



## **Towards an open research university: extending the OU's “ecology of openness”**

Dr Richard Holliman

Open University Champion for Public Engagement with Research  
Engaging Research Blog: <http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/per>

# Overview

- A little scene setting
- From open science to open research
- The OU's "ecology of openness"
- Connecting research, UK policy and support with RCUK's PER Catalyst initiative
- Framing organisational change at the OU
- Self-assessing the OU
- Reflecting on OU approaches, interventions & challenges
- Q&A

# Open science: Making science public; making public science; publics making science

## Investigating Science Communication in the Information Age

Implications for public engagement  
and popular media

4.2



## Practising Science Communication in the Information Age

Theorising professional practices

3.2



1.3



**(In)authentic sciences  
and (im)partial publics:  
(re)constructing the science  
outreach and public  
engagement agenda**

edited by Richard Holliman, Elizabeth Whitelegg,  
Eileen Scanlon, Sam Smidt, and Jeff Thomas

edited by Richard Holliman, Jeff Thomas, Sam Smidt,  
Eileen Scanlon, and Elizabeth Whitelegg



# Mainstreaming open research?

## Some “starters for ten...”

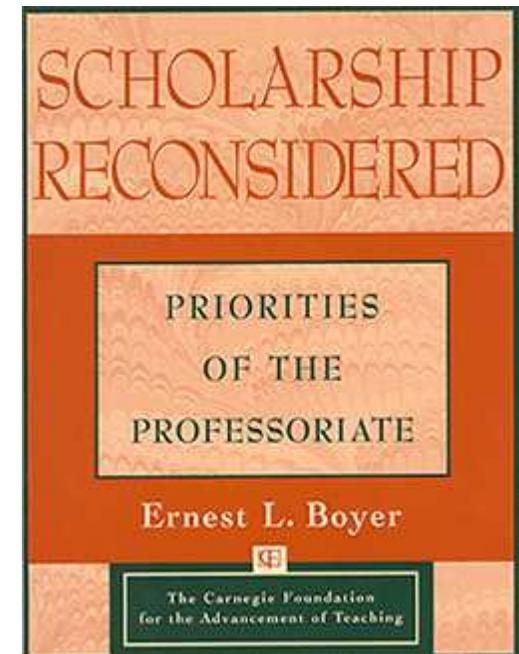
- What is a university for in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?
- What should academic scholarship encompass?
- Should citizens have roles in shaping research priorities and contributing to research?
  - How should these contributions be supported & recognised?
- How should (open) research be funded?
- How should excellence in (open) research be recognised & rewarded?
- Is there a shared understanding of open research?
- Is open research a valued activity?

# Scholarship reconsidered

- discovery – open research
- integration – open publishing
- application – open engagement
- teaching – open education

(Boyer, 1990, 1996; Pearce *et al.*, 2010)

- mapping (changes to) academic practices



# Interviewee

I don't want to be a private intellectual. Too much is real, too much at stake, in the public sphere. The interaction between the scholar and the world should not be solely within the classroom or the lab or through the occasional snippet quoted by a journalist.

All the tools are at hand for scholars to be public intellectuals. It truly does not require a rocket scientist to communicate with the entire world online.

But it may require someone who is not a scientist or scholar to believe he or she has the right and privilege to express and develop ideas without first seeking peer permission to publish those ideas.

# From analogue towards digital scholarship

“...forms of scholarship that are more information-intensive, data-intensive, distributed, collaborative, and multidisciplinary”

(Borgman, 2008)

## Comment

ROAD MAPS FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup>-CENTURY RESEARCH IN SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

**From analogue to digital scholarship: implications for science communication researchers**

arce, *et al.* 2010)

# Open scholarship: facilitating lifelong engagement with research

“The Open Scholar is someone who makes their intellectual projects and processes digitally visible and who invites and encourages ongoing criticism of their work and secondary uses of any or all parts of it—at any stage of its development.”

