



Queen Mary  
University of London

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

[www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement)





**Peter McOwan**  
Vice-Principal for Public Engagement  
and Student Enterprise

## Foreword – Vice-Principal for Public Engagement and Director of the CPE

The HE sector is in a period of rapid change. Here at QM our outward facing activities, our links with industry and the different communities we are part of are a key to our maintained success in these times, and as such are a high priority. To support this, Queen Mary has taken two major steps towards embedding this activity across the institution. Firstly we have appointed a Vice-Principal with specific responsibility for Public Engagement, to ensure that public engagement is at the heart of our strategic activities, forming a fundamental part of the spectrum from knowledge creation through to knowledge dissemination.

Secondly, as part of the 125th anniversary celebrations of the opening of the People's Palace, we have launched a Centre for Public Engagement, an expert resource base to facilitate and enable inspirational public dialogue with the College's ideas and research. The new Centre will support our staff and students and their work with external partners – businesses, charities, community organisations, government, and the wider public – ensuring that this work achieves a positive social and economic impact.

We are pleased that already we have enabled the inclusion of Public Engagement work within our promotions criteria for academics, and through our Celebration event celebrated the success of many of our projects. There is still more to do, and we hope that the Centre and the resources we are developing will enable us to work together as we develop our Public Engagement activities.



**Mike Curtis**  
Director of the Centre for Public Engagement

## Introduction – Manager of CPE and Public Engagement officer

Public Engagement at Queen Mary encompasses the widest possible variety of work; from collaboration with business and developing social entrepreneurial projects to delivering curriculum relevant sessions with school or putting on a theatre show. All of this and much, much more is already done here at QM, supporting our research, building on our personal passions and contributing directly to civic needs. The Centre for Public Engagement is here now to capture and share the good practice, the experience and skills that have been developed by the staff and students of QM, to ensure that the people involved are recognised and rewarded, and that their story is told.

Enclosed you'll find the strategy we plan to use to help us in this work; we are strong believers in leading through practice, so you'll also find details of key projects from across QM showing the breadth of what can be achieved with a little creativity and thought. Based within the Principal's office we are at the heart of Queen Mary, ensuring that Public Engagement is included in every strategic conversation, but we are an academic-led Centre, working closely with colleagues from every area of research to develop our programmes. We are very much looking forward to hearing about, and helping with, your engagement activities.



**Charlotte Thorley**  
Manager, Centre for Public Engagement



**Bryony Frost**  
Public Engagement Officer



## Vision

QM will establish itself as a leader in the field of HE Public Engagement building on the history of our founding as the People's Palace and current excellent practice in engaging a wide and diverse range of people with QM research, buildings and staff.

## Implementation

To enable this vision to be met we have take the following actions:

- appointed a Vice-Principal for Public Engagement
- created the Centre for Public Engagement and appointed its Director and Staff
- built the support structures for these appointments, such as the CPE advisory board and Faculty Stakeholder Groups
- signed the concordat and manifestos for Public Engagement

## Strategic Aims

### Do More

To **enable** QM researchers and professional staff not just to take part in public engagement activities, but to see them as an integral and important part of working in a leading HE establishment.

### Do Better

To **improve** the quality of all the public engagement activities at QM, through shared practice, development of rigorous evaluation tools, and appropriate recognition and reward for public engagement work.

### Do Tell

To **share** public engagement practice, both within QM and with external networks and stakeholders. To become a leader in the field of HE public engagement through promotion of the mechanisms that lead to the most effective public engagement.



## Do More –

To **enable** QM researchers and professional staff not just to take part in public engagement activities, but to see them as an integral and important part of working in a leading HE establishment.



QM has a strong history of public engagement activity. Our roots are based in the People's Palace, a building dedicated for the education and entertainment of the public. Our staff and students have taken on this ethos, showing themselves to be incredibly positive towards building strong links with the communities around us, opening up our spaces and processes, and creating knowledge in partnership. This strategy will build on those roots.

