

# Outreach and Public Engagement Leadership Programme

*A 12-month leadership programme for research and teaching staff in physics and STFC-funded research groups.*

## Introduction

The programme is for academic and teaching staff with an interest in taking a more strategic approach to outreach and public engagement. Taking a participant-led approach, the programme aims to build your confidence and skills in advocating for outreach and public engagement at a senior level, influencing others at different levels and in a range of job families across the organisation, and ensuring that your activities are sustainable.

Through the programme, you will be supported in developing a strategy for you or your department, connecting with peers at other institutions to learn how others are leading these activities, and honing your leadership skills for current or future roles.

The support programme consists of the following elements:

- Bespoke advice through one-on-one mentoring with one of our experienced mentors.
- Facilitated online workshops which introduce core material.
- Peer group support and networking opportunities to learn from others.
- Resources and reading materials for self-directed learning.

## Eligibility

The program is specifically for research and teaching staff in physics and STFC funded research groups. Users of STFC Funded Facilities and staff within those facilities with responsibility for outreach and public engagement are also eligible.

*Am I a Public Engagement Leader?*

For the purposes of this program, the leadership of outreach and public engagement can include anything from being tasked to develop a more strategic approach for activities within your department or research group (e.g., you may be developing a strategy, delivering a training programme, developing resources for others to use),

through to a formal role (e.g. outreach lead or champion for public engagement). We're particularly keen to hear from people who want to make a difference within their department to how OPE is organised and facilitated.

## **Feedback from Previous Participants**

We are in the third year of the programme. Participants on the previous years have reported that the program has:

- Helped them feel more confident leading Outreach and Public Engagement
- Developed their knowledge and skills in leading Outreach and Public Engagement
- Helped them develop a more strategic approach to managing and leading Outreach and Public Engagement

Feedback collected from previous participants includes:

*"I've changed my way of thinking in various aspects of my work and propelled forward multiple steps (some I've been trying to achieve for years!). I also feel a lot more confident in my expertise and the work I do"*

*"I feel more reassured in what I do and have made some changes in what I do as a result of conversations during this programme. I think this is making a positive impact on the way others around me buy into what I do"*

*"The program was incredibly useful - hearing about the challenges that others face in various roles also helped make me feel not alone!"*

*"As an academic researcher, it was extremely valuable to get more guidance from someone in the public engagement profession and see my work more through their lenses. With my mentor, I was able to make a lot of progress in my work there"*

*"I have definitely improved my balance in terms of the workload I take on, and have put new activities in place to reduce the likelihood of me taking on loads more work in the future".*

About us

**The OPE Leadership programme is funded by The Ogden Trust and STFC.**

The programme lead facilitators are David Owen and Helen Featherstone, PhD; both have extensive experience leading public engagement and developing others' skills and confidence in outreach and public engagement.

You can find out more about the Funders, David, Helen and the mentors in the programme overview.

## Programme overview

The programme will reflect your needs but will include support around the following:

- Developing your approach to leading outreach and public engagement
- Thinking strategically
- Advocating for outreach and public engagement at a senior department level
- Engaging others with your strategy
- Access to networks and expertise
- Navigating change
- Writing strategic documents
- Leveraging your institution's mission and priorities
- Project management and overseeing budgets
- Line management
- Writing business cases for roles and budgets

As part of the programme, you will also be invited to bring a live problem or project to work on. This will vary from person to person, but we invite you to consider specific challenges related to leading outreach and public engagement that you will delve into during the training and share your progress and learning with your peers. For example, live problems or projects could vary from reviewing your approach to evaluation, developing a more strategic approach to outreach, strengthening your funding proposals, or developing your leadership skills.

Once you have been accepted onto the OPE Leadership programme, you will have a short meeting with the programme leads to explore your goals for the programme. This will help you get the most from the programme and ensure we can tailor the programme content to the group's needs.

We've detailed the support available below.

### Interactive workshops

In total six interactive workshops will be held. The first and last will be in-person/hybrid (depending on participant needs), with the other workshops being online. The first 30 minutes of each online workshop will be optional informal networking.

#### **Workshop 1: Orientation and introduction (4 hrs)**

*Tuesday 22 October 2024 11.00am – 3.00p., location to be confirmed, this will be an in-person event with the option to join online.*

An in-person workshop providing an overview of the program and giving you an opportunity to network and share your hopes and aspirations for outreach and public engagement in your department. We encourage attendance in person, however there will be the option to join online.