(Burton, 2009, [Academic Evolution](#))

# Challenges of open science/research

## *Open access, open source, open peer review, open data*



## Building on History: Religion in London

*Exploring religious histories and heritages in London*



### Future project development ...

Posted on [January 21, 2014](#) by [admin](#)

The funding for our project has now come to an end and so we are currently exploring options for future funding and project development. We would very much welcome your ideas and suggestions in these regards. In the meantime, please also visit our *Building on*

#### Recent Posts

- [Future project development ...](#)
- [Exploring Religious History in Finchley at Avenue House](#)
- [Podcast for the Building on](#)

# An “ecology of openness”

- open and distance learning institution
- open to people, places, methods and ideas
- open educational resources
- McAndrew & Scanlon (2013, *Science*, **342**, pp. 1350-1)

## EDUCATIONFORUM

### EDUCATION

## Open Learning at a Distance: Lessons for Struggling MOOCs

Patrick McAndrew\* and Eileen Scanlon

Free education is changing how people think about learning online. The rise of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) (1) shows that large numbers of learners can be reached.



Support for nontraditional students, team-based quality control, and assessment design are critical.

Laboratory builds a collection of tools to combine remote access, virtual experiments, and citizen science (8) into the curriculum.

Advice: Interactions between student-teacher,

# Open Learn; [www.open.edu/openlearn](http://www.open.edu/openlearn) 2013 = 5.2m unique browser visits



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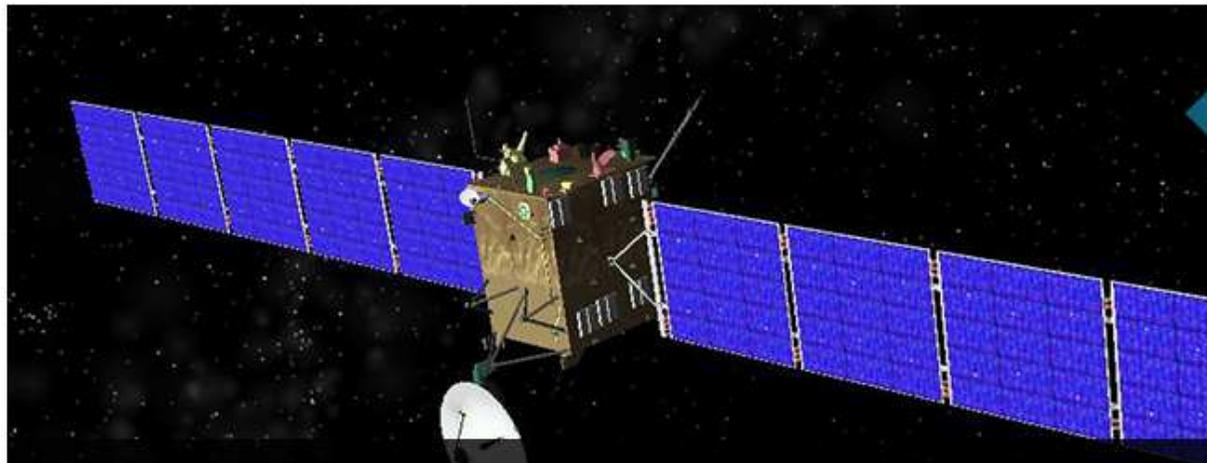
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### Rosetta: The comet-chaser wakes up for action

As spacecraft Rosetta awakes from a decade-long sleep, we find out how the comet-landing mission will unfold. [Read more](#) >



Rosetta: The comet-chaser wakes up fo...



To die or not to die?



