

NERC Consultation Event 15th October 2019

Introduction

The NCCPE was invited to facilitate a consultation event for NERC as part of the council's activity to consult widely about the NERC public engagement strategy and its potential implementation. The event was designed:

- To present and receive feedback on NERC's new public engagement with research strategy
- To explore opportunities with potential partners to achieve the strategy aims
- To celebrate research that has successfully demonstrated purposeful engagement in the research community.
- To explore ways to keep the conversations going with the community

Seventy four delegates attended the event, excluding twelve representatives from NERC and NCCPE.

- 34 different HEIs or research centres were represented
- 15 delegates attended from outside the HE sector, representing environmental organisations (6) or organisations specialising in public engagement (9)
- Four funders other than NERC were represented and one government department (BEIS)

This report summarises the feedback offered at the event by delegates.

Summary

Delegates were keen to support NERC to deliver their public engagement strategy. Each table explored this in depth, but some themes emerged across these discussions. These included:

- **Reviewing how funding is allocated and distributed:**
 - Ensuring that engaged research is valued through the peer review process, and that the reviewers include public engagement professionals and community organisations
 - Encouraging community organisations to be Co-Is on the project, and funded appropriately
 - Making the reviewing of Pathways to Impact more robust, and turning down projects where the engagement plans are not appropriate
- **Investing in partnership development including:**
 - Helping researchers and community organisations to find one another
 - Resourcing partnership development
 - Supporting researchers to be ethical in their partnership working, ensuring relationships are not forgotten at the end of the funding period, and providing funding to support ongoing work
 - Working in partnership with other sectors, to learn from their approaches, and to develop longer term work together

- **Being serious about diversity and inclusion**
 - Ensuring that NERC work alongside others who can support EDI within research organisations
 - Working alongside diverse groups to innovate more effective approaches to inclusion, with a view to listening and responding to concerns, and solutions
 - Embedding EDI into all aspects of funding and research, including within peer review processes
 - Running specific campaigns that engage people where they are, and with the topics that motivate and interest them
- **Building capacity for high quality engagement**
 - Recognising that engaged research takes time, and investing enough resource to support this
 - Integrating professional development opportunities for researchers at every level
 - Showcasing effective practice and signposting relevant resources
- **Working across the research landscape to embed change**
 - Working alongside UKRI, Wellcome and others to share learning, and consolidate approaches
 - Recognising and rewarding excellence
 - Crediting community organisations and researchers appropriately