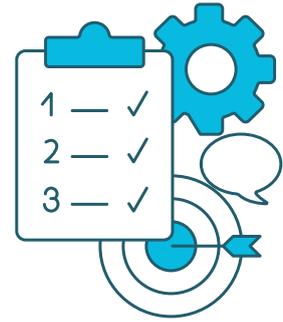


Expectations of Education and Public Engagement in large-scale awards



Fostering a culture of Public Engagement

SFI expects the same rigour and approach to best practice, ethics and integrity to be applied to EPE activity, as would be applied to the scientific research programme. To achieve this, SFI recognises the need for research leaders to work to develop a strong culture of engagement within an individual large-scale award. Engagement should be an integral part of being a researcher and researchers should be encouraged and facilitated to participate in EPE-related work. To facilitate this, it is important that researchers and other staff can avail of skills development opportunities and experiences to build capacity in EPE. It is also important that participation in EPE activities is recognised and promoted by the leadership team. In particular, “EPE champions” should be acknowledged and rewarded (see “EPE leadership” section for further details).

SFI has in the past provided, and plans to continue to provide, a suite of skills development opportunities for researchers (such as engaged research skills development, science communications, developing public engagement activities, evaluation of EPE activities etc). New programmes may include topics such as theory of change, stakeholder mapping, and policymaker engagement. In addition, SFI will develop and deliver in-depth orientation and skills development to senior leadership teams of large-scale awards to ensure a strong and vibrant culture of EPE is embedded within the award. This will be delivered early in the life cycle of relevant large-scale awards.

Stakeholders

In the context of large-scale SFI research awards, EPE refers to engagements with **non-academic audiences**. Examples of stakeholder and audience groups may include, but are not limited to, community groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), advocacy groups, social enterprises, industry and representative bodies, local authorities, regional or national government, cultural and educational communities from pre-school through to primary and secondary. However, it is essential to carefully identify and map the target audience(s) and to note that there is no requirement to “have something for everyone”. When considering appropriate stakeholders, award holders should be informed by the EPE strategy and will also be expected to contribute towards improving diversity and inclusion, by broadening participation, both geographically and amongst less represented voices.

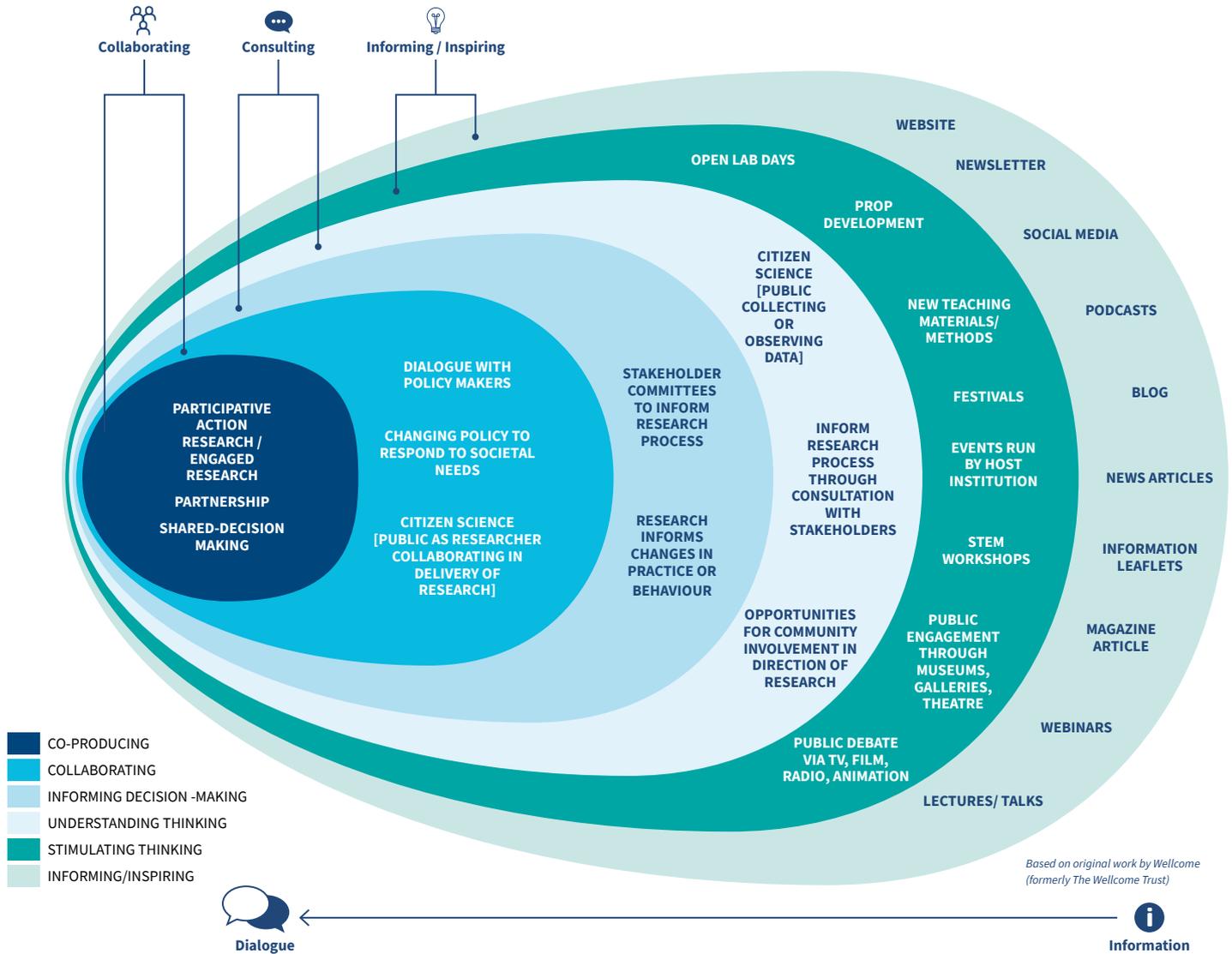
Types of education and engagement activity