OU on the BBC: Hidden histories

# YouTube; [youtube.com/user/TheOpenUniversity](https://youtube.com/user/TheOpenUniversity) 2013 = 2.4m unique visitors + 5.1m views

The screenshot shows the YouTube channel page for 'The Open University'. The header includes the YouTube logo, a search bar, and an 'Upload' button. The channel banner features the 'Open.edu' logo and the text 'The Open University on YouTube'. Below the banner, the channel name 'TheOpenUniversity' is displayed with a 'Subscribe' button showing 15,527 subscribers. The main content area features a video player for 'International Development Office, The Open University' with 37,092 views from 10 months ago. The video description states: 'The Open University has been committed to International Development for over twenty years. We are globally recognised for our teaching and pioneering research within the sector, and for driving innovation. Uniquely, The Open University also helps deliver development programmes in partnership with governments, NGOs, funding institutions and local partners. Our programmes across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia address areas such as frontline health, teacher education and English language teaching. We work where there is the greatest need: where our expertise can impact the many, rather than the few,.... [Read more](#)'. The right sidebar lists 'Other Open University channels' (OUlearn, OULife, OUresearch) and 'Related channels on YouTube' (MinutePhysics, Khan Academy, SciShow, SmarterEveryDay, CrashCourse, CGP Grey). The left sidebar shows 'What To Watch' and 'BEST OF YOUTUBE' categories. A 'Sign In' prompt is visible in the bottom left corner.

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2013 = 1.7m unique visitors + 8.7m downloads



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## Volcanoes - Historic eruptions and their climatic effects

A look at climatic effects that have occurred from the eruption of volcanoes through history.

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# An open research university?



The OU is a world leader in open learning. In developing and implementing a strategy for public engagement with research we will foster an ‘ecology of openness’ ([Wilks and Pearce, 2011](#)), changing the culture of our research, and aligning this with our mission to be ‘open to people, places, methods and ideas’.

# mainstreaming open research?

Concordat for  
Engaging the Public  
with Research

A set of principles drawn up by the Funders of  
Research in the UK

1. A strategic commitment to public engagement
2. Researchers are recognised and valued for excellent PER
3. Appropriate training, support and opportunities
4. Regular reviews of sector's progress



# Beacons for Public Engagement

# EDGE Tool

## Excellence with Impact

We help universities engage with the public

- Home**
- Public Engagement**
  - Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research
  - Schools and Young People
  - Public Engagement Resources for Researchers
  - Best practice guides and publications
  - Public Attitudes to Science
  - RCUK School-University Partnerships Initiative
- Research Policy**
- Research Careers**
- Public Engagement**
- Knowledge Exchange and Impact**
- International**
- Press and Media**
- Publications**

Home > Public Engagement > Beacons for Public Engagement

### Beacons for Public Engagement

Beacons for Public Engagement are university-based collaborative centres to help support, recognise, reward and build capacity for public engagement work across the UK. Together with our partners, the UK funding councils and the Wellcome Trust, we are investing into this initiative in order to support a step-change in recognition for public engagement across the higher education sector. There are six Beacons around the UK, and one National Co-ordinating Centre.

For more information about the initiative read our [launch brochure](#) or visit the [National Co-ordinating Centre website](#).

An independent review of the Beacons has now been carried out by People Science and Policy. A copy of the review document is available [here](#).

The Beacons were asked to provide final reports and evaluations to document the lessons they learned. These can be accessed [here](#).

#### The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement

The National Co-ordinating Centre is made up of the University of Bristol, University of the West of England and other partners. The National Co-ordinating Centre will build networks across the other Beacons and provide a single point of contact as well as an overview of their activities. It will also work strategically with key national partners who are also interested in understanding and listening to audiences better and generating knowledge with them. These organisations, including the BBC, the Museums, Libraries and Archives, and the volunteering organisation v, AlphaGalileo and Involve will help to professionalise how Higher Education engages with the public.

Visit the [National Co-ordinating Centre website](#).

#### The Beacons for Public Engagement

##### Beacon North East

Beacon North East is a partnership between Newcastle University, Durham University and the Centre for Life and local community groups, to pioneer a series of conversations informing key research issues such as: energy and the environment; social inclusion and social justice; and ageing and vitality.

