GRACE

Public Engagement Training Worksheet

About the GRACE project

GRACE (Grounding RRI Actions to Achieve Institutional Changes in European Research Funding and Performing Organisations) was a "Science with and for Society" H2020 funded project that supported the European Commission's objective of spreading and embedding Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) in the European Research Area from January 2019 to December 2021.

GRACE's mission was to develop a set of specific Grounding Actions in six research performing and funding organisations. These actions were the basis for the development of a tailored 8-year RRI Roadmap within these organisations to ensure its sustainability and full implementation over the long-term. Discover the tools used by implementing organisations.

As the project came to an end in December 2021, experts shared findings on RRI implementation in 8 inspirational webinars. Find out more and view the webinars.

About the Public Engagement Training

This training is part of the project's activities related to the RRI key of Public Engagement. Five online training sessions on Public Engagement were held for the staff of our project partners between October and December 2021, with the aim of providing them with the knowledge, strategies and reflection to feel empowered about this topic and take action in their own organisations.

We invite you to follow along in their steps by watching a series of four videos and carrying out the activities featured in this worksheet when prompted. Whenever an activity is proposed, we suggest that you first write your own answers before seeing the contributions from the participants who attended the live training.

The training playlist can be found at: https://bit.ly/3nXHjP9

The training was organised by Ecsite – European Network of Science Centres & Museums. The trainer and author of the worksheet is Didier Laval, Public Engagement Associate at Bristol University and Co-founder of Culture Instable.

Training Objectives

Overall, this series of training sessions aim to bring you:

- An understanding of what Public Engagement is, and the various forms it can take
- The ability to frame a Public Engagement action
- An awareness of the current approaches and practices
- An overview of the evaluation process of Public Engagement actions
- The tools to build your own Public Engagement action

Session 1: An introduction to Public Engagement

The video corresponding to this session can be found at: https://youtu.be/RrDlNb5IHYw

This session tackles questions such as: What do we mean by Public Engagement? How can we consider the ambitious project of engaging non-academic audiences with research? What are the main frameworks and approaches? Which different impacts can we expect? You will explore various ways of conceptualising Public Engagement and offers you the opportunity to start a fruitful reflection: among the diverse landscape of approaches, which ones are the most relevant for your current work?

Activity 1.1: Warming up

As a warm-up exercise, we recommend that you spend some time reflecting on the following questions:

1. As you are starting your training journey, how do you feel?

I feel… (*you may write down or draw your answer*)

2. Besides your work, is there anything you like to do?

I enjoy… (*you may write down or draw your answer*)

Activity 1.2: What is Public Engagement?

Watch the video until the 1 minute 43 seconds mark.

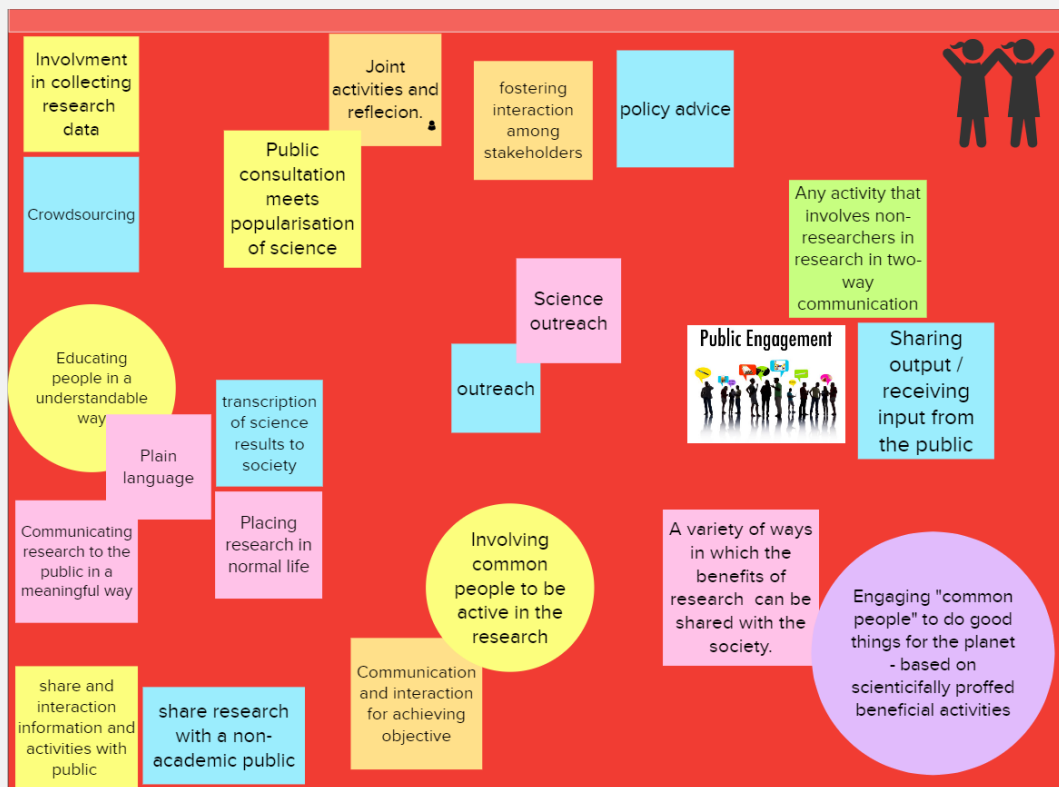What do you think Public Engagement is? What forms can it take? Do you know examples of Public Engagement actions?