### We will do this by...

- Creating a dynamic culture of involvement in public engagement, both strategic and responsive in reacting to opportunities
- Working on programmes of Patient Engagement that build on our close links with local NHS Trusts
- Increasing our partnerships with local schools, cultural organisations, industry, policy and community groups including the Olympic Park site, Tech City and the banking community in the City of London
- Identifying those activities that are most effective in achieving engagement replicating or extending their provision
- Be proactive in developing innovative ways of delivering public engagement activities and using new technologies, such as iTunesU, MOOCs and Citizen Research projects to enable to widest possible access
- Provide advice about, and access to, funding for public engagement activity to encourage the development of new, sustainable and high quality programmes
- Work across Queen Mary to create accessible physical and digital campuses
- Support development of the Queen Mary cultural strategy, including supporting the development of plans for our Great Hall and music provision
- Encourage development of engagement-informed research and interdisciplinary approaches to public engagement to ensure we are at the forefront of understanding in these areas
- Exploring all options for ensuring public engagement activities and processes can be created, developed and sustained, including core-funding and external sponsorship.

### Success looks like...

- Increase across 3 years in the diversity of public engagement activity carried out across QM, and those who deliver it. More academics from every stage of career involved in PE, more activities that involve dialogue and conversation with the public to be delivered. Baseline: HEBCI reported activity 2011
- A community stakeholder group to be established by the end of 2013 to enable a continuing dialogue between QM and relevant groups
- Public engagement activities and QM events to always be made accessible to the public via suitable web-based platforms
- Year on year increase in number of applications for funding that are supported by the CPE
- Public Engagement forming a significant element of the new Life Sciences Institute and associated programmes.

# Link

Examples of Public Engagement activity at Queen Mary

[www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement/ouractivity](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement/ouractivity)

## Do Better –

To **improve** the quality of all the public engagement activities at QM, through shared practice, development of rigorous evaluation tools, and appropriate recognition and reward for public engagement work.



We have already established a strong track record in delivery of public engagement activities. Now it is time to look at what makes for good engagement, for both the audience and for the delivery partners. Essential to this is development of reward and recognition routes for our staff and students.

### We will do this by...

- Developing our new Centre for Public Engagement as the focal point for all of QM's PE activities, bringing together and extending our already excellent practice
- Deepening our institutional understanding of audiences and how to make public engagement work best for all involved
- Engaging with the wider Public engagement community to develop good practice for Public Engagement
- Curating and creating effective training programmes for staff and students to develop their Public Engagement skills and knowledge
- Ensuring that all staff and students who deliver PE activities are systematically recognised and celebrated
- Building on the work already done to include Public Engagement and Enterprise in our promotions criteria by building up awareness of good practice in these areas throughout management structures
- Testing nationally developed evaluation tools that help us to measure the impact of our public engagement work

- Develop our own novel methods for evaluation of Public Engagement activities, introducing suitable metrics for improved reporting
- Taking the ambitions of our strategy for Public Engagement and embed them in all our key strategies and processes
- Being exemplary in the processes of consultation and inclusions enabling our projects to adopt the same practices
- Providing advice and structure to enable successful projects to flourish and be sustainable.

### Success looks like...

- An established Centre for Public Engagement brand, used across QM activity by 2014
- Increased diversity over two years in the audience for QM public engagement activity, including primary school children and teachers and older people. Baseline to be measured in 2013
- A coherent and expert package of training options available to staff and students through existing mechanisms such as the Learning Institute, but delivered in collaboration with the CPE.
- At least two training options available to every career level per year.
- Annual awards to be given for participation in public engagement and enterprise activities, to be awarded at an annual celebration event. Public engagement to be acknowledged within the staff appraisal system
- The CPE website and intranet pages acting as a central repository for good practice, delivery and evaluation tools, and being regularly used by QM staff and students
- Public Engagement referred to explicitly in other strategy documents, including the new QM Strategic Plan for 2015 and beyond
- To have reached the Embedded stage of the public engagement process outlined in the NCCPE's EDGE tool.

