COVID-19 vaccine race in the hunt for green technologies; and have upcoming meetings with BEIS and with HMT to explore the findings and their significance for policy.

Engage Case Study | Roundtables

Bringing academics and policy professionals together to drive knowledge exchange

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and UCL Public Policy convened two **virtual roundtable discussions on market creation for low carbon industrial products**.

Context

In May 2019, the Committee on Climate Change advised that, in order to reach net zero, “Government must implement an approach to incentivise industries to reduce their emissions through energy and resource efficiency, electrification, hydrogen and CCS in ways that do not adversely affect their competitiveness”. While the Government has been putting support in place for decarbonising technologies, BEIS wanted to look at the supporting policy framework needed to achieve net zero by 2050.

The Roundtables

Chaired by Professor Jim Watson, UCL Institute for Sustainable Resources, the first roundtable was held in July 2020. UCL Public Policy convened experts from across the UK to provide advice to policymakers on how a market could be created for low carbon industrial products. In October, this group was reconvened to provide further advice on the development of a sliding scale of market creation policies for low carbon products as the UK seeks to meet its 2050 decarbonisation target.

The roundtables formed part of a wider evidence gathering exercise that BEIS was undertaking to inform the development of the long-term Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy, published in spring 2021.

Outputs and impacts

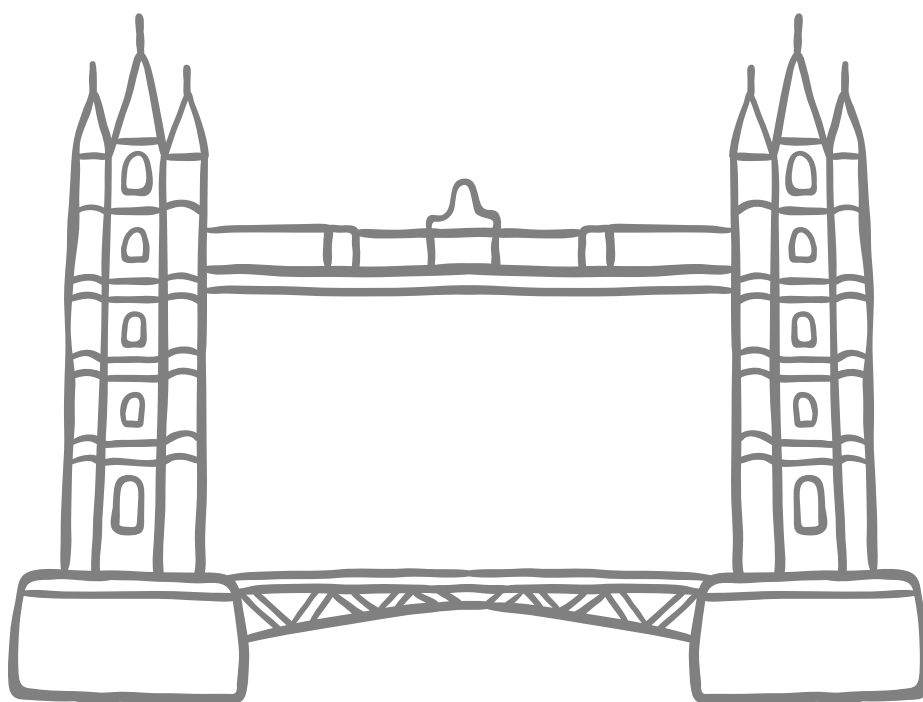
The roundtables provided an opportunity to help inform BEIS and wider Government thinking. Two briefings were produced which were shared with BEIS and the COP26 Universities Network. The roundtables identified evidence gaps and to address these, and a BEIS-UCL policy fellowship was devised to support the development of further evidence, case studies and engagement on the policy area. This started in summer 2021.

Collaborate

UCL Public Policy develops and delivers strategic partnerships to address topical policy issues and deliver public good. We collaborate with departments across UCL and external organisations to deliver strategic projects. Collaborations include:

