Dear pepnetters,

This week I participated in a different form of engagement- with parliament. I was very honoured to be invited to Parliamentary Links Day by The Physiological Society on the 26th June. The theme was science and the industrial strategy. Although the event was organised by the Royal Society of Biology, 13 other societies were represented at the event from across the breadth of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

The morning session was filled with speakers including five MP’s, the Government Chief Scientific Advisor and a representative from UKRI. These speakers all pulled out key points of how the science and industrial strategy is aimed to be delivered and how increasing the funding for R&D in the UK wasn’t the only challenge. The speeches were broken up by two discussion panels with people from many of the represented societies talking about how they were contributing to influencing and delivering some of the key elements of the strategy.

It was made apparent at the start that not many MP’s are well-versed in science, and that this is a problem. We need more scientists and engineers in the House of Commons. This surprised me at first but then on reflection, as scientists, not many of us would aim for that type of profession.

The Chair of the Science and Technology Select Committee, Norman Lamb MP, highlighted how important it is that we continue to get the best people to work in science in the UK. Government is currently working on a blueprint of the pact to be agreed for science in the Brexit negotiations. I am sure many of us would support this.

Many of the issues in the higher education sector were highlighted and discussed. We need to nurture young talent from an early age, right from primary school. We must concentrate on achieving diversity in areas such as gender and ethnicity in all STEM areas, taking it seriously and not just paying lip service to it. We should value technical staff and give them opportunities to flourish. There was also a discussion about the issue that 45% of public spend on R&D are going to the golden triangle (Oxford/Cambridge/London) and how we need to focus on getting economic development to other regions of the country. I was very interested to hear re-iterated that we should be engaging with a much wider audience and getting non-scientists interested in engaging with science and citizen science projects were mentioned as good examples of doing this.

So what are my reflections on this day? Well, it was interesting to hear all this and there were no surprises in what was said. Lots of challenges, but not many answers. Many of the discussion points raised resonate with challenges we endeavour to conquer at Leeds. I think being involved in days like this are important for research and engagement, to make the government aware of who we are and what we do and
promote what I hope is a two-way stream of communication between Government and the scientific community. It was great to hear that ‘scientists on the coal face must be supported’ but the cynic in me questions how the government can really achieve this.

I hope you are all enjoying the sunshine and looking forward to the summer.

Kind regards,
Charlotte

On Campus

Be Curious Drop in Sessions July

We are holding two session for you to come along and discuss any ideas you may have for hosting an activity at next year’s Be Curious. This is an opportunity to pick our brains and bounce some ideas around on a very informal basis. No commitment involved and no booking required:

Wednesday 11 July, 12-1pm in Pure Café, Worsley building
Wednesday 25 July, 1-2pm in Café Maia, Ziff building

We are very excited to hear your ideas! The application process for Be Curious 2019 will start in September, perhaps now is the time to get the creative juices flowing over summer.

Engagement Excellence Scheme 2018-19

There is still time to apply for this year’s Engagement Excellence Scheme. The scheme aims to build capacity and create a network of public engagement/ patient and public involvement champions across the Institution. The scheme is open to staff members from all faculties. We offer support and help for up to six Engagement Fellows with a small bursary of up to £400 per project to progress an engagement for research project and deliver impact plans and activities.

Visit our [website](#) to read the call and download the application form; submit it by Monday, 16 July 2018

International Medieval Congress

The largest academic conference of its kind in Europe, the International Medieval Congress is celebrating its 25th year from 2nd to 5th July. This historic occasion has struck a chord with medievalists with about 2,900 researchers from 60 countries
expected to take part. They are running a wide range of events, fairs and exhibitions that are open to University staff and members of the public. **Musical performances, the IMC Bookfair and Medieval Craft Fair** are just a few of the events on offer.

**Patient Involvement and Engagement Forum 19 July**

Would you be interested in a network for Patient/Public Involvement and Engagement (P/PIE) across the University? Would you like to know how your colleagues are 'doing PPIE'? What they do when faced with challenges?

This forum wants to specifically focus on P/PIE and is not a replacement or competition for pepnet.

We (Gwyn Cracknell, Jo Smith and Alexa Ruppertsberg) have been meeting for a while to share ideas and the challenges of Patient/Public Involvement and Engagement in research and teaching. We have found the meetings to be a valuable support and perceive this may be of interest to others involved in Public and Patient Involvement or Engagement activities.

If you are interested, please come along on **Thursday, 19 July at 11:30-13:30** to Worsley, 9.58a to the Patient Involvement and Engagement Forum (short: PIEF).

There is no need to register, just come along!

**PEWR Awards 2018**

The awards will be held in autumn 2018 and we will be opening applications at the start of the next academic year.

