



# SFI Education and Public Engagement Framework and Impact



An SFI guide for the design and implementation of an effective Education and Public Engagement programme and how such a programme contributes to the delivery of overall impact in the context of large-scale SFI awards.

# Introduction

This summary has been prepared primarily to provide an overview of SFI’s vision and expectations for Education and Public Engagement (EPE) within large-scale research awards such as SFI Research Centres and Strategic Partnerships<sup>1</sup>.

## Why we promote Education and Public Engagement (EPE)

Science Foundation Ireland funds research and public engagement in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The outcomes of this research and public engagement promote and assist in the development and competitiveness of industry, enterprise and employment in Ireland, delivering tangible impact for society.

EPE is a core objective of SFI large-scale research awards and, as set out in the SFI Strategy 2025<sup>2</sup>; we are committed to further developing programmes to support engagement with, and participation of, a broader range of civil society and community groups across SFI’s research awards. This commitment is strongly supported by the public, with research showing that 84% of the population hold the view that “*scientists have a professional responsibility to talk about research findings with the public*”<sup>3</sup>. SFI also aims to build people’s confidence and aspirations to pursue skills development and career choices in the STEM fields. This is to ensure that, as a nation, we will be well-placed to respond to future opportunities or challenges. Consequently, SFI expects its award holders to stimulate public understanding, interest and involvement in research and STEM, through relevant, inclusive and accessible activities. Ultimately, this will lead to the creation of a diverse scientific, research and innovation ecosystem which is welcoming to all and which places emphasis on active engagement and co-creation with the Irish public.

In summary, SFI supports large-scale award holders to carry out EPE activities which aim to:

- ▶ Work with stakeholders, beneficiaries and end-users in the co-creation of research activities with outcomes that are meaningful, relevant and implementable. This process helps to add value to the research, ensures that the outcomes are for the public good and builds trust between researchers and stakeholders
- ▶ Address STEM talent pipeline deficiencies through inspiration and skills development
- ▶ Raise awareness and heighten the public(s)’ engagement with STEM, STEM research and other related areas of research
- ▶ Conduct engaged research by working with members of the public, for example, through dissemination of findings, consultation or participation in research activities (e.g., citizen science)
- ▶ Promote a culture and practice of evidence-based policy formation
- ▶ Engage with diverse, underrepresented, and underserved communities.



1 See Glossary of Terms for details.

2 [Shaping Our Future. SFI Strategy 2025.](#)

3 [2020 SFI Barometer. Final Research Report \(Phase II\). 2021.](#)