

Resourcing public and community involvement in research projects in your local authority

Introduction to this guidance

Members of the public and community may be involved in your research in several different ways. This could include:

1. Public and community contributors who are part of the overall **governance** around research in your local authority. This could involve members of a public advisory board for example.
2. Public and community members who are **involved in individual research projects and who take a leading role** in shaping, delivering, and presenting the research. This role is often referred to as a community or peer researcher.
3. Public or (and) community members who **take part in your research as participants**, for example answering a survey or taking part in an interview or focus group

This checklist aims to help colleagues in local authorities to think through some of the practicalities and costs of working with members of the public and community on individual research projects.

Definitions of involvement and participation

Researchers and others use a variety of words to describe ways of interacting with the public.

Involvement

NIHR defines public involvement in research as research being carried out 'with' or 'by' members of the public rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them. It is an active partnership between members of the public and researchers that influences and shapes research.

Here are examples of how members of the public might get involved in research as **public or community contributors**:

- as joint grant holders or co-applicants on a research project
- identifying research priorities
- as members of a project advisory or steering group
- commenting on and developing information leaflets or other research materials
- undertaking interviews with research participants
- carrying out research as community co-researchers

Participation

This is when people take part in a research study as participants. Examples of **participation** are:

- completing a questionnaire
- participating in a focus group as part of a research study
- taking part in an interview

For more information, see: [Briefing notes for researchers - public involvement in NHS, health and social care research | NIHR](#)

Payment Rates

If you are asking public or community contributors to take part in research (**as contributors or participants**), you should think about how you are going to compensate them for their time. There are lots of different views around the levels of compensation that are appropriate, and this will also depend on the context you are working in.

NIHR has created [guidelines](#) on how much to pay community members for taking part in research projects.

However, it is important to recognise that:

- [The rate of payment that you make is at your discretion](#), and there may be rates suggested by your organisation or institution.
- The amounts that public contributors are paid for involvement varies widely, depending on activity and organisational finances/budget constraints. What you can offer will depend on the budget available. If you are applying for funding from NIHR, they will expect to see a realistic budget for involvement.

Specific NIHR guidance is available on employment and tax considerations: [Payment for public involvement in health and care research: a guide for organisations on employment status and tax | NIHR](#)

Resourcing public and community involvement in specific research projects

This checklist is designed to be an interactive document that you can use to build up your budget to support involvement from public and community contributors in your research project:

Public or community members leading and delivering research (contributors)

Items to budget for:	Things to consider	Included?		Notes
		Yes	No	
Salary for a coordinator and or facilitator plus overheads	<p>As a first consideration, it is important to ensure sufficient staff time has been allocated to support involvement activities during your research project as these can require considerable time to facilitate.</p> <p>If you are working with a voluntary and community sector partner to facilitate involvement, you will also need to consider whether they have any staff costs that would need to be covered.</p>			
Payment for involvement in induction sessions	You may wish to have group and individual induction sessions on topics such as data protection, safeguarding and to cover the time taken to complete any initial administrative activities.			
Payment for involvement in sessions to plan and design the research	<p>You will need to think about the planning sessions needed for public and community contributors to shape the research project and to feel confident about their role in delivery.</p> <p>This could involve sessions to practice data collection skills (interviewing practice) for example, as well as sessions to shape the interview question, agree on a methodology and work through practical arrangements for the research (for example how will data be collected and</p>			

	stored, how will consent be recorded?)			
Payment for involvement in data collection	If public contributors or community members are leading data collection, you will need to calculate the time they will spend on these activities (for example conducting interviews, etc.).			
Payment for involvement in data analysis	<p>You may wish to involve public contributors in the analysis of your data. We recommend thinking about how to make these sessions accessible and meaningful.</p> <p>For more information on participatory analysis, see: Participatory Analysis – Learning for Action</p>			
Payment for time contributing to writing up and presenting findings	Once analysis is complete, some public contributors may wish to be involved in writing up the findings and presenting these to different audiences. Findings could be presented in forms such as animations, short summary documents, or graphics to reach different audiences.			
Payment for time contributing to project evaluation	Methods such Ripple Effect Mapping enable a participatory approach to evaluation throughout the life of your research project. There are lots of different approaches you can take to evaluation but if you are planning to ask public or community contributors to be involved, you will need to			

	include their time for this in your budget.			
Payment for one to ones with contributors during the life of the research project	You may wish to schedule regular catch ups with your public or community contributors to ensure they are comfortable in their roles and are benefiting in terms of professional and personal development.			
Meeting rooms	You may need to budget for meeting rooms for regular meetings of the public and community contributors co-leading the research. You may also wish to include budget for a venue for a celebration or dissemination event at the end of the project.			
Materials, stationery, printing	Materials for planning sessions with public and community contributors.			
Travel expenses	For contributors to travel to planning sessions, data collection activities, or sessions to present research findings for example.			
Food and refreshments for meetings	If meetings are face to face, we highly recommend providing refreshments at all meetings and planning sessions. You may also wish to budget for refreshments for a celebration event at the end of the project.			
Resources to support access needs of different	You may wish to budget for individual items to ensure all contributors can participate			

public contributors, to ensure they can contribute fully.	<p>fully in activities, this could include, translation of materials, BSL interpreters, big print versions or fidget toys for those who find these helpful to aid concentration for example.</p> <p>This could also involve covering childcare costs, and or support from carers or personal assistants.</p> <p>You may also wish to allocate budget to creating accessible materials, such a plain language booklet that summarises what is expected from public or community contributors.</p>			
---	--	--	--	--

Public or community members taking part in research as participants (PARTICIPANTS)

Items to budget for:	Things to consider	Included?		Notes
		Yes	No	
Participation in a research activity e.g. survey, interview, focus group	If you are asking community members to take part in research as participants, you should consider whether you are going to compensate them for their time.			

Further resources:

[Budgeting for involvement: cost calculator - Learning for Involvement](#)

[PPIE planning tool for researchers - Learning for Involvement](#)

[Inclusive research funding application guidance | NIHR](#)

[Different experiences: A framework for considering who might be involved in research | NIHR](#)

[Public Co-Applicants in Research - NIHR guidance](#)