

NATIONAL FORUM FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN STEM

REVIEW OF SCHEME FUNDING

31ST MARCH 2015

SUMMARY PAPER

BACKGROUND

In October 2014 the National Forum began to discuss how best to review the funding environment for Public Engagement with STEM. These discussions surfaced a need to investigate the ways in which funding aligns with key priorities across the sector (e.g. engaging under-served audiences). As a first step, the secretariat was invited to undertake a review of **scheme funding**. We looked in detail at 39 schemes these were either live schemes or schemes that we knew would be recurring in 2015. Key questions we considered were:

- What do funders say about their schemes, in particular: what kinds of activities are supported (events, activities, projects etc.); who are the target audiences; what is the primary aim of the scheme (informing, stimulating dialogue, engaging under-served audiences etc.)
- What are the requirements for funding including: assessment criteria; evaluation requirements; duration of grants?
- What is the overall budget for each fund; how much can individuals apply for; what disciplines does it target?

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The majority of schemes are concentrated within the £0k-£50k range.
- By far the largest investment is targeted at the £10-50k schemes. The Wellcome Trust's People Award and Small Arts Awards are amongst the largest contributors to this range.
- Many of the schemes are targeted at Biosciences and Health; this also represented the largest investment area by a very considerable margin, at £8.2M. The next biggest investment was in Physical Science and Technology, at £956K.
- Very few schemes (n=6) mentioned engagement with underserved (or 'hard to reach') audiences in the high level information about the scheme, although 10 schemes did reference 'hard to reach' audiences in their assessment criteria.
- The majority of schemes assessed applications against how the project relates to scientific content (n=21), realism/feasibility of project plans (n=17) and the relevance of the activity to audience group (n=16).
- Just over 50% of funders indicated that an evaluation report would be required on project completion. A small percentage of these provided clear information and guidance on the nature of the information required. 46% of funders did not stipulate what was required or we were unable to locate the information.

A NOTE ON THE DATA

For the purpose of this exercise we wanted to look exclusively at funding for activities, projects and events. We therefore excluded:

- Funding for exchanges and residencies (e.g. Wellcome Hub Award, Nuffield Research Placements)
- Capital funding
- Research into informal science learning (Science Learning+, Nuffield Research)
- Provision for public engagement within research grants (i.e. pathways to impact)

We have also excluded Horizon 2020 on the basis that it was not possible to ascertain the necessary information about individual grant amounts, and the proportion of funding that is likely to be based in UK.

The data we captured and reviewed is intended as a snapshot of the funding environment. Whilst we have been careful to present an accurate and robust picture, there may have been schemes we have not captured or there may be occasions where we have missed important information about a scheme.

NEXT STEPS

As a result of the exercise, it was agreed that there would be great value in conducting a wider review of all key sources of funding for PE/STEM. In addition to the information gathered about specific funding schemes, this review will attempt to capture investments in infrastructure (e.g. through RCUK and BIS investments in culture change and capacity building projects); and the allocation of a proportion of research funding to support engagement activity (e.g. through RCUK's Pathways to Impact and Wellcome's Provision for Public Engagement).

A FULL LIST OF THE GRANT SCHEMES INCLUDED IN THIS ANALYSIS

Awards for All (England, N. Ireland, Scotland, Wales)	Big Lottery Fund	£300-£10,000
Scientific Outreach	Biochemical Society	up to £1000
Outreach grant	British Ecological Society	Up to £2000
BSI Communicating Immunology Grants	British Society of Immunology	Up to £1000
BSW Kick Start Grant	BSA	Up to £700
Community Grant Scheme	BSA	£500
Branch Grants	BSA	up to £1000
Holmes Hines Memorial Fund	EPSRC	No set amount, likely to be max £1500
Heritage Grants	HLF	Over £100,000
Our Heritage	HLF	£10,000-100,000
Sharing Heritage	HLF	£3000-£10,000
Public Engagement Grant Scheme	Institute of Physics	Up to £2000
Schools Grant Scheme	Institute of Physics/Institute of Engineering & Technology/STFC (this is a joint scheme, administered by the IoP)	£500

MRC Public Engagement seed-fund grant scheme	Medical Research Council	Up to £5,000
MRF Alexander Fleming Dissemination Awards	Medical Research Foundation	Up to £30,000
Outreach grants	Physiological Society	£1000
PE Grants	Physiological Society	up to £5000
Ingenious	Royal Academy of Engineering	Up to £30,000
PE Innovation Grant scheme	Royal College of Pathologists	up to £500
Partnerships Grants	Royal Society	up to £3000
Outreach Fund (large)	Royal Society of Chemistry	£10,000-£50,000
Outreach Fund (medium)	Royal Society of Chemistry	£2000 – £10,000
Outreach Fund (small)	Royal Society of Chemistry	up to £2000
Student Chemical Societies grant	Royal Society of Chemistry	up to £500
Regional Grant Scheme	Society of Biology	Half grants £50 - £200, Full Grants £200-£500
Public Engagement Grants	Society of Endocrinology	Up to £1000
PE Large Awards	STFC	£10,000 – £100,000
PE small awards scheme	STFC	£500-£10,000
PE Fellowships	STFC	Up to £100,000
Talking Science	The Scottish Government	£10,000-£40,000
Sustaining Excellence Awards	Wellcome Trust	Up to £1,000,000
Capital Funding	Wellcome Trust	Over £200,000
Arts Awards	Wellcome Trust	up to £40,000
Arts Awards (Large)	Wellcome Trust	£40,000-£150,000
Society Awards	Wellcome Trust	Up to £250,000
People Awards	Wellcome Trust	Up to £40,000
International Engagement Awards	Wellcome Trust	up to £30,000
Co-production Awards	Wellcome Trust	Up to £40,000
Development Awards (Broadcast, games and film)	Wellcome Trust	up to £10,000
Engagement Fellowships	Wellcome Trust	Salary/project costs circa £150,000