##### University of Manchester / Manchester Metropolitan / University of Salford / Museum of Science and Industry / Manchester: Knowledge Capital

The Manchester Beacon's activities will be shaped and informed by the creativity and dynamism of the people of Manchester and Salford to ensure that all members of the community, particularly residents from the poorest and most excluded neighbourhoods, benefit from their work.

They will focus on "reaching out", "listening to" and "learning from" local people. Their programme of activities will be delivered in partnership with a wide range of local businesses, sports clubs, cultural venues, community groups and media organisations.

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# 1 narrative: an open research university

## 3 themes: 9 sub-plots

Clarify your  
**PURPOSE**  
for engaging publics  
with your research

- **Mission**
- **Leadership**
- **Communication**

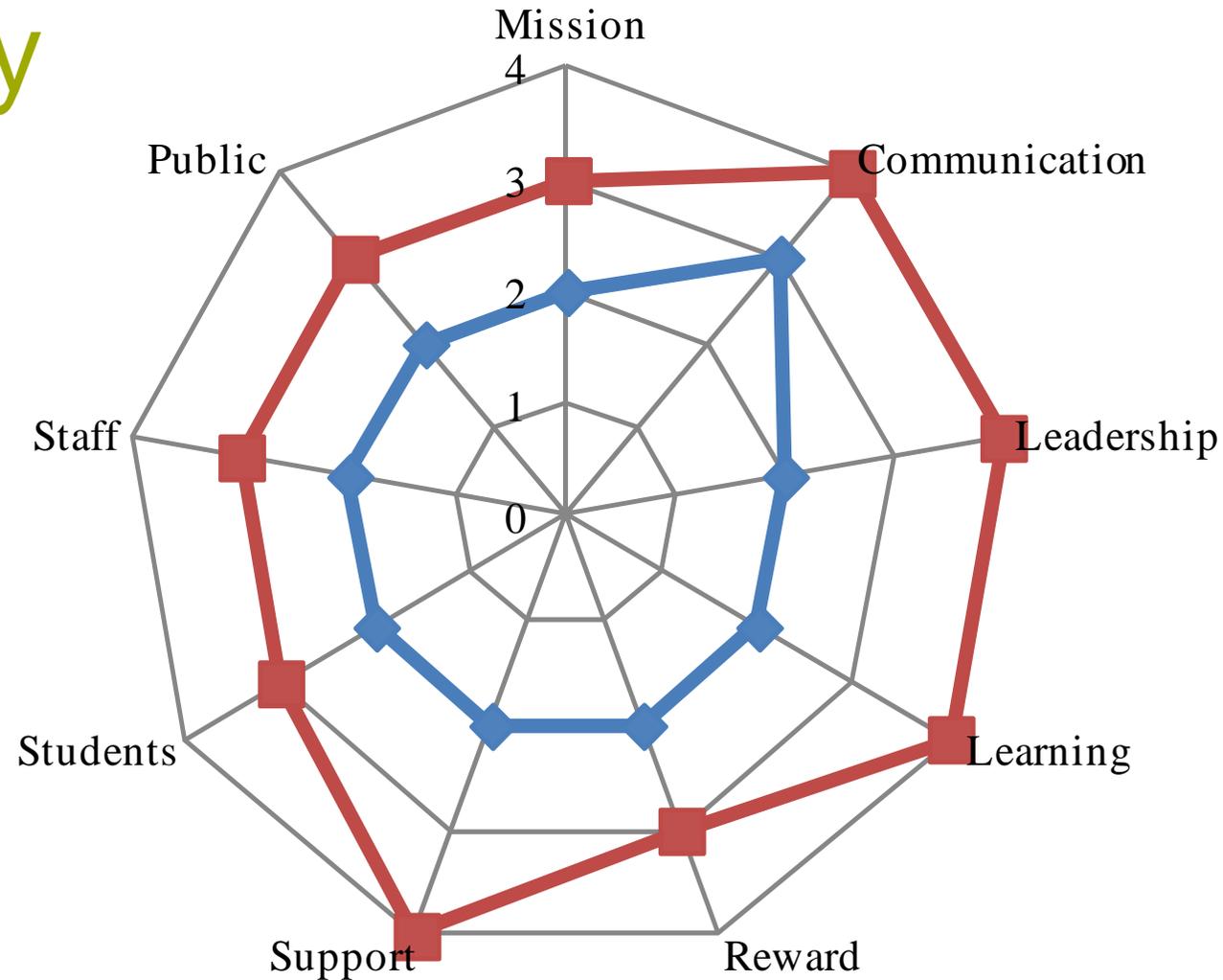
Invest in  
**PROCESSES**  
that support good quality  
public engagement  
with research

