



AccessEd & Commonwealth
Scholars Training

Public Engagement: What, Why and How

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Chief Executive, AccessEd

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#AccessEdTraining



Welcome to today's workshop



Zoom Housekeeping:

Please ensure you are **muted** if you are not speaking to the group

We will pause for questions as we go

If you are having connectivity issues, please try turning off your camera during the presentation; these can be turned on during discussion sections

If you have any technical issues please privately message Hannah in the chat for her help

If you have a Question as we go, please use the chat function

For breakout groups, we encourage use of your camera if possible please!

AccessEd: Who are we?



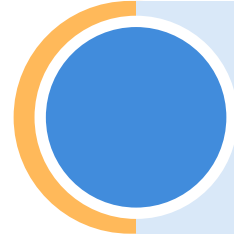
- AccessEd is a non-profit organisation committed to supporting postgraduate researchers in their professional development and university access programmes to increase social impact globally.
- AccessEd has expertise working with international students and social enterprises, as well as delivering courses in transferable skills for the 21st century. AccessEd bridges the gap from education to the professional and public sectors.



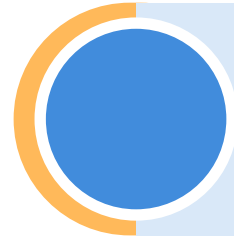
Introduction to your trainer



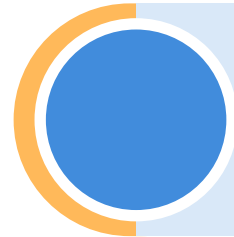
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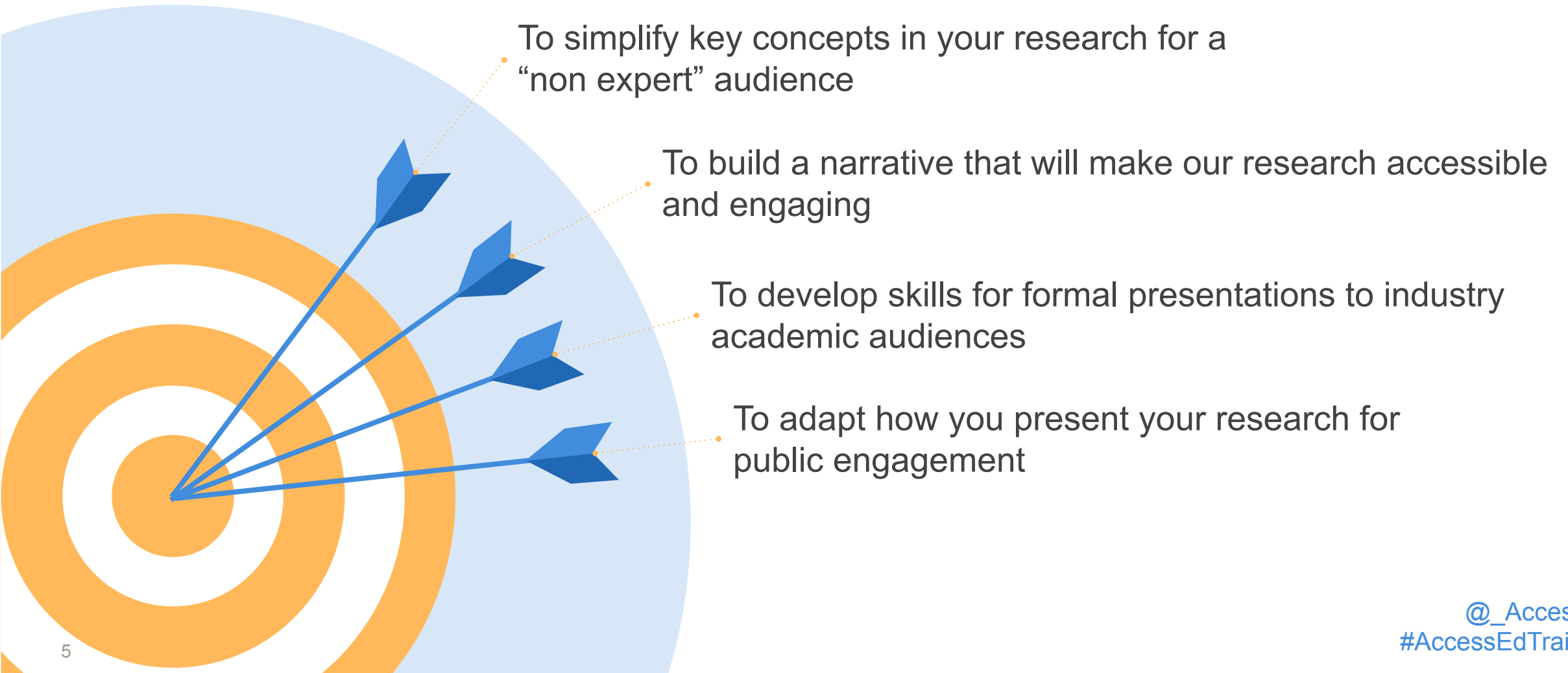


Has designed, launched and led social impact organisations, such as charity Speakers for Schools and worked for Obama for America



Expertise in social enterprise projects, community investment programmes and working cross-sector with world-leading corporations and institutions

Session objectives



Public Engagement: What & Why?



