

Public Engagement Grant Scheme Information and guidelines for applicants

1. Introduction

The Institute of Physics (IOP) in Scotland actively encourages its members and others to communicate exciting aspects and applications of physics to a wide audience. IOP Scotland's grant scheme is designed to give financial support of up to £2,500 (under exceptional circumstances and with the appropriate justification additional financial support may be considered) to individuals and organisations running physics-based events and activities for non-academic audiences.

This is part of the IOP's [five-year strategy](#) which aims to widen participation in and enjoyment of physics, and to raise appreciation of the important role that physics plays in our culture and society. As part of this strategy, we are working to reach under-represented young people and their influencers from the following groups: Black Caribbean young people, young people with disabilities, girls and women, young LGBT+ people and young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Applications which target these groups are particularly encouraged, although all applications which aim to widen the participation in and enjoyment of physics are welcome.

Practical support in terms of help, advice and selected resources is available if needed, prior to application from the Public Engagement Manager in Scotland (contact michael.jarrell@iop.org) or the IOP Scotland Committee, who can be contacted via the Nation Support Coordinator in Scotland (contact muzakira.farid@iop.org). We would advise applicants to check our FAQs before contacting us.

2. Objectives

The IOP's grant scheme aims to encourage and support the development of projects that:

- Raise public awareness of, and engagement with, contemporary physics;
- Inspire and enthuse public audiences, especially those not previously interested in physics
- Reach young people in under-represented groups and their influencers beyond the classroom.
- Develop the science communication skills of physicists
- Develop the science skills of communicators, artists, community organisers and cultural groups

3. Eligibility

The grant scheme is open to all and provides funding in Scotland for individuals and organisations to organise public engagement with physics activities. This includes, but is not limited to, members of the IOP, researchers in academia or industry, museums, community groups, not-for-profit organisations, arts groups, and libraries.

Previous recipients of IOP's grants are welcome to apply for funding. The completed final reports from previous projects will be used by the panel during the assessment process.

The assessment panel will have access to your previous application and will look to see:

- Feedback for unsuccessful applications has been acted on
- Development of ideas or activity from successful projects
- Responses to any lessons learnt from successful project final reports

4. Criteria for successful applications

Applications should meet as many as possible of the following **priority** criteria:

- The project is **physics-based** and explores underlying concepts and issues, rather than just providing information.
- Demonstrate imaginative ways of engaging new audiences with physics, including through cross-disciplinary collaborations.
- Demonstrate a clear target audience which aligns with the [IOP Limit Less campaign](#) to reach the influencers, particularly the family and community, of young people from under-represented groups (Black Caribbean, Disabled, Girls, LGBT+, low socio-economic and/or geographically isolated communities).
- Clear objectives for the project and the potential to make an impact on the target audience.
- A clear plan for an adequate and appropriate means of **publicity** to reach the target audience(s).

In addition to the above, we welcome applications that meet as many as possible of the following **desirable** criteria:

- That the activity is dependent on IOP funding or that it adds a significant element.
- Evidence that the applicant has a plan to meet any shortfall in funding not covered by the IOP's award or by other institutions they might have applied to.
- A realistic assessment of practical issues such as copyright, insurance and health and safety issues.
- Awareness of public interest and concerns including the relevance of the project to the target audience(s); (N.B. projects relating to the global challenges of climate change, healthcare and cybersecurity are encouraged.)
- Timeliness and relevance. Projects linking physics to external events in the wider community, e.g. local festivals, anniversaries etc., are welcome.
- Cost effectiveness. Where applications include buying in commercially provided activities (such as science shows), the application should clearly **justify the need** for the activities with respect to the target audience.
- Evidence of working with physicists to ensure accurate content.
- Projects that develop the science communication skills of physicists are encouraged. The

Public Engagement Manager (Scotland) can help to identify local physicists to assist with projects if required.

- Projects that support the [IOP Scotland public engagement programme](#) are welcome.
- Realistic timelines and a clear plan for delivery of the project.

Grants will *not* be awarded to:

- Projects that will take place outwith Scotland. For projects elsewhere in the UK and Ireland we welcome applications for our [public engagement grant scheme](#) that covers the whole UK and Ireland.
- Projects aimed at children while at school or on school trips. This includes outreach visits to schools and trips by school groups to your organisation. Schools might be interested in the [IOP/STFC/IET Schools Grant Scheme](#) which funds projects up to £600.
- Cover the cost of projects which are part of an organisation's usual programme of activities.
- Cover the cost of general purpose hardware, apparatus or equipment such as digital cameras, telescopes or computers etc., unless it is shown to be integral to the project, will be used beyond the project lifetime to communicate physics and does not make up the majority of the project costs.
- Projects where the entire grant is covering the salary of a freelancer. Up to two-thirds of the total amount requested can be used to cover the salary of freelancers working on the project. We encourage freelancers to work with an organisation to demonstrate the demand for their project. We will consider flexibility on this point while in-person events are not possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, funding freelancers' salary to develop activities for future delivery or online events.
- Cover the costs of salaries which are already covered by the organisation applying. You may allocate up to two-thirds of the grant to cover staffing costs which are not already covered by the organisation applying for the grant. Academics salaries can only be covered if full-time salary is not already in place.
- Projects which involve any members of the IOP's Council.

Applicants are encouraged to join the [STEM Ambassadors programme](#). As well as being an excellent scheme, it will provide free access to the [Protecting Vulnerable Groups \(PVG\) Scheme](#).

Grants must usually be used within 6 months of the date of award, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic this is currently negotiable.

5. Application process

[The application forms can be found in digital format here](#)

Applicants wishing to discuss their ideas before applying can contact Mikey Jarrell (IOP Public Engagement Manager for Scotland) for informal advice at michael.jarrell@iop.org

Applications can be submitted at any time.

Applications will be assessed by a sub-committee of the Institute of Physics in Scotland Committee. Applicants will be notified of the outcome within 4 weeks of the date of application.

6. Successful applicants

All grant payments will be made by bank transfer following an invoice to the IOPS Committee.

Reporting

A final report of the activities is expected from all those who receive grants as project evaluation and feedback can be of enormous benefit both to the organisers and to those who provide support. The final report should include a summary evaluation report against your objectives, including the activities delivered and numbers of those attending. Any images of the activities would also be appreciated. We can provide you with advice and resources to support you in conducting your evaluation.

Sections of the application form and final report may be made public on our website and shared with potential applicants with your permission. It would be appreciated if a general paragraph or two was included in the report, which could be used for publicity. We would also be grateful if you could fill in this short form; for our monitoring of grant recipients across the UK and Ireland: [IOP National and Regional Branch Grant Evaluation Form](#)

Recognition of IOP Scotland funding

Recipients of grants are required to acknowledge IOP Scotland sponsorship on all of their promotional materials. The IOP logo will be sent to all successful applicants. Copies of promotional material and any press cuttings of your project should be included with your final report.

7. Unsuccessful applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email within four weeks of application. Feedback will be given. The sub-committee's decision is final.