

CASE STUDY: National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement

Embedding public engagement in higher education institutions

About

Involve was commissioned by The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) to design and develop toolkits for senior managers and staff of higher education institutions, in order to help embed public engagement within their organisations.

Background

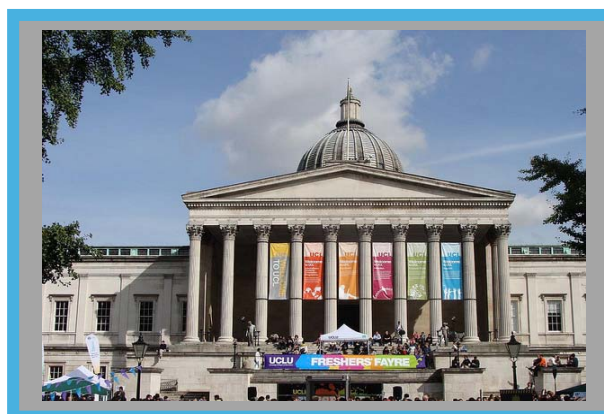
The NCCPE is part of the Beacons for Public Engagement Scheme, which was set up in 2007 to create a culture within UK Higher Education where public engagement is formalized and embedded as a valued and recognized activity for both students and staff at all levels.

Purpose

The NCCPE has developed a Manifesto for Public Engagement which senior managers can sign to show their commitment to embedding engagement into the work of their institution. The two toolkits, designed by Involve sit alongside the manifesto to inspire and equip managers and staff to put this commitment into practice.

The intended outcomes of the toolkits are:

- To provide an online resource of practical tools and case studies to equip managers to be able to support their staff and students in embedding public engagement
- To inspire and equip university staff to make public engagement part of their work



Name of project:

National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement

Type of project:

Embedding public engagement through organisation and cultural change

Date:

2010

Partners:

National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement

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Links to relevant sources:

The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement
www.publicengagement.ac.uk

About Involve:

Involve believes that honest and open dialogue between citizens and government strengthens democracy, helps make better decisions and leads to more innovative and efficient public services. We work with government, elected representatives and civil society organisations to open new channels for dialogue at all levels of government and society.

Project Activities

The project began with an iterative consultation process that built on a framework around 9 focal points that had already been identified by the NCCPE as crucial for culture change in universities.

The focal points are categorised in three groups:

- Clarifying your **purpose** for engaging with the public: mission, leadership and communication
- Investing in **processes** that support good quality engagement: support, learning and recognition
- Focusing on how effectively **people** are involved and supported: staff, students and public

A number of face-to-face and phone consultations were held with staff from a wide range of universities and funders from across the UK, ensuring the content and style of the toolkits were well informed.

In collaboration with the NCCPE, Involve developed online resources for both practitioners and senior managers. This includes a “**how to do it**” section, which provides operational staff, researchers, teachers and students with the resources to embed public engagement in their activities. Involve produced descriptions of public engagement methods, engagement guides and inspiring case studies of public engagement activities already happening at universities across the UK. The “**how to support it**” section equips managers with tools to support their staff in public engagement activities. A self assessment tool based on the 9 focal points allows users to assess their institution's support for engagement and to identify areas where they would like to see change. This so-called EDGE tool maps these dimensions against a scale: 'Embryonic', 'Developing', 'Gripping' and 'Embedded'. The website provides tips and information to help organisations improve engagement activities to their aspired level, by providing Stories of Change, case studies of the organisational change processes of a few of the [Beacons for Public Engagement](#), and dedicated Planning for Change pages which provide more in-depth information on each of the 9 focal points.



For more information on this project or the work Involve does, please contact us.

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Results

The project resulted in a useful online resource for staff and students of higher education institutions, with guidance and tools to support them with making public engagement part of their daily work.

The outputs include the [self assessment tool for senior managers](#), method descriptions and engagement guides. The Manifesto and the toolkits were launched at the NCCPE Engagement Conference, on 7 and 8 December 2010.

'How to support it' tools:

<http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support/self-assess>

'How to do it' tools

<http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/how>