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What is the Edinburgh Beltane - Beacon for Public Engagement?

The Edinburgh Beltane - Beacon for Public Engagement is a four year project delivered by a partnership led by the University of Edinburgh.

It is one of six UK Beacons for Public Engagement established to bridge the gap between researchers working at the cutting edge and the people their research will affect.

What are we going to do?

- Encourage citizen participation in and understanding of research that is relevant to public policy such as health and life sciences, energy and the environment.
- Embed a culture of public engagement in our partner Higher Education Institutions.
- Encourage, support and help researchers to play their part in society and policy making.
- Facilitate public policy debate.

Beacons for Public Engagement - funded by the UK funding councils, Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust.
How are we going to do it?

- Communicate
  We will set up a network, web pages and have an awareness raising campaign across all the partners.

- Train
  We will provide training opportunities for researchers to improve their public engagement skills.

- Provide opportunities
  We will provide opportunities for researchers to engage with the public through the events that we run, the Public Engagement Fellowships and Public Engagement Challenges.

- Engage the public
  We will run interactive events for the public which will present and debate research in public policy areas.

- Influence
  We will work with management and human resources teams in our academic partners to ensure public engagement is properly rewarded and recognized.

- Evaluate
  We will monitor the effectiveness of our approach with the aim of continuous improvement.

- Share
  We will share best practice and what we learn with all our partners.

Who will benefit?

- Researchers will benefit
  from improved communication skills, job satisfaction, inspiration, an insight into the public's views which can positively influence their research, knowledge of how to engage the public in their research and recognition for excellence in public engagement that helps career progression.

- The Public will benefit
  from a better understanding of the research issues affecting public policies, more opportunities to participate in governance of Scotland, and policymakers using evidence based approaches to decision making.

- Policymakers will benefit
  from improved links with experts, an informed and confident public, public debates to guide policy, and public participation in evidence based policy decisions.

- Public Engagement Experts will benefit
  from a larger pool of effective speakers available for different audiences, access to a wider range of subject areas for events, more research events with a public engagement strand, increased capacity to respond to public concerns, and an extended partner network.

- Special Interest Groups will benefit
  from more relevant and accessible events, the opportunity to contribute and influence research, and informed public debate.

- Academic Institutions will benefit
  from having staff with the skills to fulfill their goals of engaging the public and policymakers with relevant research and enhancing their reputation by doing this effectively and professionally.
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How can you get involved?

- If you are a researcher
  let us know what you do, get involved in training and events, consider becoming a Public Engagement Fellow, generate ideas for our Public Engagement Challenge, join our network and working groups.

- If you are a policymaker
  let us know your area of interest, suggest timely events, participate in our discussion sessions.

- If you are a public engagement expert
  join our network and working groups, be a partner in a public engagement project, let us know if we can contribute to your events, let us help you reach a wider audience.

- If you work with special interest groups
  suggest events, help us reach the right audiences.

- If you have a question: ask it!
  Let us know what subjects you would like to hear more about.

Contact us

Ruth Edwards, Project Administrator
Edinburgh Beltane - Beacon for Public Engagement
The University of Edinburgh
Darwin Building, The King’s Buildings, Mayfield Road
Edinburgh, EH9 3JR
T 0131 650 4874
E info@edinburghbeltane.net
www.edinburghbeltane.net