# Link

**Queen Mary is working to recognise the contribution staff make by doing Public Engagement**

[www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement/rewardandrecognition](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement/rewardandrecognition)

## Do Tell –

To **share** public engagement practice, both within QM and with external networks and stakeholders. To become a leader in the field of HE public engagement through promotion of the mechanisms that lead to the most effective public engagement.



Our existing practice around public engagement is exemplary, so it is time we told the world about it. There are efficiencies to be made by sharing practice internally and awareness to be raised through promotion externally. QM has the experience, skills and enthusiasm needed to become a true leader in the field of public engagement.

### We will do this by...

- Promoting Public Engagement at all levels of the institution, ensuring that it is prominent in all our internal and external communications
- Developing guidelines for good practice that build on and extend existing work at QM and nationally
- Create opportunities for practice sharing within and external to QM, including an annual Public Engagement Conference
- Develop innovative ways of promoting the process of public engagement in partnership with other HEIs and organisations
- Work with the Communications, Marketing and Events teams to promote and support public engagement activities
- Work with partner organisations and HEIs to share and promote critical thinking and practice in public engagement
- Working with the Students Union to promote, support and reward student links to our local communities.

### Success looks like...

- Public engagement events, training and resources mentioned regularly in staff bulletins and included in the annual review. Faculty Stakeholder Groups introduced to ensure public engagement is considered across every school and institute. QMSU representatives on the CPE steering group.
- A bank of resources developed by CPE staff that gathers practice from across QM and external sources being accessed regularly by QM staff and students
- A Public Engagement seminar series and blog to start mid-2013 to enable regular sharing of practice
- A Public Engagement conference to be held annually, starting in September 2013. Informal networks of public engagement practitioners across QM to be developed
- Successful promotion of QM public engagement events both internally and externally. Year on year improvement in pick-up of QM activities by local and national media.

# Link

**Join the conversation!**

[www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement/jointheconversation](http://www.qmul.ac.uk/publicengagement/jointheconversation)

## Portfolio of activities

### Centre of the Cell

Subjects:

Audiences:

Centre of the Cell is a £4 million biomedical science education centre, educational website and outreach project aimed at children and young people aged 9 to 19, families and youth and community groups. Centre of the Cell is the first science education centre in the world to be located within biomedical research laboratories.

The Centre of the Cell 'Pod' (resembling a 16 cell human embryo) is dramatically suspended above the laboratories and provides young people with a unique interactive insight into what scientists do and how their work influences real life. Centre of the Cell's Director, Professor Fran Balkwill OBE FMedSci, is a leading cancer researcher and science communication expert. Centre of the Cell has won a number of major awards including the Museums & Heritage Excellence Award for the Best Educational Initiative in the UK and the EngageU Award for the Best Innovations in University Outreach and Public Engagement in Europe.

The project was created by Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and its medical school, Barts and The London, to inspire curiosity and learning and to connect science to everyday life. Embedding a science education centre for the public at the heart of a research building is enabling us to generate an ethos of enthusiastic, targeted two-way communication that permeates throughout the medical school and university. Centre of the Cell is deeply rooted within its diverse local communities and also acts as catalyst to stimulate further public engagement and outreach projects across the university. Centre of the Cell has an excellent track record of working with QMUL researchers and secondary schools students to bring contemporary and inspirational research contexts into formal and informal learning to enhance and enrich the curriculum.