- The **four year, £10m ‘Capabilities in Academic-Policy Engagement’ (CAPE)** project with the universities of Cambridge, Manchester, Northumbria and Nottingham, and the Government Office for Science, the Parliamentary Office for Science & Technology, Nesta foundation and the Transforming Evidence Hub, funded through the Research England Development Fund. CAPE is exploring effective academic-policy engagement in different institutional, geographical and policy contexts. This is the first time that Research England has made a strategic institutional award of this nature to support academic-policy engagement.
- UCL Public Policy is involved in a significant UKRI investment – the **£2m ESRC International Public Policy Observatory (IPPO)**, led by UCL STEaPP – a collaboration between UCL, Cardiff University, Queen’s University Belfast, the University of Auckland and the University of Oxford to bridge policy and research, focused on mitigating the social impacts of COVID-19 and accelerating the UK’s recovery.
- A collaborative programme with the British Academy, the UCL Institute of Education (IOE) and UCL Science and Technology Studies on **Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work**. Multi-stakeholder workshops on the impact of AI on the quality and equity of work, and skills resulted in a joint submission to the Work and Pensions Select Committee. The project is ongoing with further knowledge exchange activities planned in 2021.
- Working with the Local Government Association (LGA) to bring together researchers and local policy professionals from across England in a series of workshops to explore partnership building and collaborative ways of working. The initial activity, which included researchers from UCL’s Energy Institute, has led to the **Net Zero Innovation Programme**, a year-long programme supporting 12 researcher-local authority partnerships from across England to develop partnerships and help local councils to achieve their net zero ambitions. The project has secured **£180k** in funding directly to the programme cohort from the LGA.
- Partnering with the Resolution Foundation on the **‘Exploring Inequalities - igniting research to better inform UK policy’** project. The collaboration included many parts of UCL from the Bartlett, to Population Health to UCL-IOE, generated a final report and set of action notes, eight podcasts, 12 blog posts and four think-pieces, and featured in national press. The project led to the formation of the Structural Inequalities Alliance, which aims to develop a consensus on a programme for equitable renewal as the UK emerges from the COVID-19 crisis, and a renewed UCL partnership with the CBI on the London Business Survey.

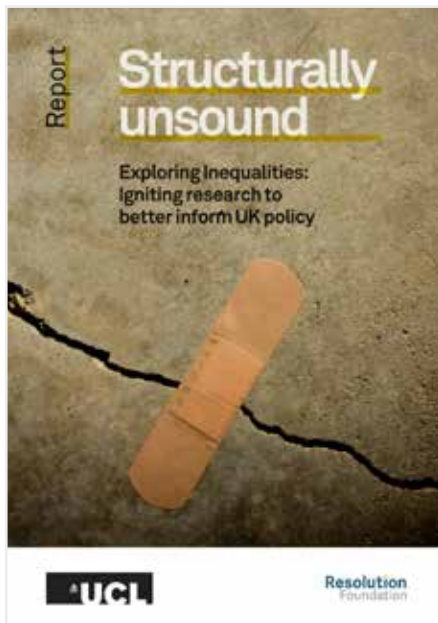
- Securing a £400,000 award from the former HEFCE Catalyst fund in partnership with the universities of Manchester and Northumbria, to develop and deliver ‘**policy summer schools**’ for undergraduates and taught master’s students. The summer school’s curriculum included sessions with academics and policy professionals on a range of live policy challenges, and career talks. In 2020, UCL and University of Manchester delivered this for the second year, with **94%** of students saying they have a greater understanding of the policymaking process as a result and **93%** saying they were more confident in applying for policy roles.
- Ongoing engagement with key public policy stakeholders in order to share insights and share activities with **UPEN**, research networks and organisations, funders, academics and learned societies, UK Government departments, local and regional authorities, think tanks and the UK parliament.
- Working with UPEN to produce two sector-leading reports on **Government Areas of Research Interest** and Surfacing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Academic-Policy Engagement (in press).



Collaborate Case Study | Exploring Inequalities: Igniting research to better inform UK policy

Collaborating to combine research and evidence on inequalities in the UK to facilitate informed and joined-up policymaking

In 2018-19, UCL Public Policy partnered with the UCL Grand Challenge of Justice & Equality and the Resolution Foundation on the project, [Exploring Inequalities: Igniting research to better inform UK policy](#).



The project, funded through UCL's HEIF Knowledge Exchange Fund, set out to cut across standard research and policy boundaries to review, synthesise, and deepen understanding of intersectional inequalities in the UK.

Through a series of six roundtable workshops, the project brought together a range of experts from academia with senior figures, directors, chief executives, and leaders from third sector organisations, businesses, charities, and policy organisations. Alongside this the project conducted 20 in-depth expert interviews in areas of specific interest. In total, over 50 organisations drawn from different sectors and from across the UK took part.

The discussions provided a unique forum in which stakeholders could share insights and build new partnerships to consider how to tackle structural inequalities.

