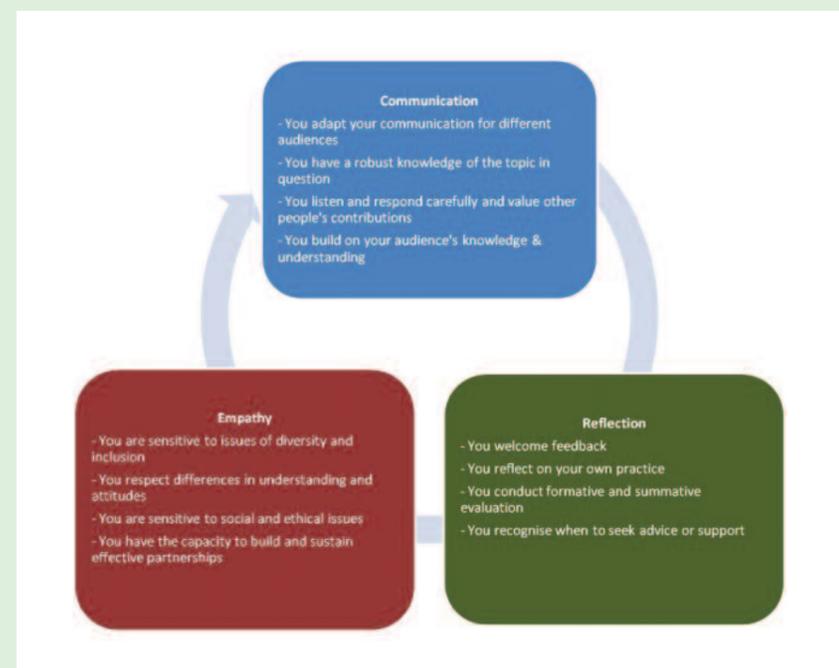


The public engagement lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework was developed by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE), the Beacons for Public Engagement, Research Councils UK (RCUK) and Vitae, in consultation with individuals and organisations with an interest in public engagement.

The public engagement lens was informed by the NCCPE Public Engagement Attributes Framework (PEAF). The PEAF captures some of the key attributes needed to effectively engage with the public and is organised into three interlocking domains: Communication, Reflection and Empathy.

For further information on the Public Engagement Attributes Framework visit www.publicengagement.ac.uk/what/skills-and-attributes

Training and development materials relating to this lens are available at www.vitae.ac.uk/rdfenses



For further information about the range of Vitae activities go to www.vitae.ac.uk or contact website@vitae.ac.uk

To find out how to get involved in public engagement and why it matters visit the NCCPE at www.publicengagement.ac.uk or contact nccpe.enquiries@uwe.ac.uk

For further information about RCUK public engagement activities visit www.rcuk.ac.uk/per

To protect and maintain the integrity of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and the Researcher Development Statement (RDS)¹ and to ensure a consistent approach to the development of lenses on the RDF, anyone wishing to create a lens on the RDF should seek permission from Vitae, and must adhere to the RDF conditions of use². Enquiries regarding the development of a lens on the RDF can be directed to rdf@vitae.ac.uk

Vitae is supported by Research Councils UK (RCUK), managed by CRAC: The Career Development Organisation and delivered in partnership with regional Hub host universities



¹ www.vitae.ac.uk/rds

² www.vitae.ac.uk/conditionsofuse



Public engagement lens on the Researcher Development Framework

Overview

The Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) underpins a major new approach to developing world-class researchers. The framework has been developed by and for researchers working in higher education as an aid to planning, promoting and enhancing professional and career development. It articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of successful researchers and encourages all researchers to realise their potential.

This is one of a series of lenses on the Researcher Development Framework.

For further information about the Researcher Development Framework visit www.vitae.ac.uk/rdf

Further information about lenses on the Researcher Development Framework is available at www.vitae.ac.uk/rdfenses

For further information on why public engagement matters visit www.publicengagement.ac.uk

The public engagement lens on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework has been developed to focus on the knowledge, behaviours and attributes that you develop as a researcher and how these can be acquired through or used in public engagement activities.