### Cutting East

Subjects: Film, Youth, Culture, Mile End

Audiences: General public, local youth

Dr. Amit S. Rai, from the School of Business and Management works with a group of young people from around Mile End. Using his experience in marketing and communications, and film and media, he mentors 5 local kids from East London's immigrant communities as they develop the Cutting East Film Festival, the youth section of the East End Film Festival. This is a film festival by young people for young people, and aims to bring together innovative multi-platform media and the communities of East London. The project uses film and media as a catalyst for social action, engaging young people in their communities and enabling them to

voice issues important to themselves. The themes for this year's festival will be 1) Religion, Identity, Refugees, and 2) Unemployment, Austerity, and Homelessness. Cutting East will run from 5-7 July at the Genesis Cinema in Stepney Green. For more information check out their web page: [www.eastendfilmfestival.com/cutting-east](http://www.eastendfilmfestival.com/cutting-east) or follow them on Twitter @CuttingEast.



### G-Hack

Subjects: Electronic Engineering and Computer Science, Design, Creativity

Audiences: General public

G.Hack was formed in February 2011 by a group of female researchers from the School of Electronic Engineering and Computer Science. The aim of the group is to provide a supportive and women friendly learning environment in which knowledge sharing and development of interactive media projects in collaboration with other universities, arts organizations and industry partners can take place.

G.Hack's first external project was a group art exhibition called Chi-TEK, alongside 20 leading female artists working with technology and new media. The artists were asked to 'hack' a teapot, using technology to make the teapot into a piece of art. G.Hack produced an interactive installation: *Sound Mapping London Tea Houses*, which allowed users to move a teapot over a map of London, hearing the different sounds of tea houses across

the capital as they did so. The collection premiered at the V&A during the *Digital Weekend*, an event attended by 7,500 visitors from all over the world.

The group has also collaborated with Central Saint Martin's College of Arts and Design on an interactive installation *Threads & Yarns*: senior citizens from Camden worked with arts students to create a set of crochet flowers, which were then implanted with speakers playing recordings of their conversations. They have delivered workshops based on both the technology used for *Sound Mapping London Tea Houses* as well as extending the project using textiles, electronics and smart materials. More info about their activities can be found on their blog: <http://ghack.eecs.qmul.ac.uk/>



**Mile End Group**

Subjects: Politics, Policy, History

Audiences: Policy Makers, General Public



The Mile End Group (MEG) is Queen Mary University of London’s forum for government and politics. MEG events are open to all and free to attend providing you secure a ticket.

The MEG was created in December 2003 by doctoral students of Peter Hennessy, Attlee Professor of Contemporary British History at Queen Mary. The initial focus of the MEG was to provide a lively gathering for the findings of postgraduate research, allowing for discussion in an informal yet dynamic environment and building on Professor Hennessy’s undergraduate course, ‘Cabinet and Premiership’, and his MA class, ‘The Hidden Wiring’. As the particular emphasis of the research centred on the worlds of Westminster and Whitehall, past and present, the MEG invited contribution from a variety of individuals with inside knowledge of the workings of government, and over the years has evolved into a seminar series attracting increasingly high profile speakers.

Professor Sir Michael Barber, Lord Healey, Lord Heseltine, Lord Hurd, Sir John Major, Baroness Eliza Manningham-Buller, Sir David Omand, Peter Riddell, Alan Rusbridger and David Willetts, amongst others, have all spoken at MEG seminars. The involvement of such noted speakers has served to widen the appeal of MEG events, and attendees include those from academia, business, government and journalism. Many students also attend, making the group a truly intergenerational forum for the exchange of ideas and experience.

The MEG co-operates with a number of institutes and think tanks and has partnerships and links to the Attlee Foundation, the British Academy, the Cabinet Office, Churchill College Cambridge, Corpus Christi College Cambridge, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the Ministry of Defence, the National Archives, the Prime Minister’s Office, the Royal Society, the Royal United Services Institute, the Science Museum, the Treasury, and the Young Foundation.

**People’s Palace Projects**

Subjects: Drama, Performing Arts

Audiences: General Public, young people, policy makers

People’s Palace Projects was set up in 1996 when Paul Heritage came to Queen Mary University of London to establish a new Drama Department. Having previously founded the Theatre in Prison and Probation (TiPP) Centre at Manchester University with colleague James Thompson, Paul set out to create an independent arts charity based in East London.