The project generated significant outputs and impacts, including:

- Publication of major report, [Structurally Unsound](#).
- [Report launch at Resolution Foundation's headquarters](#) in Westminster attended by **over 100 people**.
- Coverage in the national press as well as publications in sector leading media outfits, including [Times Higher Education](#), [The Conversation](#), [The Independent](#), [Wonkhe](#), and [CBI Ideas Forum](#).
- Report [referenced during debate in the House of Lords](#).
- [Eight podcasts produced](#) with project partners exchanging insights and knowledge from across different sectors. To date, these have been **downloaded almost 3,500 times**.
- Invited to present findings to government departments; at academic conferences and workshops; third sector policy forums; and business groups.
- Invited to advise the GMCA, CBI and Camden Council on intersectional inequalities.
- Delivered webinars with Whitehall & Industry Group, Wales Centre for Public Policy and [UCL Lunch Hour Lecture](#).

Collaborate Case study | Catalyst Policy Summer Schools

Collaborating across the higher education sector to bring public policy opportunities to students

Undergraduate and taught master's students have been largely left out of Knowledge Exchange (KE) initiatives. The Policy Summer School project, a two-year collaboration between UCL, the University of Manchester (UoM), and Northumbria University, funded through a HEFCE Catalyst award, sought to address this.

Piloting a Policy Summer School programme that connected policy professionals with students, it used innovative teaching methods to develop understanding of policymaking. It also aimed to enhance students' employability and skills and evaluate the potential of this form of KE, both for students and for the policy organisations involved.

Year 1: Power to the Planet

- UCL Public Policy partnered with the UCL Global Citizenship Programme to deliver a 9-day policy summer school with the theme of 'global environmental justice'.
- Over 100 students participated and engaged with 13 national policy organisations, including the Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology, Government Office for Science, Camden Council and the Institute for Government.
- Students worked on live policy challenges and eight students went on to complete a 12-week paid internship at a national policy organisation.

Year 2: Policy Boot Camp

UCL Public Policy delivered a joint summer school with the UoM. Continuing to use innovative teaching methods, students engaged with an expanded network of policy professionals, from national, to regional, to local and included government, parliament and special advisers. Students received informal mentoring through the course, which delivered over 50 hours of content over 5 weeks. An expanded internship programme included policy partners from Year 1 as well as new hosts:

- Over 300 students in attendance
- 17 policy actors discussing their experiences and motivations
- 13 different 'methodology toolkit' workshops and 7 policy 'sandpit' challenges set by 29 policy actors and facilitated by and with policy practitioners
- 20 students on paid internships in local, regional and national government.

It was very insightful to hear different perspectives... it opened my mind more... and can help see the bigger picture.
(Northumbria participant, 2019)

[I liked] The fact that Boot Camp provided a 180-degree overview of the policymaking process. It unravelled the process very well [and] was really good at combining the theory and real-world applications.
(UCL participant, 2020)

Collaborate Case Study | Policy Dialogues: Pathways to Net Zero for Local Government, Professor Tadj Oreszczyn, UCL Energy Institute

Across the UK, local authorities are declaring a climate emergency and developing actions at a local level to reduce carbon emissions, increase biodiversity, transition to net zero and ultimately improve the quality of life of their residents and the local environment. However, the ability of local authorities to respond to the climate emergency varies. UCL Public Policy worked with the UCL Energy Institute to bring climate, energy technology and emission reduction experts into dialogue with local authority representatives across England to develop responses to address this urgent need.

The online Policy Dialogue event Pathways to Net Zero for Local Government, organised in March 2020, brought together 15 experts from UCL and the Universities of Exeter, Imperial, Warwick and Durham, with representatives from six local authorities across England. The Dialogue provided an opportunity to share and expand best practices across councils and establish and deepen the collaboration with academic experts in order to support transitioning to net zero.

The outcomes from the dialogue included strengthening UCL Public Policy and individual academic links to local government; providing an opportunity for researchers to test research findings or tools and to generate tangible impact from their research; and, the successful establishment of a network of climate scientists willing to share their research with local authorities and collaborate to co-develop insights for local use.

The impacts have been the continuation of paired working between universities and local authorities to drive solutions. Strengthening local policy networks, then, supports closer university-local government ties, increases local authorities' evidence-based strategy development and upskills evidence production and use capabilities on all sides.

As a result of this initial dialogue event, in 2020 the Local Government Association (LGA) and UCL established the Net Zero Innovation Programme. The LGA committed £180,000 of funding to support the delivery of collaborative projects for 10 councils, through a pairing programme between academic and university participants. Partnership pairs have focused on concrete policy areas linked to individual councils' needs, the role and responsibility of the local authority participant, and expertise of the university participant. This has included pilots and policy developments for reallocation of road space; reducing carbon emissions from built stock; and embedding green recovery post-COVID.