Public Engagement is…

For example, a Public Engagement action can be….

As inspiration, you'll find below a selection of answers from the participants taking part in the live training sessions.

Please watch the video until the 31 minutes 33 seconds mark.

Activity 1.3: Public Engagement and you

Now that you saw the presentation, please reflect and select one or several aspects that left an impression with you. This may be a specific example mentioned in the video, or a more general idea.

> The main things that left an impression with me are:
>
> -
> -
> -
> -
> -

As inspiration, you'll find below a selection of answers from the participants taking part in the live training sessions:

- '*You don't have to be very ambitious at the beginning, you can start small*'
- '*The high variety and the broad definition of public engagement*'

- *'The creativity of public engagement methods'*
- *'Thin line between sharing research and activism'*
- *'The places where activities can be conducted, from malls to restaurants'*
- *'PE in malls and on public transportation'*
- *'I liked the Science Gallery Dublin's activity about memory boxes'*
- *'The amount of time and energy to convey knowledge'*
- *'Proactive performance versus public participation'*

To end with, let's start reflecting about what's in Public Engagement for you. What could you find in it? Could Public Engagement bring something to your professional work? To your personal life?

I believe that doing Public Engagement may bring me…

-
-
-
-
-

As inspiration, you'll find below a selection of answers from the participants taking part in the live training sessions.
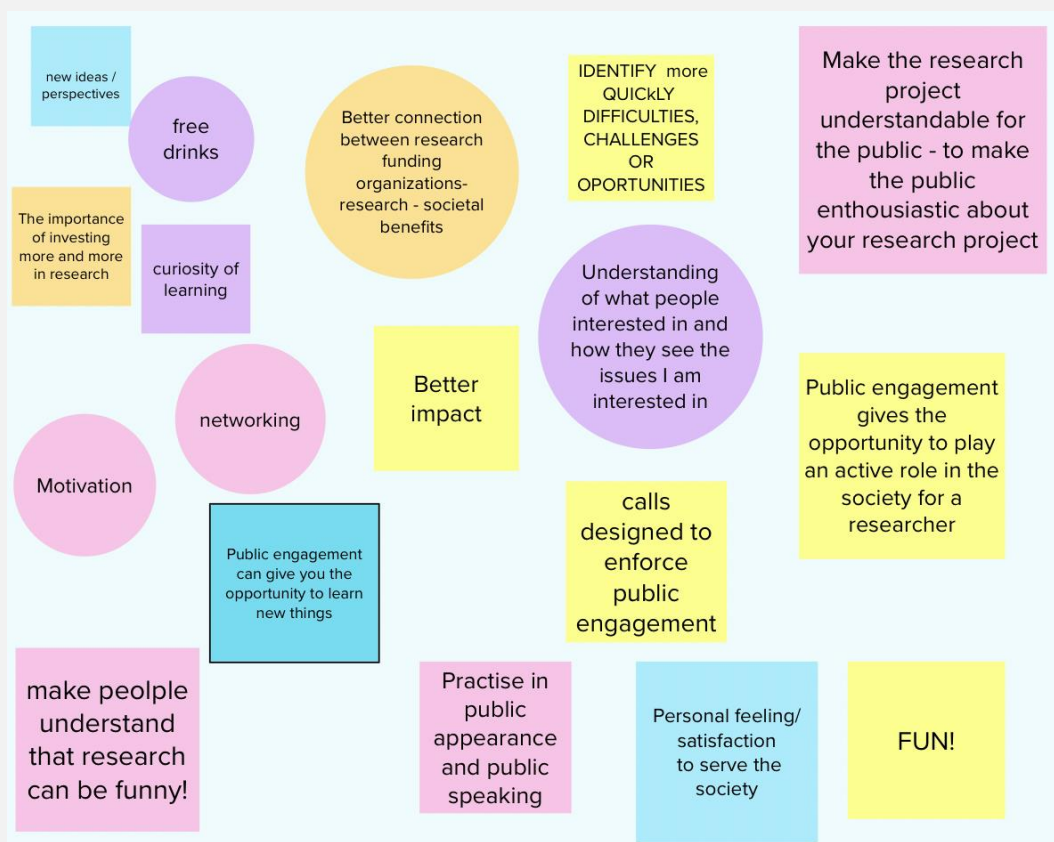
To wrap up the session, watch the rest of the video until the end.