## **Workshop 2: Developing and implementing your OPE strategy (2.5hrs)**

*Friday 6 December 2024 1.30pm – 4.00pm, online*

This workshop will help you develop a more strategic approach to OPE. We will cover:

- What are the key components of a strategy?
- How might you engage others in developing and implementing a strategy?
- How do you measure success?

## **Workshop 3: Inclusive leadership (2.5hrs)**

*Monday 10 February 2025 1.30pm – 4.00pm, online*

We will look at inclusive leadership in the context of outreach and public engagement. The session will cover:

- What is inclusive leadership?
- How can you lead more inclusive OPE?
- How can you be an inclusive advocate for OPE?

## **Workshop 4: Securing funding for outreach and Public Engagement (2.5hrs)**

*Friday 30 April 2025 10.00am - 12.30pm, online*

This session will look at developing funding proposals for outreach and public engagement. We will cover:

- Identifying appropriate internal and external funding sources.
- Thinking strategically about funding opportunities.
- Writing and reviewing funding bids.

## **Workshop 5: Navigating policy drivers for OPE (2.5hrs)**

*Friday 27 June 2025 10.00am – 12.30pm, online*

This session will explore how you can utilise different institutional levers and narratives for OPE. We will cover the following:

- Map out the key institutional levers for OPE within your context.
- Explore how to leverage these drivers to build a case for OPE.
- We will hear from experienced leaders across the sector who share their leadership stories and top tips.

## **Workshop 6: Wrap up and next steps (3 hrs)**

*Tuesday 16 September 2025 - location to be confirmed: this will be an in-person event with the option to join online.*

This workshop will bring participants together to share their progress against their goals, synthesise their top leadership tips and work to shape a plan for the forthcoming academic year. We will be joined by previous participants in the programme.

## **Mentoring**

Our mentors have extensive experience leading outreach and public engagement in universities. They are experts in senior leadership for outreach and public engagement, culture change in universities, evaluation, high-quality public engagement and outreach, strategy development, and influencing upwards. They will help you understand your circumstances and identify effective approaches to leadership in your setting. The mentors will share their first-hand experiences, point you to relevant resources, and connect to others in the field whom you could benefit from speaking with.

In total, each participant will be offered up to 1.5 days of mentoring time through the program. This would equate to approximately four or five mentoring sessions.

## **Peer groups**

You will be allocated into small peer groups of up to ten people. These groups will meet approximately three times at a time that is convenient for the group. The meetings will be online and an opportunity to work with others on issues that you are currently dealing with or expect to encounter in the near future. Helen or David will host the groups.

## **Resources and reading**

You will be provided with copies of all the materials used in the workshops and peer groups, along with follow-up materials if you wish to extend your reading.

## **Key dates for your diary**

As detailed above, the workshops will take place on the following dates and times:

- **Workshop 1: Orientation and introduction:** Tuesday 22 October 2024, 11.00am – 3.00pm, location to be confirmed: this will be an in-person event with the option to join online.
- **Workshop 2: Developing and implementing your OPE strategy:** Friday 6 December 2024, 1.30pm – 4.00pm, online.
- **Workshop 3: Inclusive leadership:** Monday 10 February 2025, 1.30pm – 4.00pm, online
- **Workshop 4: Securing funding for outreach and Public Engagement:** Friday 30 April 2025, 10.00am - 12.30pm, online
- **Workshop 5: Navigating policy drivers for OPE:** Friday 27 June 2025, 10.00am – 12.30pm, online
- **Workshop 6: Wrap up and next steps:** Tuesday 16 September 2025, 11.00am – 2.30pm, location to be confirmed: this will be an in-person event with the option to join online.

The peer groups and mentoring will be arranged around your availability.

## **How much time commitment does the programme take?**

We estimate that each participant will need to allocate between 3 – 5 hours per month to participate in the programme.

This accounts for:

- Attending the workshops and peer group discussions
- 1-1 Mentoring
- Additional reading you may choose to undertake

Our hope for the programme is that by providing you support related to leading outreach and public engagement, helping you develop your leadership approach, and by connecting you with peers and external expertise - it saves you more time in the long run than you put into it.

## **Introducing David, Helen, and the mentors**

### **David Owen, Gurukula Ltd.**

David has over fifteen years' experience working with leadership teams in UK higher education institutions supporting the embedding of outreach and public engagement in strategy. He has previously worked with universities to help them develop, implement, and review public engagement strategies and has co-authored several reports on public engagement leadership, including:

- University Governance for Public and Community Engagement, a report for the University of Brighton as part of their UKRI SEEPER Grant (2018)
- Engaged University: turning words into action, (UCL/NCCPE, 2019)
- A field guide to public engagement and culture change (University of Bath, 2021)

David is an ILM level 7 equivalent accredited coach with a wealth of facilitation, training and mentoring experience. Competent with online and in-person delivery and blended learning since the COVID-19 pandemic, he has successfully delivered continuing professional development courses, research and advocacy courses and brought stakeholders together on a \$25 billion investment to review progress and identify action plans.