The programme has supported closer university-local government ties, increased local authorities' evidence-based strategy development, and upskilled evidence production and use capabilities on all sides. It is driving impact in localities outside of those which might usually be targeted by an academic audience and through the partnership with the LGA is scaling up collaboration opportunities in order to enhance the impact on local net zero policies across England.

Looking ahead: UCL Public Policy Priorities | 2021-2024

UCL Public Policy's mission is to connect our engagement expertise with those positioned to implement and benefit from it, and to champion the role of diverse expertise and evidence in public discourse.

We have identified three priorities to guide our approach to supporting UCL's academic-policy engagement over the next three years. These are set out below, together with specific commitments and actions in order to advance academic-policy engagement for the benefit of the UCL community.

PRIORITY 1

Enhancing UCL research impact and supporting UCL researchers

UCL's rare breadth of research and our commitment to delivering impact for public benefit provides fertile ground for academic-policy engagement. To make the most of our institutional strengths, UCL Public Policy will work to maximise synergies between departmental, faculty and school activities through:

- Delivering the CAPE project, and embedding the learning within the UCL Public Policy programme and working with external partners to ensure sector-level improvements in academic-policy engagement.
- Collaborating with stakeholders to develop further strategic external partnerships and build awareness of the value of intermediaries in academic-policy engagement.
- Enhancing our training opportunities to meet the UCL community's growing appetite, including targeted provision for under represented groups at UCL.
- Coordinating and communicating opportunities for UCL researchers to engage with public policy.
- Facilitating routes for researchers to interact with policy professionals.
- Adding value to UCL initiated projects by ensuring policy engagement is built in at the start, sharing best practice for achieving policy impact and providing additional support to deliver public policy impacts where appropriate.

PRIORITY 2

Amplifying UCL's contributions to key policy areas

In line with UCL's commitment to being a force for social good and applying our cross-disciplinary expertise to addressing societal challenges, UCL Public Policy will work closely with UCL and external stakeholders to identify emerging opportunities for policy engagement and impact. In particular, we will:

- Strengthen understanding in the policy community of UCL's Artificial Intelligence research through building strategic partnerships and knowledge exchange activities.
- Work with the UCL Climate Change and Net Zero communities, identifying policy opportunities to apply UCL's considerable research strengths in these areas.
- Promote a greater understanding of how structural inequalities can be tackled, by supporting an alliance of leading organisations, building platforms for policy debate, and realising the role of research in inequalities decision making.

PRIORITY 3

Advancing the practice of academic-policy engagement

UCL Public Policy will continue to evolve our programme of support and engagement mechanisms in response to academic and policy demand and the developing evidence and practice base – including through our involvement in the CAPE and IPPO projects.

We will:

- Work across UCL's academic and professional services units, developing synergies and coordinating activities to make UCL's policy impact more than sum of its parts.
- Strengthen understanding of what mechanisms are effective in academic-policy engagement to ensure the UCL community can continue to respond to policy demand in a timely and accessible way.
- Engage our policy partners and stakeholders to co-develop sustainable structures to support ongoing and constructive engagement in order to enhance evidence-informed policymaking.
- Improve evaluation of our activities at both an individual project and programme level.

Appendix

UCL Public Policy awards 2017 - 2021

UCL Public Policy EPSRC IAA Policy Dialogues	
2017 – 2018	
GetAMoveOn Network+ , Professor Anna Cox, UCL Division of Psychology and Language Sciences	£2,000
Urban design to address inequality in Lebanese refugee camps , James Shraiky, Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering	£2,000
2018 - 2019	
Policy Exchange , Prof May Cassar, UCL Institute for Sustainable Heritage	£1,000
London Water Network , Dr Luiza Campos, UCL Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering	£1,200
Neuromorphic computing , Professor Tony Kenyon, UCL Electronic and Electrical Engineering	£2,000
Future Targeted Healthcare Manufacturing , Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker, UCL Biochemical Engineering	£2,000
2019 - 2020	
Pathways to Net Zero for Local Government , Professor Tadj Oreszczyn, UCL Energy Institute	£5,000
Mapping Local Skills Networks , Professor Alan Penn, UCL Bartlett School of Architecture	£2,400
2020 - 2021	
Net Zero Innovation Programme , Professor Tadj Oreszczyn, UCL Energy Institute	£9,900

UCL Public Policy | EPSRC IAA Rapid Response Advisory Scheme

2018 - 2019

The Enduring Aspects of Place: Shaping DCMS's Strategic Research Needs (ARIs) , Professor May Cassar, UCL Institute for Sustainable Heritage	£5,000
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2019 - 2020