SFI, and our international reviewers, expect that large-scale research award holders will develop a varied and balanced portfolio of engagement activities with a clearly defined target audience(s). SFI expects that all large-scale awards include some elements of deep public engagement and/or engaged research that have the potential to inform and shape the delivery of aspects of the research programme. Examples of this type of activity include – public/patient involvement, stakeholder engagement in defining research problems and solutions, Government engagement to inform policy or regulations, and community engagement to inform research direction.

Lighter touch or more traditional “outreach” activities are also valuable, as they can create awareness and help to build capacity in engagement work. To illustrate the wide spectrum of potential education and engagement activities, SFI has adapted the model originally devised by Wellcome (see Figure 1 below).

Activity types should be carefully chosen to match both the stakeholder and the research focus. The features of both effective public engagement and EPE portfolios in large-scale SFI awards are set out below.

Figure 1 - SFI Education and Public Engagement

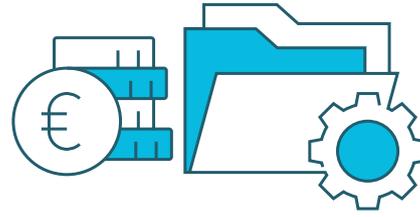


- Notes:**
1. It should be noted that the activities outlined in the schematic are not exhaustive. For example, public/patient involvement (PPI) and citizen juries are recognised methods of collaboration and co-production.
 2. As one moves from the outside of the schematic to the core, the focus moves from awareness raising and informing to two-way dialogue and empowerment in decision-making. While the scale of audience reach may decrease with progression from the outer layers to the inner ones, the depth of engagement and value increases significantly.

Funding effective public engagement

SFI expects that sufficient funding for a number of key flagships⁴ and engaged research activities will be allocated from the main SFI award. SFI funds more general STEM EPE activities and initiatives through mechanisms such as the annual SFI Discover Programme Call and Science Week Festivals and Events Call. In exceptional circumstances, additional funding may be secured through these, or other mechanisms, to complement core activities or to pilot new approaches.

The EPE budget may include, but is not necessarily limited to, staff costs, direct costs of EPE activities, travel related to EPE efforts, costs to engage in collaborative EPE-related partnerships with other organisations, costs related to EPE training and evaluation costs.



The engagement costs associated with specific engaged research work need not be included in this budget but rather can be included in the overall research budget.

As a guideline, at least 5% of the SFI budget should be allocated to the totality of the EPE programme in the large-scale award, to ensure appropriate resourcing, implementation and evaluation.

Features of EPE portfolio in large-scale SFI awards

SFI expects the EPE portfolio in large-scale awards to include the following features:

- ▶ Clear alignment with, and relevance to, the relevant research domain
- ▶ A balanced portfolio of activities
- ▶ A number of “flagship” projects
- ▶ Significant involvement of researchers across all career stages
- ▶ Funding allocation through main award
- ▶ Clarity of purpose and robust evaluation

Features of effective public engagement

SFI expects EPE in large-scale awards to ensure effectiveness through the following:

- ▶ The activity must be planned, and should be integrated into the planning of the wider research programme
- ▶ The activity should have clear target audiences and be geared towards the needs of these audiences
- ▶ Engagement should be two-way, involving interaction and listening, and should be designed to enhance the programme of research
- ▶ The activity reflects the specific needs of, and unique opportunities generated by, the relevant research area
- ▶ Evaluation and performance improvement must be incorporated from the outset. SFI has developed a toolkit and video to support the evaluation process
- ▶ Approaches employed must be based on best practice. The same rigour and approach to best practice, ethics and integrity should be applied to the EPE activity, as would be applied to the scientific research programme
- ▶ An appropriate budget must be assigned
- ▶ Team members with relevant expertise must be included in EPE activities to guide, coach and mentor the broader team.

⁴ Flagship programmes are the key programmes of activity which are the focus of the EPE work and are closely aligned to the research programme. Typically, three flagship programmes are identified and reported on as part of the annual reporting / site review processes.

EPE leadership

LEAD: The vision for EPE should be established at award leadership level – e.g. lead- or Co-PI. EPE leadership should ensure that EPE is a strategic priority and receives appropriate focus and resources, and may work with dedicated EPE management resources to develop and operationalise EPE activities.

MANAGE: Meaningful EPE activity requires strong management and oversight. Dedicated resources should be allocated to this management role – frequently an EPE manager. EPE management will work alongside the PIs and Co-PIs to develop and implement EPE strategy and to play a pivotal role in enabling and embedding a culture of EPE.

CHAMPION: EPE champions refer to individual team members who participate in five or more EPE activities per year, and who lead, or significantly contribute to, the development and/or delivery of EPE strategy and/or activity. Additionally, they serve as important role models, inspiring and enabling others to participate. EPE champions should be identified and celebrated in annual/progress reports and site reviews.