Public engagement describes the myriad of ways in which activities 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.”

Definition from publicengagement.ac.uk

Why is it so important?

Openness, Honesty, Transparency – It’s important to have open conversations about what you do & why you do it

Demonstrate Commitment to Wider Social Benefits – research needs to make a difference – show the wider value of your research

Fresh Eyes Bring Fresh Ideas – Gaining feedback from externals enriches the relevance of your research

Inspire the public – help them be inspired by your subject, understand its importance and even attract future collaborators!

Breakout Room activity: Think > Pair > Share



What do you currently think about public engagement?

Why is public engagement important in your home country?

Who is your audience at home?

How might today's workshop help you?

So, who is the 'public'?



The public is everyone!

- Family and friends
- Potential future funders
- Members of your local community/community groups
- Schools and colleges (primary, secondary, further education)
- Families and children
- Young people (aged 18-25) and adults
- Business and industry
- Government and policy makers



Methods for engaging the public



- Press release
- Blogs and articles
- Local radio
- Digital media
- TV
- Websites
- Social media
- Presentations
- Posters and displays
- Workshops
- Hands-on activities
- Performances
- Talks
- Consultation panels



The 'How':



1. Building a Narrative

- Concept Mapping your Research
- What Makes Stories Special?
- Creating your Narrative

2. Presentation Skills for Different People and purposes

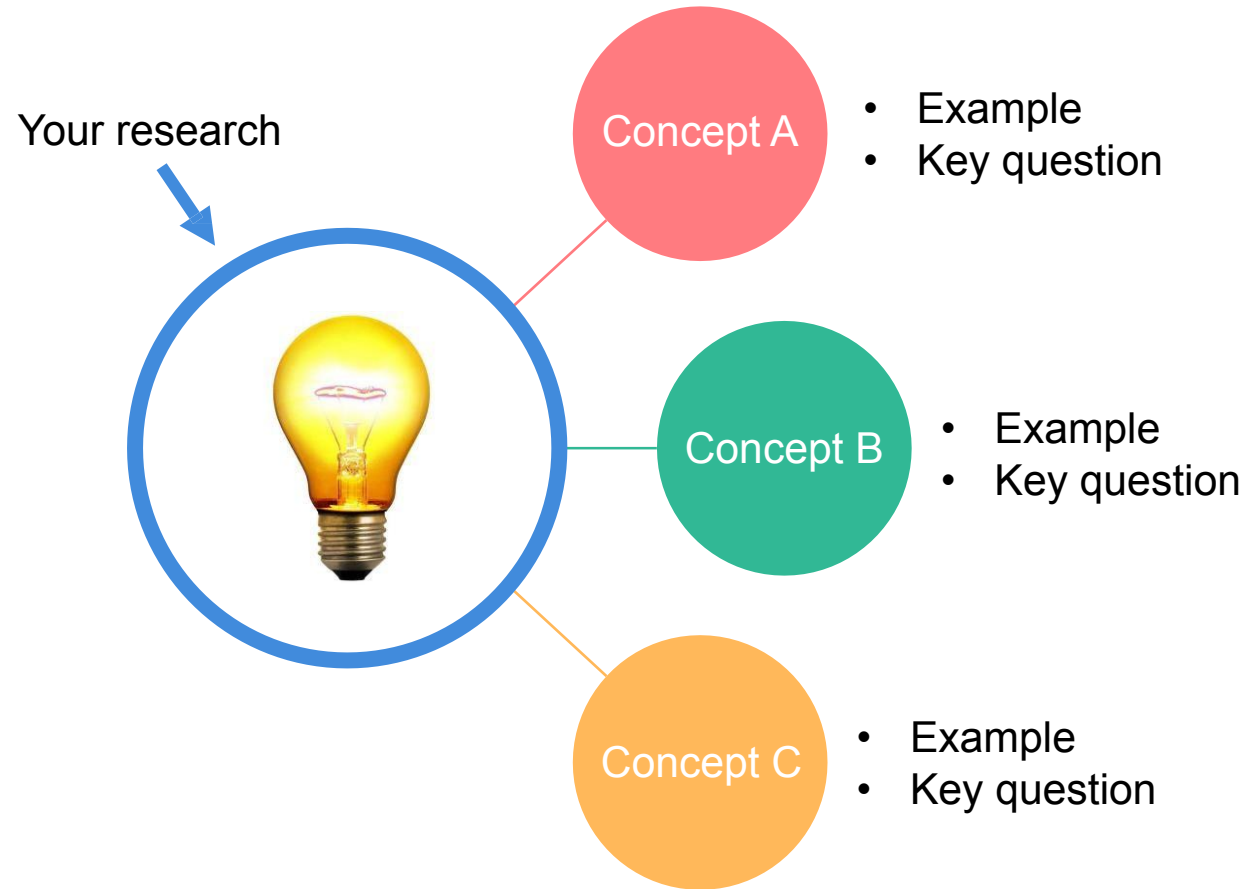
- Do's and Don'ts
- Practicing your Introduction
- Scenarios



Building a Narrative Voice



Concept map your research



Determine the key concepts:

What the main ideas, topics and focuses of the research. List the three main ones

Give examples:

What do you mean by these concepts? What are the areas of focus here?