Proposing a set of policy decisions which are oriented towards the promotion of energy efficiency programs in Myanmar , Dr Gabriel Anandarajah, UCL Energy Institute	£5,000
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Prevention Green Paper , Professor Anna Cox, UCL Division of Psychology and Language Sciences	£5,000
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Operational performance of buildings , Professor Michael Davies, UCL Institute for Environmental Design and Engineering	£5,000
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Policy support for net zero modelling at BEIS using the UK TIMES model , Professor Paul Dodds, UCL Institute for Sustainable Resources	£5,000
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Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Enforcement Study , Dr Peter Mallaburn, UCL Energy Institute	£5,000
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2020 - 2021

Supporting the delivery of Industrial Decarbonisation , Dr Evangelia Manola, UCL Civil, Environmental & Geomatic Engineering	£9,900
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UCL Public Policy | Expert Engagement Awards

2017-2018

Development of a toolkit to respond to cybercrime against older people in India , Dr Kartikeya Tripathi, Security and Crime Science, Engineering	£4,000
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2018-2019

Engaging with marginalised groups on access to and affordability of treatment for Hepatitis C , Ms Fatima Wurie, UCL Institute of Health Informatics and Centre for Behavioural Medicine	£3,470
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Gender and IoT” Policy Dissemination Strategy: Raising Awareness on Internet of Things-Facilitated Tech Abuse within Policy Communities , Dr Leonie Tanzer, UCL Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy	£4,000
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Informing policy on secondary findings form genome sequencing in clinical practice: learning from the 100,000 Genomes project , Dr Saskia Sanderson, Institute for Health Informatics	£4,000
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2019-2020

The Social Ecology of Radicalisation , Dr Noémie Bouhana and Dr Sandy Schumann, UCL Department of Crime and Crime Science	£2,282
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A global university for a global ocean , Dr Chris Brierley and Dr Helen Czerski, UCL Department of Geography and mechanical Engineering	£850
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Heritage and State-Building in Post-conflict Iraq , Dr Mehiyar Kathem and Professor Eleanor Robson, UCL Department of History	£3,900
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Defending Women’s Rights in hostile times , Professor Maxine Molyneux, Shahra Razavi and Constanza Tabbush, UCL Institute of the Americas and UNRISD	£1,000
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UCL Public Policy | Expert Engagement Awards (continued)

2019-2020

Re-thinking prosperity for the UK in the 21st century: Supporting multi-stakeholder dialogues in the North West of England , Professor Henrietta Moore, UCL Institute for Global Prosperity and Liverpool City Council	£1,900
Facilitating discussions: Barriers in the management of public smart city projects , Angeliki Maria Toli and Dr Niamh Murtagh, The UCL Bartlett School of Construction and Project Management	£2,040

UCL Public Policy | Policy Challenge Awards

2017-2018

Future Supply and Demand Mechanism within the Service Sector , Adam Golden, The UCL Bartlett School of Construction and Project Management	£4,000
Visions for future UK and EU citizen science collaborations , Professor Muki Haklay, UCL Department of Geography	£4,000

2018-2019

LGBTQ+ Spaces and Communities in Camden , Professor Ben Campkin and Lo Marshall, UCL Urban Lab	£3,596
The Evaluation Exchange: Exploring the potential of a university-community partnership approach to evaluation in Camden , Dr Gemma Moore and Dr Georgina Pitts, UCL Public Engagement	£4,000

UCL Public Policy | Policy Engagement and Impact Fellows

2017-2018

UK care home sector , Dr Amy Horton, UCL Department of Geography	£644.00
Hydration in later life , Dr Cini Bhanu, UCL Institute of Epidemiology and Health	£1,708.50
Relationships between foster carers and children in care , Eva Sprecher, Anna Freud Centre	£1,789.30
Making administrative health data 'research-ready' , Dr Louise Mc Grath-Lone, UCL Institute of Health Informatics	£1,090.11
Robotics for sustainable agriculture , Dr Sara Adela Abad Guaman, UCL Mechanical Engineering	£1,528.00
Care of South Asian infants in East London (childhood obesity) , Shereen Al Laham, UCL Institute of Epidemiology and Health	£1,646.01

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- **Dr Emma Baxter**, Public Policy Engagement Facilitator (BEAMS, 2018-19)
- **Dr George Dibb**, Head of Industrial Strategy & Policy Engagement (2018-20)
- **Carina Schneider**, Public Policy Engagement Facilitator (BEAMS, 2019-20)
- **Dr Isabel Bennett**, Public Policy Engagement Facilitator (BEAMS, 2020-21)
- **Reuben Williamson**, Catalyst Summer School Facilitator (2020-21)

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