**Sustainability Awards – Congratulations!**

Congratulations to former Engagement Fellow, **Cat Scott** on her sustainability award for ‘Building Knowledge and Capacity’. Cat is a key member of the Living Lab for air quality, which brings together researchers from different schools and services to measure the level of air pollution across campus.

Also recognised was runner up, **James McKay**, who has spent five years creating and leading collaborative projects with a key focus on the subject of sustainability, involving dozens of staff and students across campus and in the community, including some memorable contributions to Be Curious.

Runner up in the ‘Sustainable Purchasing’ award was Engagement Champion, **Marie Parker** for working with purchasing teams, suppliers and key stakeholders to create a more effective and efficient procurement programme at St James’s Hospital.
Research Development Fund – closing date 5 September 2018

This funding can be used to support involvement of members of the public (e.g. public, patients, carers, service users and other stakeholders) in shaping or developing research ideas, i.e. at the research development stage prior to submitting a research proposal. For example holding an event/meeting (or series of smaller meetings) to inform a particular research grant application. Or to establish an ongoing PPIE panel/user group in a specific research area, where the need for such a group has been identified and no other group exists already. It is advantageous to outline how the ongoing support for such a group will be met.

There are three deadlines each year. The next deadline is 5th of September 2018. Funds are limited for each round and the maximum amount per application is £500.

Visit our webpage to download further information and guidance and access the application form. https://comms.leeds.ac.uk/public-engagement/event-planning-resources-and-communication/

Elsewhere

Using Social Media for Public Engagement

Following a recent thread on the NCCPE network here are some examples of projects successfully using social media channels and some useful tips:

The University of Oxford recently ran a digital festival which featured two-way engagement: https://www.oxforisparks.ox.ac.uk/brain-discovery-week


and a summary blog for LSE Impact: http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2015/07/30/online-engagement-strategy-dont-go-it-alone/

Imperial College London have a useful blog on using social media: http://wwwf.imperial.ac.uk/blog/perc/2018/04/05/using-social-media/?hootPostID=3a9b3810db1ab260e926a0ddbc2bc2c4

One of their students did some PPI using Twitter. She was doing research on breastfeeding, and wanted help designing the research from mothers with experience (or not) of breastfeeding. She received hundreds of Direct Messages from people offering their views, so collated that and designed her study accordingly. Using the right hashtags it got shared quite widely including Jane Garvey and Women’s Hour

Call for help: https://twitter.com/rbcca_blaylock/status/957244203687448576

Thread summarising what she learnt: https://twitter.com/rbcca_blaylock/status/958095578898018304
Are you involved with public engagement in higher education? Do you have an inspiring image you want to share?

There is still time to enter the NCCPE national competition, *Images of Public Engagement 2018*. Submit your image by 16th July to be in with a chance of winning a ticket for the NCCPE’s Engage Conference, or new photography and art materials.

Winning entries will also be showcased as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations, featuring on their website and in a new-look Manifesto for Public Engagement.

Find out more & apply on the NCCPE website https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/nccpe-projects-and-services/images-public-engagement-2018

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**Funding opportunities**

**Physiological Society – Grants**

These promote the discussion of physiology with public audiences and aim to inspire creative public engagement with physiology. To stimulate physiologists to share stories and expertise in innovative ways with wider audiences, particularly those that are traditionally hard to reach. To increase dialogue between researchers and the public, in particular on topics such as the relevance of research to health, medicine and performance; and to produce materials and resources which can be used for further public engagement and outreach work.

The awards are worth up to £5,000. Closing date 14 July 2018

**John Maddox prize – sense about science**

The John Maddox Prize recognises the work of individuals who promote sound science and evidence on a matter of public interest, facing difficulty or hostility in doing so. Nominations are now open for the 2018 prize.

The prize is worth £3000. Closing date 31 July 2018

http://senseaboutscience.org/activities/the-john-maddox-prize/

**Royal Society of Chemistry – small grants**

These provide financial support to members, individuals and organisations in order to enable them to run chemistry-based public and schools engagement activities.
The trust aims to support projects that maximise members' outreach and engagement contribution.

Grants are worth up to £200. Closing date 10 September 2018.

**Palaeontological Association – Engagement Grants**

These encourage educational outreach, public engagement and related initiatives in paleontological themes

Grants are worth up to £5000 but will be considered up to £15,000. Closing date 01 October 2018

**Microbiology Society – Education and outreach Grants**

These support relevant science teaching or promotion initiatives, or developments likely to lead to an improvement in the teaching of any aspect of microbiology.

Grants are worth up to £1000. Closing date 01 October 2018