Interested in exploring the ways in which the arts can respond to urgent social crises, Paul’s vision for People’s Palace Projects was supported by QMUL and the organisation was incorporated as a charity in 1998.

People’s Palace Projects has had an international focus from its inception, with our first project journeying to Burkina Faso, West Africa. The project addressed issues that affected Burkina Faso’s rural communities, particularly in regards to AIDS/HIV education. By working with a local partner, we trained practitioners and created a tour of forum-based performances. This

initial project marked the beginning of the process that still forms the basis of PPP’s work, both in the UK and beyond.

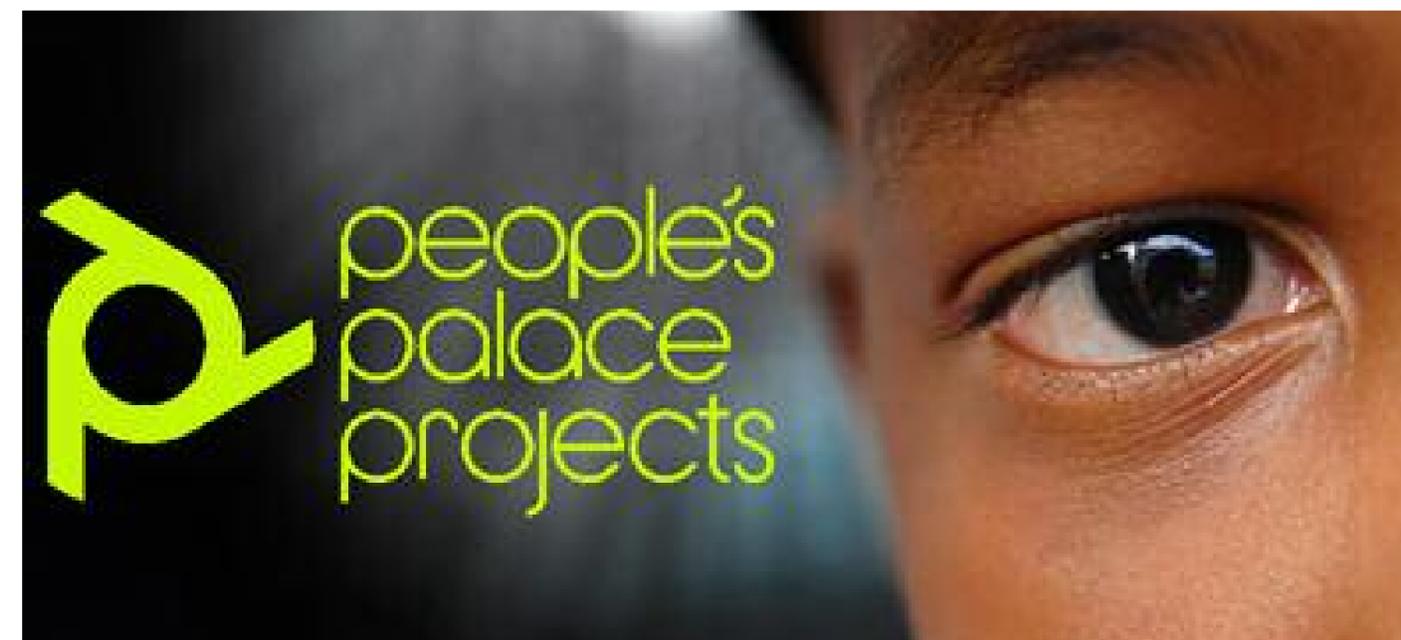
Fifteen years on...

People’s Palace Projects has spent the last fifteen years creating and debating art that makes a difference to people’s lives. From London to Brazil, Liverpool to Azerbaijan, our creative projects and cultural exchange programmes have sought out contexts where art matters most and working with those for whom art makes a difference in the lives.