Share key questions:

What does your research aim to answer about these concepts?

Sentence starter challenge



My research is on the topic of XXXXXXXX

In my research I look at three concepts: A, B and C

When I study A, I am answering the question: Question A. For example, Example A

When I study B, I am answering the question: Question B. For example, Example B

When I study C, I am answering the question: Question C. For example, Example C

What makes stories special?



*“Everybody loves a good story. Even small children who have difficulty focusing in class will sit with rapt attention in the presence of a good storyteller. But stories are not just fun. There are important cognitive consequences of the story format. Psychologists have therefore referred to stories as “psychologically privileged”, meaning that our minds treat stories differently than other types of material. **People find stories interesting, easy to understand, and easy to remember.**”*

Daniel T. Willingham, “Ask the Cognitive Scientist”, American Educator, Summer 2004

What defines a story? The Four Cs.



Causality

Events in stories are related because one event causes or initiates another.

“The King died and then the Queen died” presents two event chronologically, but “The King died and the Queen died of grief” links the events with causal information.

Complications

If a story were just a series of episodes in which the character hammers away at her goal, it would be dull. Rather, the character’s efforts to remove the obstacle typically create complications – new problems that she must try to solve.

When Scarlett learns that Ashley doesn’t love her, she tries to make him jealous by agreeing to marry Charles Hamilton, an action that, indeed, poses new complications for her.

Conflict

In every story, a central character has a goal and obstacles that prevent the goal from being met.

“Scarlett O’Hara loved Ashley Wilkes, so she married him” has causality, but it’s not much of a story (and would make a five-minute movie). A story moves forward as the character takes action to remove the obstacle. In *Gone With the Wind*, the first obstacle Scarlett faces is that Ashley doesn’t love her.

Character

Strong, interesting characters are essential to good stories, and screenwriters agree that the key to creating interesting characters is to allow the audience to observe them in action.

F. Scott Fitzgerald went as far as to write, “Action is character.” Rather than tell us that Scarlett O’Hara is popular and a coquette, the first time we meet her we observe two men fawning over her.



What defines a story? The Four Cs.



Causality

What caused you to study your topic?
What caused you to become a researcher?
What causes the topic you are researching?

Conflict

What are the most serious obstacles that you face as a researcher?
What are the most serious conflicts that you face personally?
What are the main obstacles in your research?

Complications

What unpredictable challenges did you encounter when doing your research?
What do you know now, that you didn't know then?
What personal consequences have there been for you?

Character

What have you learned about yourself?
Who else has helped you along the way?
What actions have you taken that you are most proud of?
What are examples that demonstrate these qualities?
What disagreements are there between researchers in your discipline?



Narrative arc



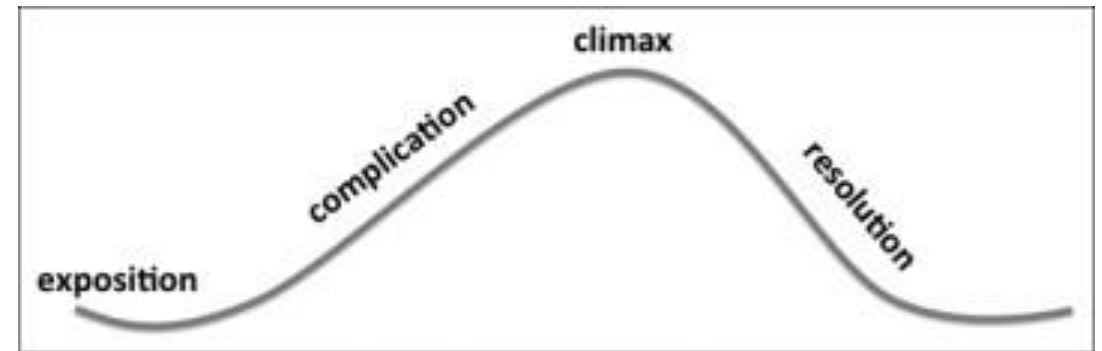
1 The Background

2 The Problem

3 The Attempt at Solution

4 The Resolution?

5 What's Next?





Practicing Presentation Skills



What's the worst presentation you've been to?



1

What made it so bad?

2

What did the presenter do and say?

3

How did watching the presentation make you feel?

4

Did you learn anything or take anything of relevance away?