Session 2: Framing: Opening the scope

The video corresponding to this session can be found at: https://youtu.be/7-u-_qxkHRo

To start building a Public Engagement project, the first steps requires researchers and supporters of research to open the scope in three different ways: identifying the topics that can be opened up for exploration, choosing a focus in terms of audiences, and building partnerships for Public Engagement.

Activity 2.1. Framing your topic: What is the link between your research and society?

After having watched the video until the 14 minutes 45 seconds mark, we invite you to take the time to consider your research topic and question it.

- My research is important because….

- My research relates to people's life in the following ways:

- It contributes to a wider picture, which is…

- My research may resonate with the following books, comics, series, movies, video games:

- My most memorable moment with my research is:

- My research is linked with the following stories:

You'll find below a selection of answers that participants taking part in the live training sessions gave when trying to link their research topic with a wider societal interest.

Research topic	Wider societal interest
Animal personalities	*Animal welfare*
Corporate sustainability	*Environmental preservation*
Human DNA variations	*What makes YOU unique? / Curing genetic diseases / Can there be another me?*
Controls in the public sector	*More efficient public services for citizens*
Privacy and data protection research	*Human rights, dignity, democracy*

## Activity 2.2. Choosing your core audience

After having watched the video until the 28 minutes 26 seconds mark, it's time to think about your own core audience.

Which audiences could you consider as primary ones for your Public Engagement action? Are there specific age groups? Specific genders? Socio-economic background? A specific geographical area? Some family situations? People having a certain type of job? An interest or a hobby? An opinion, some specific views or values?