- **Support**
- **Learning**
- **Reward**

Focus on effective  
support and involvement of  
**PEOPLE**

- **Staff**
- **Students**
- **Publics**

# Towards an open research university



—◆— How embedded is PER at the Open University? - 2011 assessment

—■— Where does the Open University want to be in March 2015?

# initial diagnostic exploration

- mapping PER strategies, practices, resources & support mechanisms
- investigating processes of PER innovation
- reviewed internal/external strategic documentation + research literature
- 15 interviews with ADRs and Research Centre Directors
- CROS and PIRLS survey
- defining and valuing PER
  - ‘communicating to...’ vs. ‘engaging with...’
  - PER vs. PE vs. research impact
- few PER leadership roles & lacking strategy
- issues of control
- diversity, e.g. people, places, methods and ideas
- quality and performance
- self-censorship of researchers

# communication vs. engagement

“I've been really shocked by at various levels across the university is the lack of understanding between dissemination and impact.

Not helped by the work we do with the BBC in a way that could have impact, all sorts of things we do could have impact. But it's not the same...”

# communication vs. engagement

“I think we should be much more proactive in defending large-scale public engagement, including broadcast work and [to] defend that as legitimate impact.

I have actually worked with a video... a, sort of, TV director who had worked for [XXX] and it was a nightmare, frankly.

And that is what I've heard from every single other academic [...] that it's a constant negotiation between your academic complexity and integrity and their need for nice headlines...”

# quality and (lack of) recognition

“...there’s a conflicting degree of un-clarity as to how you measure these things...

in terms of what we do, I would argue it does have public benefit. But to measure that public benefit would be an extremely, well in the first place complex and time consuming, but also misguided process to kind of nail down well the amount of benefit from...

I think it’s fair to say that we probably slightly under appreciate people who do that type of activity but probably no more than we under appreciate people who excel in research...”

# Focal points for embedding public engagement with research

## PURPOSE

Embedding a commitment to public engagement with research in institutional mission and strategy, and championing that commitment at all levels

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>MISSION</b></p>       | <p>Sign-up to the NCCPE Manifesto for Public Engagement.</p> <p>Create a shared understanding of the purpose, value, meaning and role of public engagement with research <b>with staff</b> and embed this in the OU's <b>strategy</b> &amp; mission.</p> <p>Working definition of public engagement <b>with research</b>.</p>                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>LEADERSHIP</b></p>    | <p>Introduce a University Champion for Public Engagement with Research.</p> <p>Support engaged research <b>champions</b> across the organisation and departments.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <p><b>COMMUNICATION</b></p> | <p>Communicate consistent, clear messages to validate, support and celebrate public engagement with research, both within the OU and externally. (e.g. <b>blog</b>, <b>Spotlight</b>, <b>Awards Scheme</b>, <b>Seed Funding</b> call, <b>publication</b>. PER Fellows, NCCPE PE Ambassadors).</p> <p><b>Participatory design</b> of digital infrastructure to facilitate open engagement with members of the public, user communities, stakeholders and community organisations.</p> |

# (distributed) Leadership

- PVC (RSQ)
- First OU Champion for PER
  - seconded to the RSQ Unit
  - ‘third stream professional’?
- Connecting strategy and action
  - Engaged project management
  - Mission creep
- Raising awareness vs. identifying, assessing and showcasing excellence
- 9 CAUs
- Departments
  - Research Centres
- Roles and responsibilities
- Development plans
- Will there be a 2<sup>nd</sup> PER Champion?