Body Language



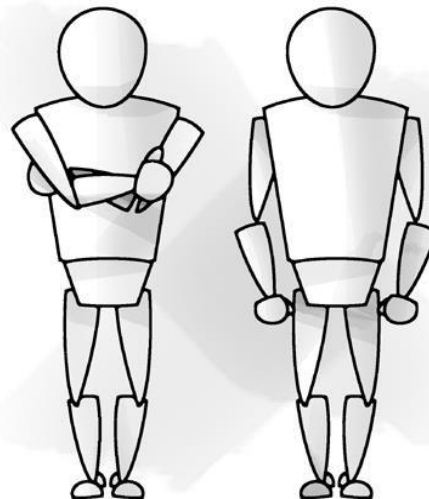
Open v Closed Body Language

Open

Eye-contact, good posture, facing forward, relaxed/happy facial expressions, making use of space, hand gestures.

Closed

Looked down, slouched, facing away, looking nervous or distressed, standing totally still, arms crossed.

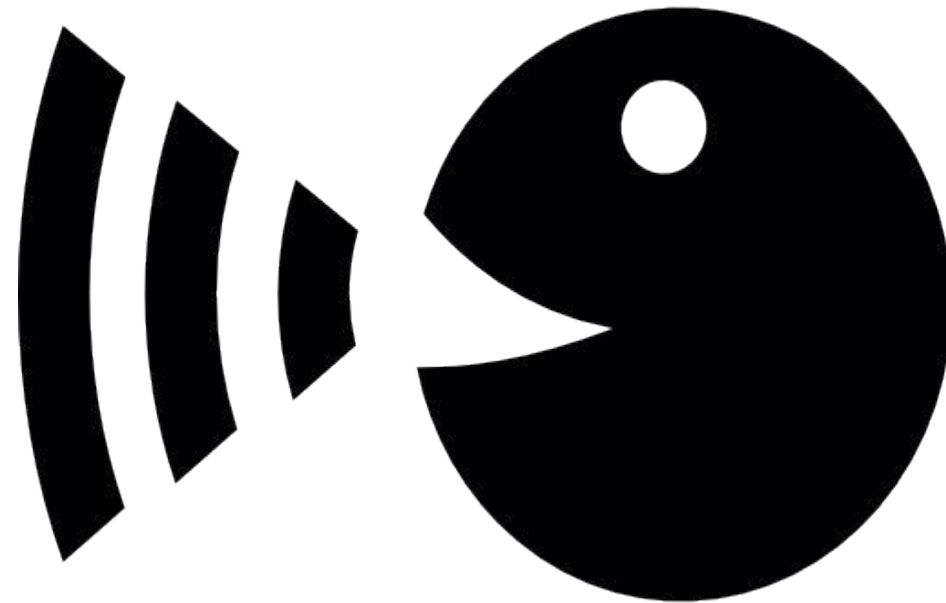


Use of Voice



Things to consider

- Pace
- Tone
- Pauses
- Enunciation
- Volume



Basic Do's and Don'ts



Do's

- Introduce yourself
- Explain what you will be speaking about
- Make sure your research is accessible and engaging
- Use bullet point notes
- Consider pace and volume
- Make the most of space
- Thank your audience for listening

Don'ts

- Share your life story!
- Overcomplicate it or go into too much detail
- Assume your audience knows as much as you
- Use full scripts
- Talk too fast or too quietly
- Pace up and down
- Say “thank goodness that’s over!”



What kind of presenter do you want to be?

Imagine you are about to stand up and give a presentation about your research.

How will you introduce yourself and your research interests?

Take 10 minutes to turn your concept map skeleton and your storytelling chart into a script for your introduction.

Do's and Don'ts



Do's

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Breakout Room: Practice!



Practice the presentation on each other.

Give feedback:

- “I liked it when...”
- “Next time try...”

Do's and Don'ts



Do's

- Introduce yourself
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Discussion: Scenarios - adjust to the audience



A

You have been asked to take part in a community outreach event for CSC where you will present your research to members of the general public. Your audience are mostly local residents and their families who have been invited in to find out what happens at GCU Londone

How will you structure your presentation to get them enthused and informed?

C

You are attending an industry event and will have opportunity to network with staff from industry related to your research.

How do you engage with different guests, some of whom are very senior?

How do you answer the question “and what do you do?” to describe your research interests.

B

You are participating in the 3-minute thesis competition with the university. If you are a PhD student/Master’s student, you will present on your thesis or dissertation.

What will be the focal point of your presentation? How is this different than prese

D

You are attending an interview* and are asked an open ended question on the significance of your research.

What do you say?

***try different interview scenarios:**

- 1) For an academic position
- 2) For a job in industry





Tea break



Types of Public Engagement

Ways of Engaging the Public



**Social media
or blog**

**Speaking in
schools**

**Posters and
Displays**

Media

**Festivals and
Conferences**

**Consultations
(with the
public)**



Types of Public Engagement: Pros & Cons

Example: You sign up to speak at a Primary School

Pros	Cons
Can be a one time or repeat commitment	Designed around a school's schedule
Chance to work with new educators	Takes time to organise and attend
Builds experience with different age groups	Not all students may be interested
Tests your ability to simplify your subject to the most basic elements!	Limited audiences

Top tips if this is of interest: Boil down to the exciting basics of your area of work. Don't worry about explaining your full thesis, but why is it exciting to a 8 year old or 15 year old! And take time to show them you are relatable -- how much did you know about your topic at their age?



