



**Brunel**  
University  
London

# Public Engagement Fund

Engagement Strategy and Support Unit  
2016/17





“As part of our Vision 2030 Brunel has affirmed its role as a Civic University – We will strengthen our position as a civic university, using our innovation and entrepreneurialism to drive the local economy and build important strategic partnerships with local organisations to bring benefit to, and increase our impact in, the local community. Public Engagement is a key part of that Vision.”

**Professor Bill Leahy**

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs and Civic Engagement).



“Public Engagement is a core component of our research culture and one that can be transformative to the researcher as well as engaging our undergraduate students to experience the thrill of creating new knowledge. This funding stream will help to foster those two major interactions”

**Professor Akram Khan**

Public Engagement Champion

## Introduction

2016/17

We are committed to sharing our knowledge, resources and skills with the public so they can understand some of the great ground breaking research that goes on here.

The Public Engagement Fund is a Brunel initiative which has been designed to support researchers in undertaking public engagement activity, connecting research and teaching with people outside the institution.

The scheme funds both academic and postgraduate projects. Successful projects are chosen by a panel who believe that each one selected explores areas that the public would like to get involved in, can relate to and would be interested in seeing progress over the course of a year.

For the 2016/17 academic year three projects were progressed. Two were from academic staff and one was from postgraduate students.

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# The projects

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## Jennifer Ryan - Young Person's Advisory Group

The involvement of children and young people in research ensures that research is relevant to young people and their families, that researchers effectively communicate with young people and that research findings are effectively shared with young people.

The Brunel University London Young Person's Advisory Group will consist of 5-10 young people aged 8 to 19 years. The group will meet every 12-16 weeks to assist researchers at Brunel University London to plan and develop research projects that involve children and young people. In particular the group will provide feedback on study designs, help researchers to produce Participant Information Sheets and advertisements that are appropriate for young people, and help researchers to disseminate their research findings.

They also learn about why research is important to conduct and the importance of being involved in research. In addition to the group meeting, the group facilitators and some group members will visit local youth groups to promote the group and highlight the importance of involving young people in research. Members will also act as Young Ambassadors at local and national conferences and public events to highlight the importance of children's research and the key role the group can play in the development of research projects.



## Jennifer Jones - Brunel Community Health Club



This project envisages the creation of a health hub to bring together the community of Brunel with members of the public, healthcare providers, industry, educators and government in preventive action. Around 17.5 million people die every year in the World from cardiovascular disease – primarily heart attack and stroke. The evidence for prevention is compelling. These conditions, together with other chronic diseases such as cancer, are largely avoidable. Given that 80% of heart attack and 90% of type 2 diabetes can be averted, this project offers a platform for information exchange and discovery with a main focus on prevention and keeping people healthier for longer. This project contributes to the National Cardiovascular Outcomes Strategy and the World Heart Federation’s “25 by 25” mission – to reduce these avoidable deaths by 25% by the year 2025.

## Emma Harding and Rachel Woodbridge - In Their Shoes

The project will engage school pupils in a 1 hour experiential workshop. This will involve interactive activities which will practically put students and teachers 'in their shoes', experiencing what it may be like to have typical and lesser known symptoms associated with dementia.

The sessions aim to encourage reflection on their experiences of the creative tasks undertaken in the workshop. What did these experiences feel like? How do they relate to people with dementia? and how could we as a community support people with dementia having these experiences?

As part of the project the team aim to develop a toolkit for the workshops (materials, a training package and workshop delivery protocol) to ensure the project is sustainable and can be delivered on an ongoing basis, for example, by teachers from the local schools or student volunteers.



## Public Engagement Fund 2017/18

Following the success of this years projects the scheme will run again in the 2017/18 academic year. We have had 17 applicants with a mixture of both academic staff and postgraduate students from across the three colleges at the University. A panel will meet in the summer to select the best projects to run next year.

If you are an academic or enrolled postgraduate student at Brunel University London and would like to know more about the scheme and when applications will open again please feel free to email us at [engagement@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:engagement@brunel.ac.uk).