For over a decade, we worked in the Brazilian prison system, seeing prison guards become human right advocates, ex-prisoners become actors, and a studio theatre built in a Federal prison complex in Brasilia. We have created projects that have had a real and measurable impact on people’s lives, including the negotiation of ceasefires between rival

drug gangs in Rio de Janeiro and the improvement of degraded environments in the communities of Acre, Brazil.

People’s Palace Projects work has received recognition from a number of awarding boards. In 2010, we became the first and only UK arts organisation to become one of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture’s International ‘Pontos de Cultura’ (Points of Culture). Our artistic director, Paul Heritage has been knighted by the Brazilian government for his contribution to UK-Brazilian cooperation. In 2004, Paul received the British Council’s 70th Anniversary Award and Premio ORILAXE award for Human Rights in 2005 for his work with PPP projects.



## Portfolio of activities

### Do I have to go?

Subjects: Dentistry, Drama

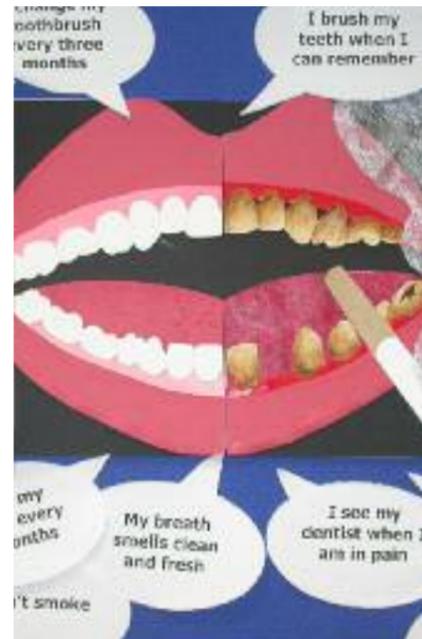
Audiences: Primary, Parents

Professor Ferranti Wong, Dr Benjamin Roberts (Institute of Dentistry), and Alistair Campbell (English and Drama) work with children from the local Osmani Primary school, using child-led research to explore why children are not motivated to visit the dentist.

Using drama techniques developed by Alistair Campbell, the team engaged with the children to develop child-led research questions. The children then engaged with their peers and parents to discover the answers before the results of the research were presented back to other students and staff at the school to generate positive attitudes and break down barriers associated with dental health.

Four PhD students from Paediatric Dentistry were instrumental in tracking the development of the child-led pedagogical model from the starting position of being totally immersed in the drama techniques, to a present identification of three longer-term aims:

- 1/ To evaluate this reflexive practice as a strategy to include the voice of the child in PhD training;
- 2/ To negotiate with the children, the school and the academy to create a training template with wider relevance to Medical Humanities research and pedagogical practices;
- 3/ To identify ways forward for the successful dissemination of the model, honouring shared ownership with all public partners.



### Barts Pathology Museum

Subjects: Pathology, Medicine, Dentistry, History

Audiences: General public, adults

The beautiful Grade II listed Pathology Museum at St Bartholomew's Hospital houses over 5,000 medical specimens. It spans three mezzanine levels and includes pathological pots relating to all areas of anatomy and physiology, including the skull of John Bellingham – assassin of Prime Minister Spencer Percival. Traditionally a teaching collection, the museum has now opened its doors to the general public through taxidermy lessons and events that included an anatomical themed cake sale and a seminar about Egyptian 'Mummies' for Mother's Day.

Only open to the public for these special events, the museum has pulled in a spectacular 5000 visitors in its first year.

Its rapidly growing fan base secured the museum 2nd place in the prestigious Culture24 'Connect 10 competition' and the Museum of London chose to host one of their Doctor's, Dissection and Resurrection Men lectures in the space, with many other collaborations scheduled for the future. The events all run concurrently with the conservation and repair of the museum's anatomical specimens.



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