Types of Public Engagement: Pros & Cons

Example: Running a blog

Pros	Cons
Can be done flexibly in your own time	Requires building an audience
Free	Requires coming up with fresh material
Versatile style and approaches	Could be duplicative of publishing efforts
Easy to promote and share widely	Writing may not be your strongest medium for non-expert audiences

Top tips if this is of interest: Consider running a themed blog with a colleague. Agree the scope and purpose. Could it be a more ‘fun’ extension of your topic?

Setting Goals for Public Engagement



- 1 Identify the type of opportunities that also fit the areas you need to develop**
- 2 Set a target minimum of PE for each term (e.g. one outreach activity) -- if you set a goal for your whole degree, you might find you leave it as an afterthought!**
- 3 After this session, map what opportunities are available to you; create a spreadsheet of specific options at your university, region, or for your industry/field**
- 4 Share your plans with peers and advisors, to not only get their ideas but help hold yourself accountable**



Evaluating your Public Engagement



Evaluating your Public Engagement



Evaluation is a process of collecting evidence and reflection that will help you understand the dynamics and effect of your work, and help inform future projects or approaches.

Used correctly, evaluation is a valuable tool that enables you to learn from your experiences and to assess the impact of your work.

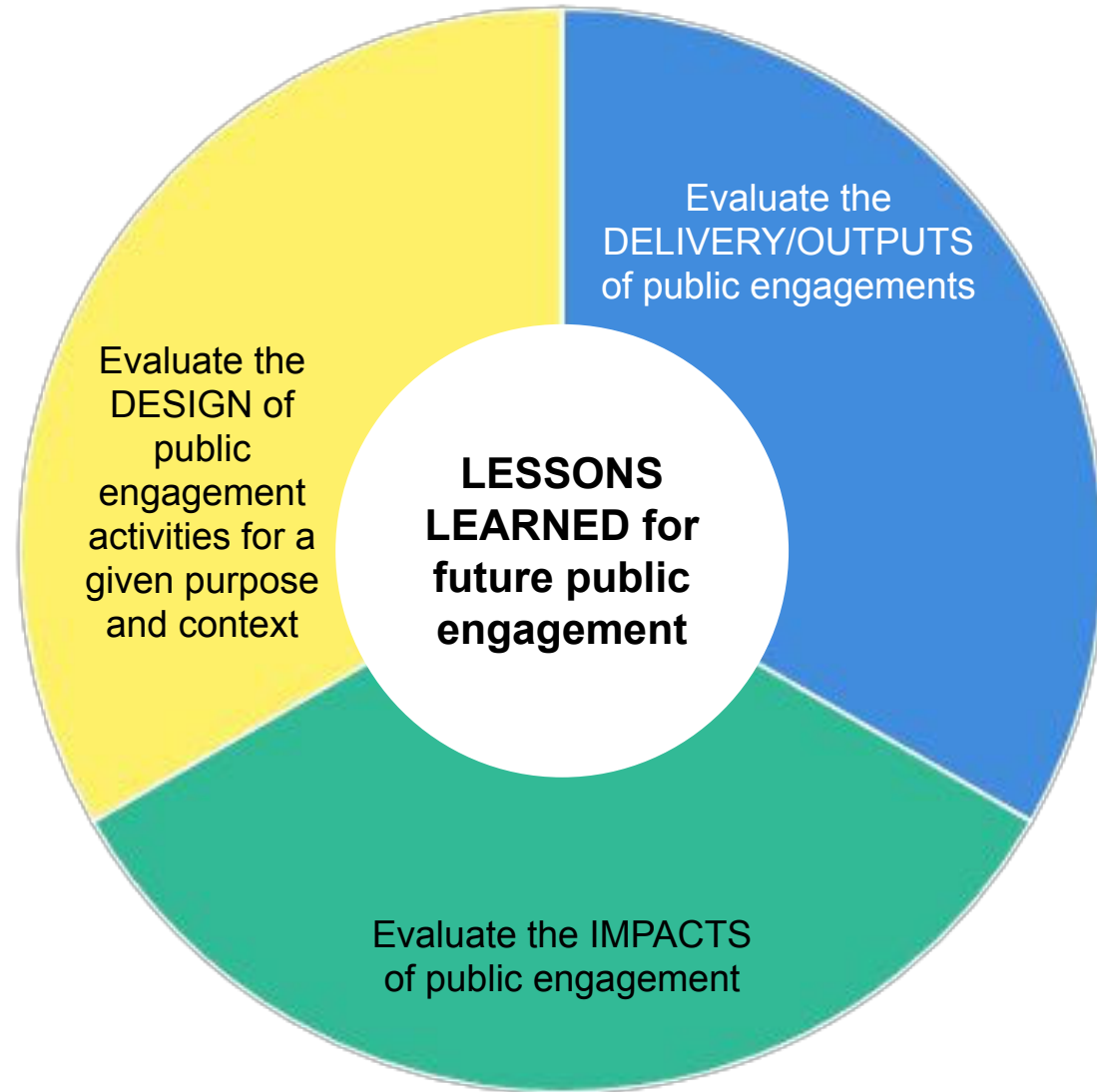
Why evaluate

Considerations for what and when you might evaluate

Examples of how to collect data

Frameworks & further reading

Why evaluate your PE?