My core audience would be…

You'll find below a selection of answers from the participants taking part in the live training sessions.
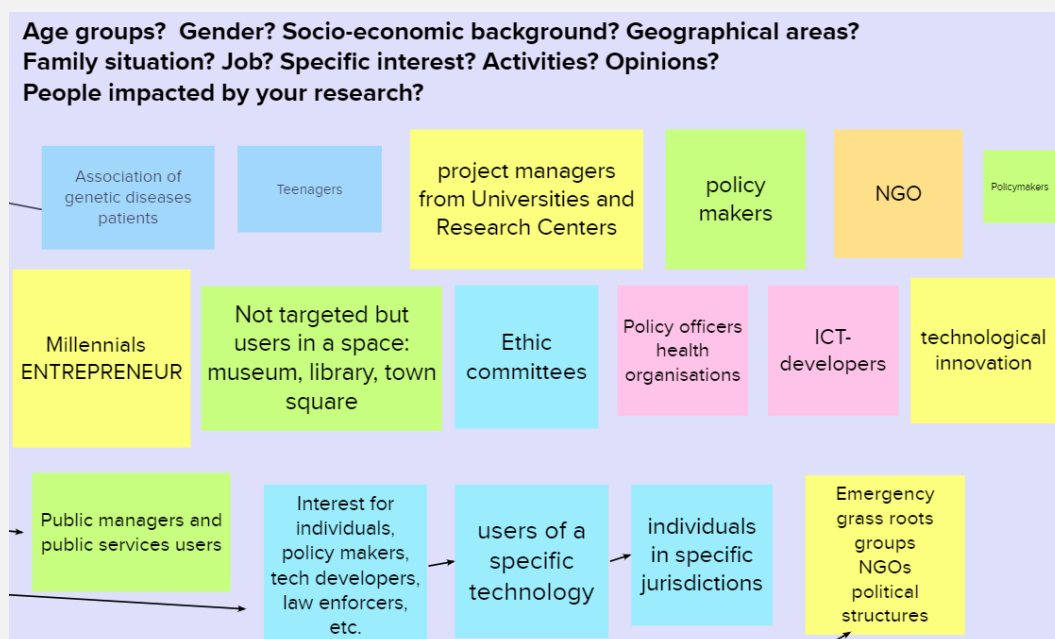
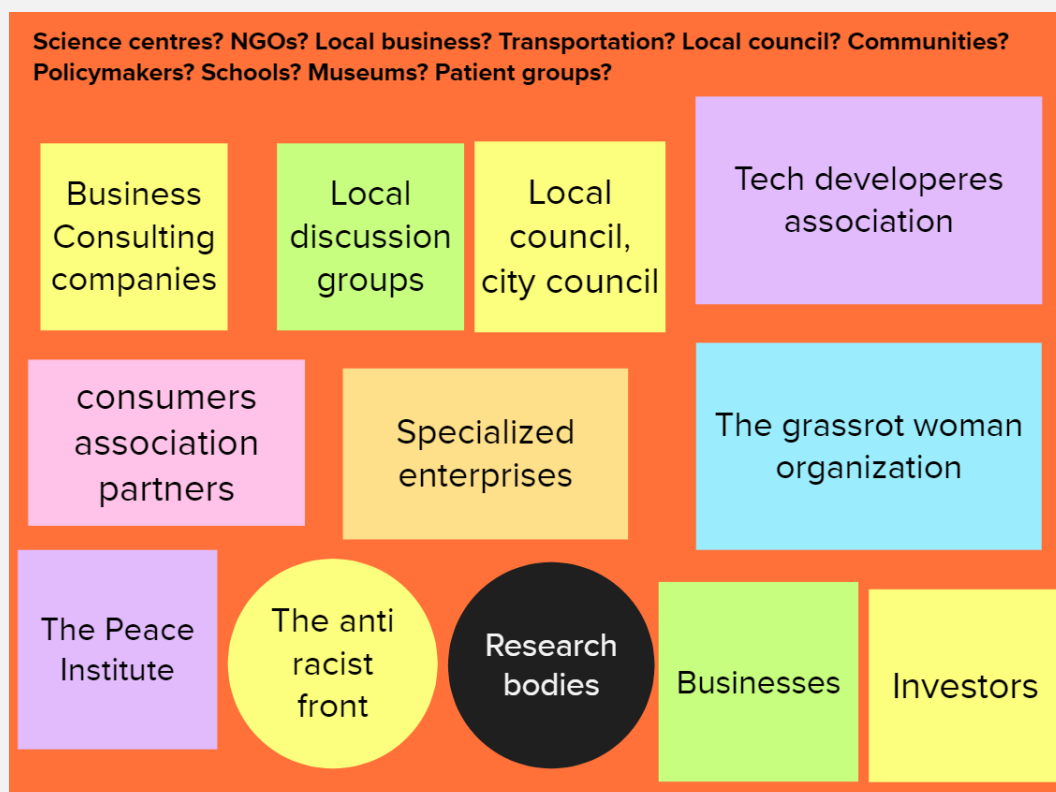## Activity 2.3. Partnerships: With whom could you collaborate?

After having watched the video until the 33 minutes 28 seconds mark, we invite you to reflect on the partners relevant for your Public Engagement activities. They may be related to your research, to your audience, they may be close geographically, or they may bring some useful know-how.

- Which partners would be relevant for you?
- Which partners give access to the core audience you identified in Activity 2.2?
- Which partners give access skills, know-how or infrastructures?
- Which settings would be relevant for you?
- Which partner is located in geographical proximity to you?

The main relevant partners would be…

1.
2.
3.
4.