### **Helen Featherstone, PhD, Independent Consultant**

Helen has been leading Public Engagement in Higher Education since 2012 and has been working in the public engagement and science communication sector for over 20 years. Helen is known for her excellent training and professional development interventions – with participants particularly valuing the expertly facilitated opportunities to learn together, to bring new ideas to their practice, and to hear real-life examples drawn from Helen's own experiences.

Helen recently led the UKRI-Funded SEE-PER project: ChallengeCPD@Bath, which examined public engagement training and professional development for academics. Helen was involved with setting up the NCCPE's Engage Academy and has been a mentor on that programme and for public engagement leads in Wellcome-funded research centres.

### **Dr Dom Galliano (he\they), Independent Consultant**

Dom Galliano is a freelance consultant working towards an open, transparent, and equitable research community. Dom works with academics, professional service staff, national funders, and other organisations to challenge the systems that inhibit culture change across the academic ecosystem. Dom brings over a decade of

experience from leading successful (and not so successful) programmes, structures and projects from their previous roles, which include Head of Public Engagement at UCL, Director of Outreach and Public Engagement at the Southeast Physics Network and managing Physics in Society programme for the Institute of Physics. They are an experienced mentor, having worked with over thirty academics and engagement professionals to reflect on their careers and help them through problematic projects. They are also a keen advocate and activist helping support and improve the workplace for the LGBTQ+ community in STEM and has advised national STEM membership organisations on their LGBTQ+ programmes.

**Charlotte Thorley (she/her), Independent Consultant**

Dr Charlotte Thorley is a freelance science communication and public engagement professional working with charities, universities, funding agencies and researchers to create structures and strategies that value diverse voices within research, reaching new audiences and maximising impact. Charlotte loves working in the space between the physical and social sciences, reflecting her own learning journey, and enjoys helping researchers to understand the impacts are having through their engagement work. Recent projects include a review of the Outreach Fund for the Royal Society of Chemistry, exploring the impact of the Early Career Engagement Programme for the STFC Laboratories, and continued evaluation support for the Tactile Universe project as well as strategic support for a number of university physics departments.

**Contact us**

If you have any questions about the programme please contact:

David Owen  
[david@gurukula.co.uk](mailto:david@gurukula.co.uk)  
[www.gurukula.co.uk](http://www.gurukula.co.uk)

Helen Featherstone  
[Helen.featherstone@proton.me](mailto:Helen.featherstone@proton.me)

## Application process and assessment criteria

You will need to apply to be on the OPE Leadership programme. Your application will be assessed by members of the Gurukula team, Ogden Trust, and STFC staff. If you are unsuccessful, you will be given feedback.

[Click this link to access the application form.](#)

Who is eligible?

- ✓ You are: research or teaching staff in a physics department or group, or STFC funded research group.
- ✓ You have responsibility for outreach and public engagement at a departmental/research group (or equivalent) level.
- ✓ STFC Facilities users and staff with responsibility for outreach and public engagement
- ✓ You must have some current experience of leadership for outreach and public engagement that is likely to continue over the duration of the programme. This experience can be very new.
- ✗ Members of the Ogden Outreach Officers Network are NOT eligible.

The assessment panel will use the following criteria to decide if the OPE Leadership programme is the right programme for you:

1. Your current level of strategic oversight and leadership for outreach and public engagement
2. Your commitment to developing your leadership in outreach and public engagement
3. Your departmental commitment to outreach and public engagement
4. Availability for the workshop dates and capacity to participate in the program

The panel will also be looking to create a cohort that is geographically distributed across the UK.

We encourage applications from those who are currently under-represented in outreach and public engagement leadership, including disabled, D/deaf and neurodiverse people, LGBTQ+ people, people with global majority heritage, and working-class background.

We can accept more than one applicant per institution, providing they are from different departments or groups. If we're oversubscribed for the programme, we may need to prioritise one applicant per institution.

Previous participants may apply. However, you must make a compelling case for how a second year on the programme would benefit you and your activities.