# complementing the OU mission

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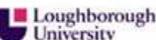


national co-ordinating centre for public engagement

We help universities engage with the public

HOME WHAT IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT? WHY DOES IT MATTER? HOW TO DO IT HOW TO SUPPORT IT HOW WE CAN HELP ABOUT US

### Who's signed the manifesto?

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br>Anglia Ruskin University<br>Cambridge Chelmsford Peterborough<br><a href="#">Anglia Ruskin University</a>                                  | <br>Aston University<br>Birmingham<br><a href="#">Aston University</a>                         | <br>BATH SPA UNIVERSITY<br><a href="#">Bath Spa University</a>                             |
| <br>BU<br>Bournemouth University<br><a href="#">Bournemouth University</a>                                                                     | <br>diamond<br>Diamond Light Source<br><a href="#">Diamond Light Source</a>                    | <br>Durham University<br><a href="#">Durham University</a>                                 |
| <br>Edge Hill University<br><a href="#">Edge Hill University</a>                                                                               | <br>Edinburgh Napier University<br><a href="#">Edinburgh Napier University</a>                 | <br>GCU<br>Glasgow Caledonian University<br><a href="#">Glasgow Caledonian University</a>  |
| <br>Goldsmiths<br>UNIVERSITY OF LONDON<br><a href="#">Goldsmiths, University of London</a>                                                    | <br>HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY<br><a href="#">Heriot Watt University</a>                          | <br>Imperial College London<br><a href="#">Imperial College London</a>                    |
| <br>IOE<br>Leading education and social research<br>Institute of Education<br>University of London<br><a href="#">Institute of Education</a> | <br>LANCASTER UNIVERSITY<br><a href="#">Lancaster University</a>                             | <br>LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY<br><a href="#">Liverpool John Moores University</a> |
| <br>Loughborough University<br><a href="#">Loughborough University</a>                                                                       | <br>Manchester Metropolitan University<br><a href="#">Manchester Metropolitan University</a> | <br>Newcastle University<br><a href="#">Newcastle University</a>                         |
| <br>northumbria UNIVERSITY<br><a href="#">Northumbria University</a>                                                                         | <br>The Open University<br><a href="#">Open university</a>                                   | <br>OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY<br><a href="#">Oxford Brookes University</a>               |

### ALSO IN THIS SECTION

- [The case for engagement](#)
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### Manifesto

Find out [what these universities have signed up to](#) (and add your university to the list).

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# Communication



- “Research with people at the centre”
- Working definition of “engaging research”



the **processes** of conducting research, and in the **products** of that research.



|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>REWARD</b>   | Recognise and reward staff involvement within <b>recruitment, promotion, workload plans</b> and <b>performance reviews</b> , and celebrate success with <b>awards</b> or prizes.                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>SUPPORT</b>  | Mapping current activity and strategies; <b>research-led</b> .<br><br>Co-ordinate the delivery of public engagement with research to maximise efficiency, target support, improve quality, foster innovation, join up thinking and monitor involvement and impact. (e.g. <b>self-organising networks, SUPI, evaluation</b> ). |
| <b>LEARNING</b> | Offer opportunities for learning and reflection and provide support for continuing professional development and training; <b>generic vs. bespoke; impact vs. PER; induction; not just PGRs</b> ; connect with existing schemes.                                                                                               |

## Focal points for embedding public engagement with research

### PROCESS

Investing in systems and processes that facilitate involvement, maximise impact and help to ensure quality and value for money

HOME

WHAT IS PUBLIC  
ENGAGEMENT?

WHY DOES IT  
MATTER?