Public engagement should be part of every researcher's portfolio of skills and the public engagement lens on the Researcher Development Framework can demonstrate to researchers and higher education institutions how this can be achieved.

There are many reasons for researchers to engage with the public. Public engagement can:

- improve the quality and impact of research
- build trust, understanding and collaboration with the public
- challenge assumptions, sharpen thinking and inject energy
- develop skills that can aid researchers' employment and promotion prospects
- increase research's relevance to, and impact on, society

Defining public engagement

Within this lens, public engagement is defined as a 'myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit'. NCCPE, 2010

"My public engagement experiences have substantially enhanced my understanding of the links between fundamental research and the needs of UK plc"

Professor Paddy Regan, University of Surrey



Public engagement lens on the Researcher Development Framework

“The most important benefits I have gained from these public engagements are to see the influence of my research, and to have gained the communications skills to be able to get the research across to any audience I am put in front of.”

Dr John Drury, University of Sussex

Working with people outside higher education requires an ability to discuss research with a variety of audiences to build trust, understanding and collaboration, work with others to develop effective projects and effective partnerships.

Engaging with the public enables researchers to use and develop their communication skills including presenting, writing, listening and facilitating. To develop effective engagement work requires an ability to recognise the different purposes for engaging with others, and ensure that the engagement work is appropriate to the purpose and the audience.

Engaging with the public enables researchers to develop an understanding of the social context of their work (including ethical implications and public attitudes) and helps researchers understand how to ensure their research has relevance to and impact on society.

Engagement projects range from collaborative projects, consultation projects, and informing projects that seek to inspire and engage people. Public engagement projects develop researchers' understanding of how to engage with people outside of their research group, and will develop skills of empathy, listening, communication and respect for others.

The majority of public engagement activity requires an ability to plan and deliver, and provides a relatively easy way to use and develop these skills. It can enable a researcher to develop and utilise their evaluation skills.

An understanding of public engagement as one of the key pathways to impact will enable engaged researchers to communicate impact more effectively through funding proposals, Research Excellence Framework (REF) impact statements and case studies.

“You can only truly know your research when you can explain it easily to anyone.”

Charlie Mydlarz, Salford University

“We developed an engagement process over seven months....the benefit to our research came from harnessing this local knowledge to generate a distinctive research agenda for urban sustainability. Issues had emerged on crime, safety and community cohesion which we had not expected.”

Professor Malcolm Eames, Research Chair with the Low Carbon Institute, based at the Welsh School of Architecture

Engaging with the public can stimulate the development of a researcher's subject knowledge; provide an additional source of information, knowledge or expertise to feed into their research; and help develop a better understanding of the relevance of their research to society.

Public engagement uses and develops critical and original thinking and can enable a researcher to approach their research from a new perspective. A key part of public engagement is conducting appropriate evaluation and using problem solving skills, which are key skills to apply within research.

Developing an inquiring mind and being open to new sources of ideas is an integral part of understanding and responding to the publics' views on their research. Public engagement can help increase a researcher's awareness of their research and how this impacts on society.

Engaged researchers report that the public's interest in their research reignites their enthusiasm and passion for their research area; is a great confidence booster; and may provide new perspectives on their research. Public engagement helps researchers pro-actively consider the ethical and social implications of their research to ensure research integrity.

Public engagement can provide an opportunity to apply and develop skills in running projects, which can utilise and develop skills such as time management, preparation and prioritisation.

Public engagement uses and develops transferable skills such as communication, team work, creativity, networking and project management. This can enhance employability both within and outside academia, raise researchers' profiles; and allow them to enhance their reputation and relationships.

“Public engagement re-enthused me about my research. It was fun, new and creative.”

Bennett Young, University of Manchester