If you would like to talk to David or Helen before applying, they will be holding two drop-in sessions on:

- Monday 27 May, 12.00pm – 1.00pm
- Friday 14 June, 10.00am – 11.00am



There is no need to book; just turn up. You can also reach them at [david@gurukula.co.uk](mailto:david@gurukula.co.uk) and [Helen.featherstone@proton.me](mailto:Helen.featherstone@proton.me)

The **deadline** for applications is **5.00pm, Friday 21 June 2024**. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by 19 July 2024. We'll be holding informal discussions with successful applicants in July and early August.

### **Drop-in meeting links**

#### **Monday 3 June, 12.00pm – 1.00pm**

Topic: OPE Leadership Drop In

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81063783347?pwd=Si9ZaGlvSUdmb2ZjcjJ5YUp0WE94QT09>

Meeting ID: 810 6378 3347

Passcode: OPE2024

#### **Friday 14 June, 10.00am – 11.00am**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81063783347?pwd=Si9ZaGlvSUdmb2ZjcjJ5YUp0WE94QT09>

Meeting ID: 810 6378 3347

Passcode: OPE2024

## Application form

You will need to complete the following on the application form.

Name

Job title

Department

Please tick this box to confirm that the focus of this department is physics or STFC related.

Organisation

Email

Telephone

Provide a short biography (no more than 300 words) detailing your outreach/public engagement experience and responsibilities.

Please tick this box if you are happy to share this with other participants (should you be selected).

Please tell us what you want to get out of this programme (no more than 300 words). You may wish to tell us about you and your professional development goals and your department's outreach and public engagement ambitions.

Feel free to disclose if you are from underrepresented communities within outreach and public engagement leadership (including but not exclusively, disabled, D/deaf and neurodiverse people, LGBTQ+ people, people with global majority heritage, and working-class backgrounds.) We are asking this question to give you the opportunity to provide extra context to your application for the panel (no more than 200 words).

Which of the following are you most interested in support for? (tick all that apply)

Developing your approach to leading outreach and public engagement

Thinking strategically

Advocating for outreach and public engagement at a senior departmental level

Advocating for outreach and public engagement beyond your department

Engaging others with your strategy

Access to networks and expertise

Navigating change

Writing strategic documents

Writing operational documents

Leveraging your institution's mission and priorities

Project management and overseeing budgets

Line management

Writing business cases for roles and budgets

Other

Comment box

Please confirm your availability for the following workshops (check all that apply):

- Tuesday 22 October 2024, 11.00am – 3.00pm
- Friday 6 December 2024, 1.30pm – 4.00pm, online.
- Monday 10 February 2025, 1.30pm – 4.00pm, online
- Friday 30 April 2025, 10.00am - 12.30pm, online
- Friday 27 June 2025, 10.00am – 12.30pm, online
- Tuesday 16 September 2025, 11.00am – 2.30pm, location to be confirmed: this will be an in-person event with the option to join online.

#### Access statement

Any in-person activities will be held in venues with step-free access, audio loops, accessible toilets, and quiet rooms.

Vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free food will be available, but we will ask for dietary requirements before any in-person events.

Online activities will be held using Zoom, with closed captions being available. Slides will be available before the sessions in a screen-readable format.

Please tell us about anything else you may need to participate fully in the programme.

## **Outreach and Public Engagement Leadership Programme – code of conduct**

We believe that everyone has the right to feel safe, have a fulfilling experience and be in a welcoming environment when participating in the programme.

When participating in the OPE Leadership programme, we will respect and listen to each other's views;

- Use welcoming and inclusive language;
- Treat everyone equally;
- Respect each other's choice of pronoun (if in doubt, please ask);
- Respect each other's personal space and property

We will NOT accept:

- Violent behaviour;
- Harassment;
- Discrimination; or
- Display of inappropriate content.

Harassment includes but is not limited to, offensive verbal or written comments related to gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, harassing photography or recording, sustained disruption of events, inappropriate physical contact, unwelcome sexual attention. If what you're doing is making someone feel uncomfortable, that is enough reason to stop doing it.

We ask that everyone involved with the programme consider this code of conduct as a starting point. We will review and update it during the opening workshop and ask that everyone actively participate in abiding by the final principles as part of their continued involvement in the programme.

Making a complaint:

If someone is violating the Code of Conduct and you are either the subject of the harassment or a witness, there are three options:

1. If you feel able to discuss someone's behaviour aimed at you, or someone else, directly with them, please do.
2. Let David or Helen know and ask them to intervene if you wish them to. You may just want an incident recorded.
3. If the matter is particularly serious and you wish to file a formal complaint, please contact David or Helen, who will work with our funders to address the issue. If the complaint is against David or Helen, please contact our funders at [office@ogdentrust.com](mailto:office@ogdentrust.com) to discuss the matter with them.