You'll find below a selection of answers from the participants taking part in the live training sessions.

Science centres? NGOs? Local business? Transportation? Local council? Communities? Policymakers? Schools? Museums? Patient groups?

Business Consulting companies

Local discussion groups

Local council, city council

Tech developeres association

consumers association partners

Specialized enterprises

The grassrot woman organization

The Peace Institute

The anti racist front

Research bodies

Businesses

Investors

To wrap up the session, watch the rest of the video until the end.

Session 3: Public Engagement in practice

The video corresponding to this session can be found at: https://youtu.be/96eCIb4Qpzg

What are the best practices and tools for a Public Engagement action? A speech or an exhibition? Delivering plenty of content, or using a more dialogic approach? Should researchers engage in a participatory process, or even in co-creation? Or should they rely on blogging and social media to give online visibility to their work? In this session, you will review selected practices for Public Engagement, discuss their value, and identify the ones that are the most relevant for your work.

This session is different from the others: participants to the live training sessions explored in small groups a number of Public Engagement practices. We invite you to do the same, before listening to their reflections on the topic. But, first of all, get started by watching the introduction until the 4 minutes 4 seconds mark.

Activity 3.1 Exploring Public Engagement practices

Below is a list of seven types of practices that are commonly used in Public Engagement. Each type of practice is illustrated with several examples. Choose one of them and explore it through the links provided.

Show your Research

Tell your PhD:

- Three-Minute Thesis (from University of Queensland, Australia)
- Preparing your Three Minute Thesis presentation (from the University of Sussex, United Kingdom)

Dance your PhD:

- Dance your PhD (from John Bohannon & Black Label Movement, TEDxBrussels)
- Watch the winners of this year's 'Dance Your PhD' contest (from the Science Journal)

Draw your PhD:

- Draw your PhD (from King's College London, United Kingdom)
- Drawing your PhD: another way of doing research (from Le Labo des Savoirs, France)

Games

- First, an overview with several examples: How to use games to involve the public in decisions about research and innovation policy (from Nesta, United Kingdom)
- And several examples: Eye Wire and PlayDecide
- Public Engagement Through the Development of Science-Based Computer Games: The Wellcome Trust's "Gamify Your PhD" Initiative (article from the journal Science Communication)

Hackathons

- Some examples include: Science Hack Day; Science Game Jam; History Hackathon and the Space app challenge

Art & Research collaborations

- Four Examples from the Wellcome Trust: Somewhere In Between at Wellcome Collection: 4 major pieces of science that art can help you understand (from the Evening Standard, United Kingdom)
- The FEEL IT Festival (Bristol, United Kingdom)
- Benefits of this approach: Collaborations with artists go beyond communicating the science (from the journal Nature)
- A guide to this approach: Engaging the public through art-research collaborations: New resource informed by the sector (from the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, United Kingdom)

Escape Rooms

- A STEM-based escape room tried at Esplora Science Centre, Malta: STEM escape rooms for public engagement (from the journal Research for All)
- Insights into developing a Cell Signalling-themed escape game (Babraham Institute, United Kingdom)
- An example of a digital escape game: X Lab
- An example of an escape room about legal research
- An academic review on the potential of escape rooms as a science communication technique (from JCOM, Journal of Science Communication)

Immersive Theatre

- 'Invincible' theatre play, commissioned by the University of Bristol to discuss the topic of synthetic biology: press release; presentation and trailer video; evaluation report
- The immersive theatre show 'Deadinburgh'
- "Space Plague": An investigation into immersive theatre and narrative transportation effects in informal pandemic science education (article in the Journal of Science Communication JCOM)

Meeting the researcher

- Some formats that can be used are: Science Cafes; Meet the Researcher; Speed dating;
- For further inspiration: Human Library; I am a scientist

Once you have explored the links for your chosen practice, take a moment to reflect on them, and fill in the box on the next page.

Once you have done this, you can repeat the same exercise with another type of Public Engagement practice. You can also listen in to the reflection of the training participants about the first five types of practices activities by watching the remainder of the video.

