



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

2022–2026



CONNECTION & COLLABORATION FOR MEANINGFUL RESEARCH

The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement defines public engagement as:

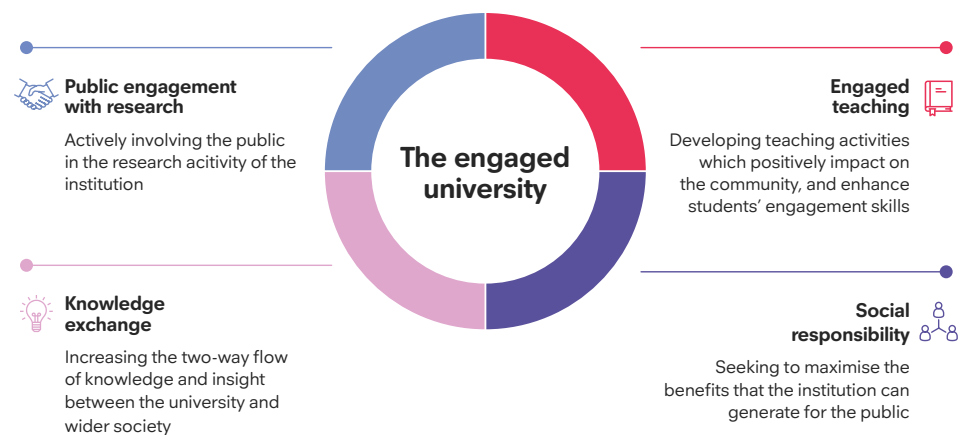
“The myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.”

The University of Plymouth’s overarching vision is to be a broad-based, researchintensive university, open to all who can benefit from a University of Plymouth education, and delivering excellent interdisciplinary research, experiential education and civic engagement.

We are an engaged university and public engagement plays an important role in research and engagement. This is reinforced through our university strategies, particularly the Research and Innovation strategy, where it commits to ‘support meaningful public engagement with our research.’

OUR FOCUS

The focus of this strategic plan is primarily on public engagement with research to enable us to embed this approach within our research culture. This complements the University of Plymouth's proud history of place-based civic engagement and engaged learning, for example through the Law Clinic and the Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise.



Where we are now

The University of Plymouth is part of its city and we understand the value of working with others beyond the University in mutually beneficial ways. We are committed to public engagement and have excellent practice across our three Faculties and Strategic Research Institutes.

Where we want to be

We want to be an exemplar of excellent public engagement, placing partnerships with the public locally, nationally and internationally at the heart of our research. We will have clear processes for embedding and delivering high quality public engagement with research.

There are many methods and reasons to engage the public with research. We aim to nurture a thriving community of practice that focuses on the following:

- Involving members of the public in shaping and conducting research
- Patient and public involvement throughout the research lifecycle
- Sharing new knowledge, technology and advances with others to help shape their understanding of the world

We believe our publics have a central role to play in ensuring our research responds to global challenges and makes a difference.

We will engage people throughout the research process, by understanding what matters most to people and using this to prioritise research areas, co-creating research with them and sharing research findings in accessible and impactful ways. Public engagement enables research to be inclusive, impactful and to enrich the lives of everyone who is involved in it.

This strategic plan is supported by the core team of Public Engagement practitioners based in Research and Innovation, who will work across the Faculties and Research Institutes to support ongoing development and delivery of a strategic approach to public engagement with research.

OUR AIMS

The aims below outline our priority activities over the coming academic year and will be reviewed and refreshed annually. We will also use the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement's EDGE tool to self-assess our progress.

01

Aim one

To nurture and be known for a culture of excellent public engagement with research.

Actions:

- Develop a community of practice for researchers and professional service staff from across the University of Plymouth.
- Raise the external profile of the University of Plymouth's public engagement.

02

Aim two

To support academics in the preparation and delivery of public engagement with research.

Actions:

- Provide opportunities for researchers to pilot new methods of public engagement with their research.
- Work with the strategic research institutes to better understand and support their approaches to public engagement with research.



03

Aim three

To secure external funding for public engagement with research for both academics and the central public engagement team.

Actions:

- Work with the Funding Advisory Service to develop clear guides for public engagement proposal development including idea creation, costs for public engagement and partnership working.

04

Aim four

To build sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships with external communities and organisations.

Actions:

- Establish an external public and community engagement network in 2022/23 that meets twice a year, supported by an online platform such as Teams or Slack.
- Identify and secure collaborative funding opportunities to encourage partnership working with key public and community organisations across Devon and Cornwall.

05

Aim five

To encourage a culture of self-reflective practice, including data collation and evaluation.

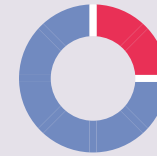
Actions:

- Capture robust public engagement data in a timely manner.
- Develop a range of resources and toolkits to support researchers in evaluation of public engagement and data collation.
- Support quality submissions to both the Research Excellence Framework and the Knowledge Exchange Framework.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?



**Membership of the
University's Public
Engagement Network
to grow by at least
10% annually**



**We will be in the top
quartile for PE in
KEF by 23/24**



**We will be awarded a Silver
Watermark by the National
Coordinating Centre for
Public Engagement no later
than 2024/25**







UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

True to our roots and place we are pioneering and we advance knowledge and transform lives.