

Public engagement and knowledge exchange

What is public engagement?

“Public engagement describes the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.”

It may take forms including:

- schools enrichment work;
- collaborative research projects (citizen science);
- science festivals;
- maths busking and other outreach activities...

In Scotland, a lot falls under the banner of Maths Week Scotland.

What is knowledge exchange?

“Knowledge exchange is the transfer of ideas, research, expertise or skills between universities and business, communities, the third sector and government.”

Common mechanisms for KE include:

- industrially sponsored or supported research projects;
- contracted consultancy work;
- internships with an external organisation;
- contributions to policy development / consultations;
- patents, spin-outs etc.

Why should I get involved?

Reasons include:

- Employability: develop and demonstrate new skills; try out possible career paths; make useful contacts...
- Money, either directly (e.g. consultancy fees) or indirectly (institutional “impact”).
- Learning how companies, charities, government etc. really work.
- Having an effect — preferably a positive effect — on the wider world.
- A bit of relief from research and teaching.

Who pays for this stuff?

We do! (Well, we spend someone else's money...)

- Grants of up to £4000 to current students in SMSTC member departments.
- These grants are to support PE or KE activity, e.g.
 - ▶ industrial internships;
 - ▶ placements with experienced PE providers;
 - ▶ formal media or outreach training;
 - ▶ involvement with PE/outreach projects.

This list is not exhaustive — please be creative!

- Funding can support extensions to studentships (up to 2 months), travel/relocation costs, and costs associated with training.

Information will appear on the SMSTC website later this semester.

(The guidance and application form for the last round are currently available.)