

## The Sussex Knowledge Exchange and Impact Programme Public and Community Engagement Fellowships

### 1. **Background**

The University of Sussex has been allocated funding from Research England –HEIF to develop skills and shape best practice in public and community engagement.

As part of a KE and Impact Fellowship scheme being managed by the Sussex KE and Impact Support Programme a proportion of this funding for 2024/2025 has been allocated to support a number of **Public and Community Engagement Fellowships**. The fellowships will have a maximum award value of £2,000 for the Early stage and £4,000 for the Follow-on engagement stage. A total of up to seven (7) projects are expected to be awarded across the two strands.

The key aim of the Fellowship is to raise the profile and recognition of public engagement with research; develop partnerships with local communities and communities elsewhere around the world, and create positive impacts through working together with communities and members of the public. Projects must centre around knowledge exchange activities, and those involving only higher education partner(s) will not be eligible.

### **Objectives**

- To promote meaningful engagement and strengthen relationship between academics and the wider community.
- To support projects that address societal challenges and contribute to public understanding of academic research.
- To enhance the skills and professional development of academics in public and community engagement.

The following list provides examples of activity which could be funded through the Public and Community engagement Fellowship:

- build new networks and share learning
- transform the ways in which organisations and/or platforms involve the public in health research
- Working collaboratively with stakeholders, particularly to better understand and address local, regional or national challenges
- Exploring the importance of the relationship between universities and their civic partners in driving forward a shared agenda
- Supporting universities to bridge and reduce social divides and improve the quality of life in their communities.

### 2. **Public and Community Engagement Fellowships details**

There are two strands of Public and Community Engagement Fellowships:

- **Early-stage engagement projects** open to researchers from all disciplines and career levels (esp. early career researchers)

- **Follow-on engagement projects** for previous KEI Public and Community Engagement Fellowship recipients

#### **A. Early-stage engagement:**

Applicants are encouraged to pilot public engagement to support their learning, gain experience, and develop ideas. This fund targets academic staff with little or no engagement experience and aims to reach new public groups. Applications under the early-stage strand will be assessed against the following equally weighted criteria

##### **a. Demonstration of Aims, Defined Public Group, and Engagement Activity**

- *Connect your research with the proposed engagement activity:* outline the aims and expected outcomes of your work. Define the public group and explain how your project meets their needs. Describe the purpose of your activities to your research project.

##### **b. A clear explanation of benefits to applicant and the development of research work**

- *Personal and Research Benefits:* Explain how the engagement project will benefit you as the applicant and enhance your research, discussing potential new insights, collaborations, and overall academic and professional impact.

##### **c. Feasibility and Next Steps**

- *Project Feasibility:* Present a realistic project plan that demonstrates feasibility within the given budget and timescales, ensuring careful consideration of resources and timelines.
- *Next steps beyond funding:* Articulate your plans leveraging on these funds to map onto other funding/ support opportunities beyond the funding period.

#### **B. Follow –on project engagement:**

This is particularly available only to previous KEI Public and Community Engagement Fellowship awardees who have prior experience with public engagement and would like to build on existing engagements with their external partners.

- expanding existing engagement activities (your own, or others) to new public groups or delivering in a different context
- enhancing a specific aspect of your public engagement work, leadership in public engagement, and facilitation abilities with external partners
- small-scale pilots of innovative engagement activities to evaluate what works and does not with all stakeholders

Applications under the follow-on engagement strand will be assessed against the following equally weighted criteria:

##### **a. Evidence of Previously Developed Engagement Work and Outcomes**

- Demonstrate past engagement work and its outcomes, and explain how these enhanced your research.

##### **b. Demonstration of Aims, Defined Public Group, and Engagement Activity**

- Connect your research with the proposed engagement activity, outlining the aims and expected outcomes. Define the public group and explain how your project meets their needs. Describe the benefits to you and your research, and present a feasible project plan with steps for securing additional funding.

**c. Explanation of Benefits to Applicant and Research Development**

- Personal and Research Benefits: Describe how the project benefits you and your research, including potential insights and collaborations.

**d. Feasibility and Next Steps**

- Present a realistic plan within budget and timescales, and outline plans for securing additional funding or support post-project

**3. Funding available and eligible costs**

The maximum funding that can be requested is:

1. **Early-stage engagement projects** up to £2,000
2. **Follow-on engagement projects** up to £4,000

Eligible costs for both strands can include:

- **Research assistant costs via REED**
- **Communication and Engagement:**
- Costs for non-academic publications and communications (e.g. briefings/video/podcasts/social media activity).
- **Capability Building and Deepening understanding:**
- Costs for hosting and attending: workshops for training and knowledge transfer/exchange events, key stakeholders and opportunities to support engagement (e.g. travel & accommodation).