Developing an evaluation plan

1. When should you develop your evaluation plan?

- Plans should be considered as soon as you're aware of the opportunity -- some may ask for this when you apply
- Keep in mind your own time (capacity) to implement it; don't make it too ambitious that it can't be done
- Do you need to circulate surveys, or ask participants to be available a particular date?

2. How should you design your evaluation plan? Depends on:

- What you want to collect and why?
- Who you are using in your evaluation (students? Public participants)?
- What access do you have to collect the data?
- How will it be used?

Example: Science and Technology Facilities Council, [Public Engagement Evaluation Framework](#)

Implementing your evaluation



Evaluation Type	Works well when	Considerations
Post-event survey	Participants have limited time; clear questions	Having contact details or consider paper option; inputting/logging if paper
Pre and post survey	Email access or easy access to participants	Time-based biases; matching up the surveys; time to compare results
Focus Group	Still understanding your audiences viewpoint requires open questions; understanding attitudes; you have time/budget to manage this	Time and capacity to organise; codifying results (transcribing, qualifying)
Longer Questionnaire	Understanding attitudes more in-depth; participants are incentivised to reply	Response bias; time to evaluate results; codify responses
Quizzes	You have younger participants and you want to ensure they've understood your presentation/event	Keep it fun; how will you measure results? Hands or a text app? Is that practical?

Remember: What's the purpose of your evaluation? To improve your communication skills? Ensure it's been engaging (short term impact)? Change behaviour or attitudes (long term impact)?

Considerations in designing your evaluation: Surveys



.When starting out, surveys and questionnaires can be effective as a starting point

- DON'T: Make it too long; match your age group, their time, and 'incentive to finish'
- DON'T: Ask questions without providing discrete and comprehensive response options
- DON'T: Forget to track key info; age, school/location, if it helps you infer results
- DON'T: Ever use a survey without having personally tested it and on 2 other people!

Don't forget: GDPR! If you are collecting full names, be sure to request permission for any details kept (age, address, contact information)

Considerations in designing your evaluation: Surveys



When starting out, surveys and questionnaires can be effective as a starting point

- DO: Prioritise key questions that are best for this engagement and this audience—you can't answer everything!
- DO: Make questions you want to answer specific “What do they know about waste management?” is too hard to capture in a survey -- *“Do they know about a local recycling scheme? Do they feel confident they know where their garbage goes after it is picked up?”*
- DO: ask a mix of closed and open questions when you are still trying to understand overall knowledge, attitudes or behaviours
- DO: Visualise the results. Is anything missing or could go wrong when they sit down to answer your questions?



Post-Engagement Survey Questions

They don't have to be complex if they tell you what you need to know:

- Do they feel more **knowledgeable** about a specific issue you covered (ocean pollution, vaccine access...)
- Do they feel **more confident** explaining a concept to a friend?
- Are they **more interested** in the subject?
- Do they know **where to go** for more information?

Example response types...

- **Dichotomous:**

I would recommend this blog to a friend who wants to know more about nature: Yes/No

- **Likert Scale:**

I now understand more about the issues facing the rainforest

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Definitely

- **Multiple choice or Select Multiple:**

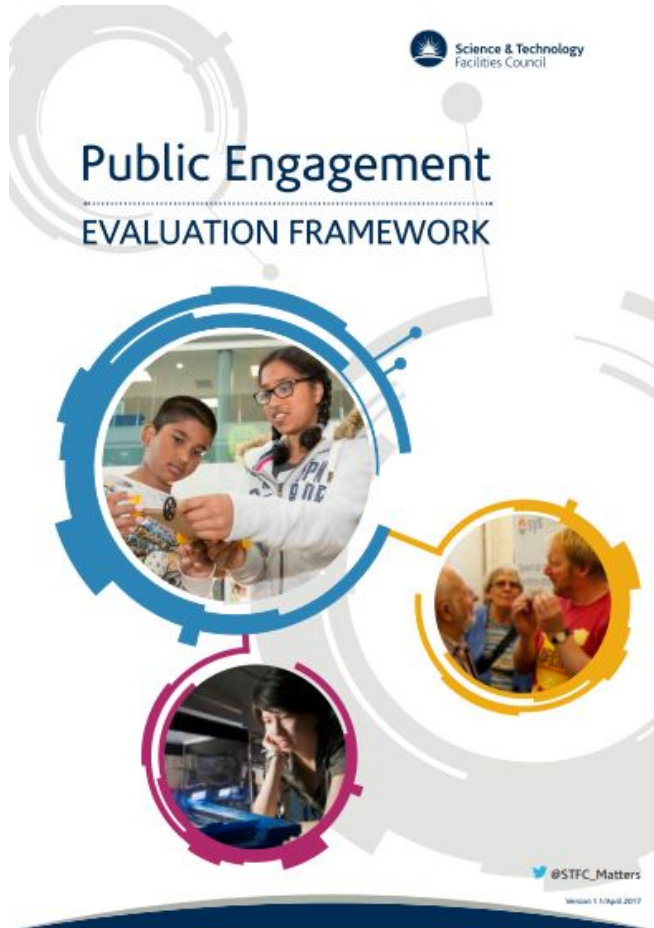
After listening to this talk, which of the below topics do you feel confident explaining to a friend?