After reviewing the examples of _____(name of practice), I believe that:

This approach is about…

Its specific value to the public is that…

Its specific value to the involved researchers is that…

The main constraints, issues or challenges would be…

This approach seems very suitable for research that is…

Other useful resources I have come across related to this practice…

Session 4: Evaluating Public Engagement

The video corresponding to this session can be found at: https://youtu.be/oM0oD4W__nI

What impact should participants expect from their Public Engagement action? And how can they evaluate this impact? This session will offer insights about the different types of impacts which should be considered, so that participants can optimize their action. Ways to evaluate this impact, in a formal or a non-formal way will also be explored.

Activity 4.1. Warming up

First of all, let's do a warm-up exercise. When we say the word "evaluation", what ideas come to your mind?

"Evaluation" makes me think of…

You'll find below a selection of answers from the participants taking part in the live training sessions.

Activity 4.2. What does public engagement change?

Please watch the video until the 3 minutes mark.

Let's think about what is created by a Public Engagement action. Following the instruction of the videos, please fill in the box on the next page:

A "good" public engagement action should be…

…so as to create on the short term….

…and, in the long term, to contribute to…

You'll find below a selection of answers from the participants taking part in the live training sessions.
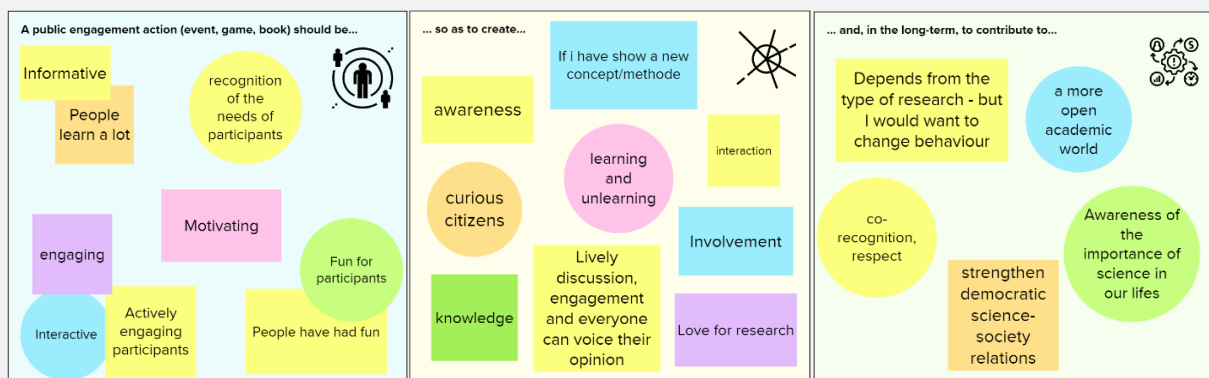
A Public Engagement action generates <u>outputs</u> (e.g. events, documents, ideas, meetings…) in order to create more important short-term effects called <u>outcomes</u> (e.g. new awareness, new understanding, empowerment…). These effects will contribute to a long-term <u>impact</u> (e.g. increasing young people's involvement in STEM careers).

Activity 4.3. Evaluation planning

Please watch the video until the 26 minutes 48 seconds mark.

How can you collect data? There are various means, which may be very formal or very playful. Write the ones you are aware of in the box on the next page.:

We can collect data for evaluation through…

You may see below some answers from the live participants.

You may now watch the video until the end.

Additional resources

You may find here a list of freely available resources that can help you to plan, implement or evaluate a public engagement action.

First of all, if you wonder **why** you should start public engagement, you might have a look at this guide from Research Councils UK called <u>What's in it for me? The benefits of public engagement for researchers</u>. Researchers share their experiences engaging with the public, and the benefits it had for them.

Now, in order to **frame and plan** your public engagement action you can browse this <u>section of the NCCPE</u> (National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement in the UK). It provides guidelines and hints on various topics such as audiences, approaches, project or partnerships. The Imperial College London has also set a very well structured <u>online toolkit for Public Engagement</u>.

To explore specific **practices**, you have a wealth of links showcasing examples in section 3 of this document.

Regarding **evaluation**, Queen Mary University had designed an <u>evaluation toolkit</u> comprising a great wealth of tools to collect data, including some informal and enjoyable ones. You may also check the dedicated <u>hands-on guide on evaluation planning</u> from Manchester University. Last, if you are looking for indicators of "good public engagement", you may check this <u>12 quality indicators</u> from the H2020 European QUEST project.