**Ineligible costs**

- Paying PhD students
- Salary buy-outs or staff time
- Estate and indirect costs
- Conference participation
- Publications, journals or book launch

**4. Application process**

Applicants can only submit a single application to this call.

Applications will need to be set up, costed and approved on Worktribe, the University's research management system. **Worktribe approvals must also be submitted and completed by 5pm on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025.** Applications and Worktribe approvals received after this date will not be considered.

Applicants need to complete the relevant application forms (downloaded via the links below) and email them to [research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk) by **5pm on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025** after completing approvals on Worktribe.

1. [Early-stage engagement project](#)
2. [Follow-on engagement project](#)

To access Worktribe you must complete the mandatory LearnUpon training ‘Introduction to Worktribe’. Guidance on accessing Worktribe is available on the internal [Worktribe webpages](#). Please note, following completion of the training, it can take up to 1 week for Worktribe access to be given so we advise you to complete the training module as soon as possible.

If you would like to start your project costing on Worktribe and do not yet have access, you can email [research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk) with details of your project. The team will set up your project costing on Worktribe so that you can see and edit it once you do gain access.

Worktribe process:

In Worktribe, go to ‘Opportunities’ and ‘Browse Opportunities’. Select the opportunity ‘INTERNAL Knowledge Exchange and Impact Support Public Community Engagement Fellowships’ (Funder: University of Sussex). Create your application from this opportunity (‘Create Project’) as this will pre-populate scheme information in your project record. Please select ‘Add to My Opportunities’ so that we can gauge interest levels and provide support.

When you have created the project from the opportunity, complete the mandatory fields (marked with an asterisk):

Project Title:	Your Project Title
Est Project Dates:	1 Feb 2025 – 30 Jun 2025
Project Type:	Internal Funding Other
Project Activity Type:	Internal
Funder	University of Sussex
Scheme	Select the relevant scheme/strand from the drop down
Project Lead	Your Name
Lead Org Unit	Your department

And ‘Create Project’.

Once your project has been created in Worktribe you can add further details and budget costs. To cost staff time (your own and that of other staff on your project), you will need to contact [research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk) quoting your Worktribe project number.

Please note the following:

- PI and Co-I time needs to be costed into your Worktribe record even though these costs cannot be recovered from the Fellowship and do not need to be detailed in the word application form.
- Please contact Ian Sinclair on [research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk) with the %FTE you will spend on the Fellowship, and he will add these costs to your Worktribe project record. These will not be covered by the grant funding.
- You will need to complete a risk assessment in Worktribe before the application can be submitted for approval.
- You will need to upload a draft application form before the project can be sent for internal approvals. This can be updated before the bid is submitted to the deadline.

- When your project is ready to be sent for internal approvals, the Research Initiatives team will initiate this process in Worktribe.
- Once your bid is approved, the Research Initiatives team will confirm that you may submit your final application by emailing [research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk).
- Because this is an internal call with a short turnaround, due diligence checks on external partners will only be completed on awarded Fellowships.

**Scheme contacts**

If you would like to discuss the suitability of your project idea, please contact either:

- Nana Yankah, Programme Consultant, KE and Impact Support Programme  
[ny95@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:ny95@sussex.ac.uk) or

For all Worktribe queries, please contact Ian Sinclair [research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:research.initiatives@sussex.ac.uk)

**Timescales**

Call opens	Call ends	Assessment	Awards start
w/c 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	5pm on 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2025.	w/c 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2025, with decisions expected to be communicated w/c 3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2025	w/c 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Activities are expected to start by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025 at the latest and must be concluded by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025. Unspent funds cannot be rolled beyond 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.**

**5. Assessment Process:**

- The application process is overseen by Prof Debbie Keeling, Deputy PVC for Knowledge Exchange, and managed by Nana Yankah, Programme Consultant, Sussex Knowledge Exchange and Impact Support Programme.
- The panel reviewing applications will comprise both academics and professional services colleagues.
- All applications need to be logged on **Worktribe** and go through the usual School approval process.
- A strong application should have:
  - Ability to meet the above criteria/eligibility for each funding stream
  - An idea for an activity you would like to deliver that engages public groups with or involves them in your research.
  - An identified public group you want to engage with or involve in your research.
  - A willingness to try new things and think creatively about public engagement
  - Evidence of how the Fellowship will position the researcher to explore or leverage external funding in the near future.

**6. Reporting**

All awardees will be required to complete a short evaluation at the end of the funding and may be asked to provide comments and other content for internal and external communications, to demonstrate the impact of the Fellowships.