A... B.....C... D...

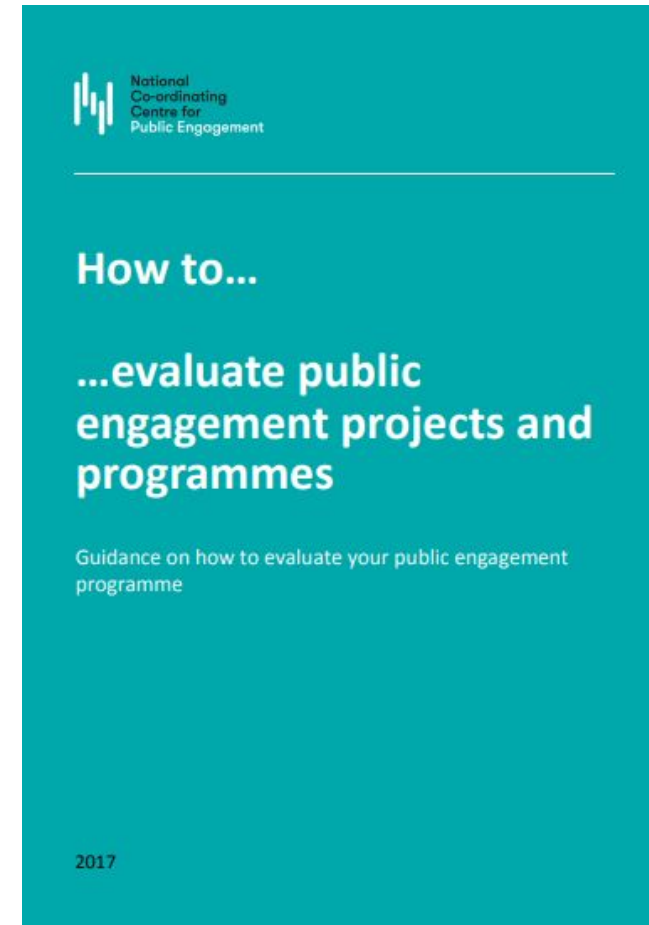
Reporting your findings



Frameworks to Design your plan – more examples



Science & Technology Facilities Council
UK Research and Innovation

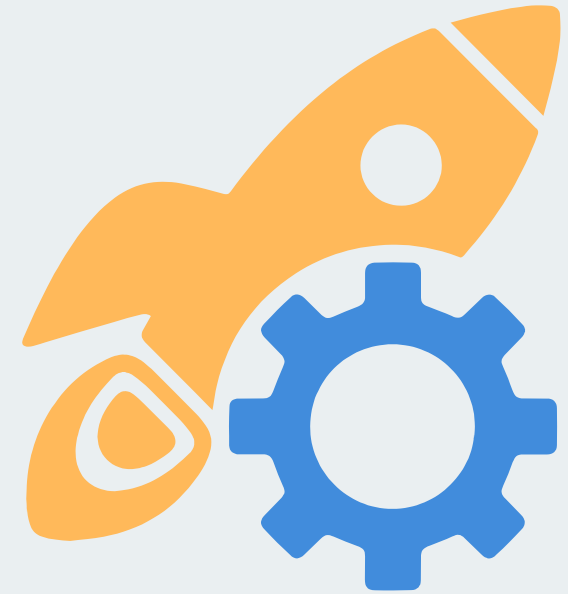


National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement,
How to evaluate public engagement projects and programmes

Key to Public Engagement Success



- **Plan:** don't wait for opportunities to come your way-- the best Scholars proactively make a plan
- **Time:** Identifying and pursuing opportunities takes time.
 - Reaching out to conferences, peers, organisations that offer volunteering opportunities
 - Researching your audience and preparing your materials
- **Know the different types of opportunities**
- **Evaluate!**
 - Creating an evaluation plan is key
- **Discussion:** Recognise the rewards!
 - What are some of the rewards to embarking on these activities?





