

UKCPN Resource: Ways to make contact with potential academic partners

1. Identify the university that covers your area of interest or expertise – this might be local, regional, national or international.
2. Find out more about your chosen university using, internet search engines [Google etc] Websites, twitter feeds, word-of-mouth, local libraries and Community Volunteer Services [CVS].
3. Identify the university public engagement manager or community involvement team member.
4. Check out individual university schools or faculties that might match your interest, for example, business, social work, health, environment, architecture, art and design etc.
5. Approach University reception staff or the main switchboard for contact details and email addresses for any of the people mentioned above.
6. Use emails and phone calls to make an appointment - don't be disheartened if you don't get a response immediately. Keep a note of staff names [and position] phone calls and email times and dates and keep trying.... persistence pays off.
7. Keep a check on university websites and twitter feeds for university public lectures and seminars, get yourself on a mailing list or join the University's LinkedIn groups (both the university and schools may have them and some are open to the public.
8. Familiarise yourself with the University (staff and students) by attending open days and public events - these are nearly always attended by university public engagement staff and it also gives you the chance to get a feel for the surroundings.
9. Attend focus and advisory groups held by your university.
10. Attend local community involvement and support networks [they may already have a link to your university].
11. When you eventually get to meet university staff, the jargon and academic language can be off-putting - alien at first but it is surprising how quickly you get used to it.
12. Make sure your objectives are clear and precise and don't forget, keep it simple.