HOW TO  
DO IT

HOW TO  
SUPPORT IT

HOW WE  
CAN HELP

ABOUT US

## Engage Competition 2014



Are you involved in public engagement with research? Have you been involved in a great project that you want to share? Why not enter the Engage 2014 Competition.

The NCCPE are running this national competition to find and celebrate high quality public engagement with research projects.

Across the UK researchers are engaging the public in lots of different ways and for lots of different reasons. We want to recognise and reward great quality examples of public engagement in practice, and we want you to get involved.

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- Awards scheme
  - criteria for assessment
- Seed funding scheme: evidence

# Focal points for embedding public engagement with research

## PEOPLE

Involving staff, students and representatives of the public and using their energy, expertise and feedback to shape the strategy and its delivery

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>STAFF</b>    | <p>Ensure that all staff – in academic and support roles – have <b>opportunities</b> to get involved in informal and formal ways.</p> <p>Calls for <b>seed-funded projects</b>, reviewed and supported.</p>                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>STUDENTS</b> | <p>Proactively include and involve students in shaping the mission and in the delivery of the strategy, and maximise <b>opportunities</b> for their involvement.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>PUBLIC</b>   | <p>Invest in people, processes and infrastructure to support and nurture the involvement of individuals and organisations external to the OU, e.g. SUPI and <b>DTSA</b>; Participation Now and <b>opendemocracy.net</b>; <b>Brilliant Club</b> and PGRs; <b>Earthwatch</b> and citizen science; Tate and art history; CRC and Girl Guides; Enduring Love? and Relate.</p> |

# Open research?

## Starters for ten...

- What is a university for?
- What should scholarship encompass?
- Should citizens have roles in shaping research priorities and contributing to research?
  - How should these contributions be recognised?
- How should research be funded?
- How should excellence be recognised and rewarded?
- Is there a shared understanding of public engagement with research?
- Is public engagement with research a valued activity?

**FROM  
PEER REVIEW  
TO  
MERIT REVIEW**

# Any questions?

## An engaging thesis?

[http://nccpe.wordpress.com/  
an-engaging-thesis](http://nccpe.wordpress.com/an-engaging-thesis)

### NCCPE's Blog

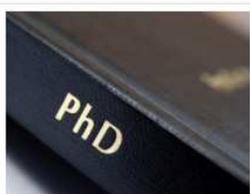
Exploring how universities engage with the public



Home About An engaging thesis

## An engaging thesis

As part of our Engaged Futures consultation, we have asked people to share their visions of what the engaged university might be like in the future. Here Richard Holliman, University Champion for Public Engagement with Research, The Open University ([Richard.Holliman@open.ac.uk](mailto:Richard.Holliman@open.ac.uk), [www.open.ac.uk/blogs/per](http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/per)) shares his views.



Imagine it is January 2033. You are one of a small team of prospective co-supervisors for a postgraduate research project. The supervision team has advertised for a new postgraduate research student to begin work in autumn 2033. The studentship is fully funded, covering fees and a stipend for living expenses. It is based on a '1+3



## Engaging Research

[http://www.open.ac.uk/  
blogs/per](http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/per)



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### Engaging Research

An Open Research University: Embedding public engagement within the research culture of the OU

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## An open research university

Posted on [Wednesday, 17 July 2013](#) by [Richard Holliman](#)

### Research with people at the centre

Champion's blog; star date 2013.07.17. This is the blog of the OU's RCUK-funded Catalyst, 'An open research university'. But our mission isn't to boldly go. Rather, our three-year mission is to embed the principles, values and reflective practices of public engagement within the research culture of Open University researchers. This requires all OU researchers to think more strategically about how we plan our research.

This requires us to think (yet again, I know) about culture change...

- "If you're the University's Champion for Public Engagement with Research can you tell me how many people it takes to change a university's research culture?"
- I guess the obvious answer is, "I don't know at the moment, but I do know that those involved really have to want to change."



Dr Richard Holliman,  
The Open  
University's  
Champion for Public  
Engagement with  
Research