Final thoughts

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Final Thoughts



1 Public Engagement is a Two-Way Street

2 The 3Ps: Purpose, People, Place

3 Stories Stick! Build your Narrative

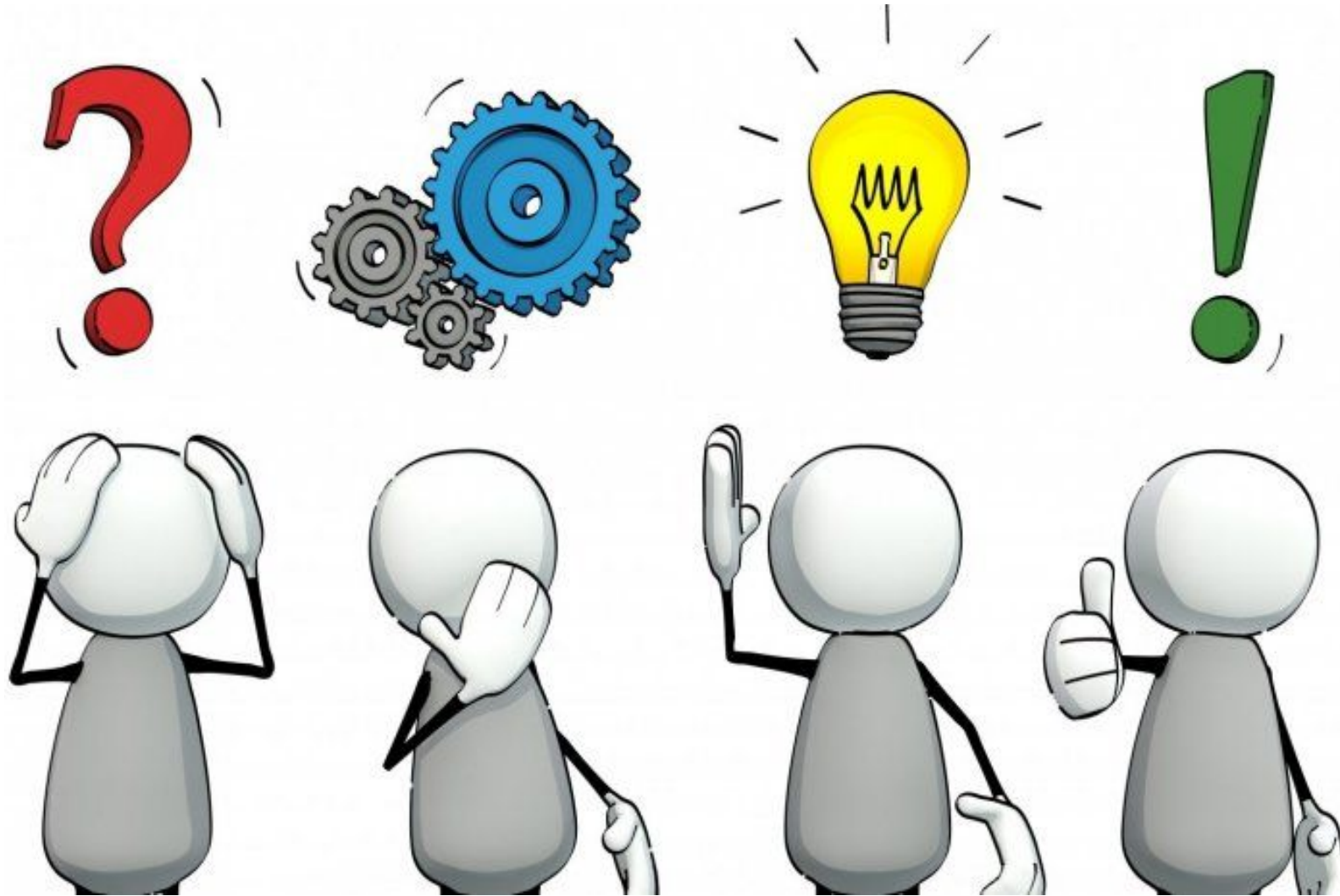
4 Presenting your Research: Practice Makes Perfect

Learning Portfolio reflections



Group discussion: what have you learnt in relation to your Learning Portfolio aims?

Reflections





Thank you & Evaluation form

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Impact – What to measure



Impact relates to long term change. Longer term impacts, can be categorised into these three types:

- Conceptual impacts: these can be thought of as changes to how people think.
- Capacity building impacts: these can be thought of as changes in what people do.
- Instrumental impacts: these can be thought of as changes in how things work.

Example:

- Short term: Participants act as oral health ambassadors, sharing their knowledge and understanding with others.
- Long term: Improved oral health amongst participants, and their families and friends.
- Think about: How can I measure this?

Gathering and interpreting evidence



What do you want to know? For example, it may be that you are interested in outputs (did you do what you planned to do), outcomes (what changes did the activity cause or contribute to), impact (have you made a long term impact), or all of the above?

- Example evaluation questions
- To what extent were the desired changes met?
- Who benefitted?
- Who didn't benefit?
- To what extent can changes be attributed to the activity?
- Conceptual impacts: these can be thought of as changes to how people think.
- Capacity building impacts: these can be thought of as changes in what people do.
- Instrumental impacts: these can be thought of as changes in how things work.

Example:

- Has the programme improved oral health knowledge of the participants?
- Has it had an influence beyond the participant group?
- Did the co-produced activities meet the needs of the target group?
- To what extent has the inclusion of research findings improved participants approach to oral health?
- Was the training appropriate that led to the right delivery for young people in the schools?

Top Tip: Planning is so crucial because by outlining these questions you help narrow to what's important and ensure it's being evaluated!