



Summer 2020

Public Engagement Newsletter

Greetings from the PERu HQ!

So much has changed since our last newsletter back in January – I'm sure our team is not alone in feeling that the landscape and context for our work is shifting and changing significantly as the COVID19 crisis progresses. Our PE Network Lunch and Showcase back in February feels a world away ...

In this issue we'll bring you up to speed on **how PERu and our partner teams are adjusting and responding to the situation**; we hope you'll be encouraged and energised by the exciting opportunities and activities that are emerging.

An early 'win' for the team was responding to many requests for digital content to be used at home by schools/families. An array of resources were speedily collated and promoted from **our new '[Digital Engagement](#)' web page** – and will continue to build. We're delighted that opportunities for longer-term collaboration with the Widening Participation Team are opening up as we collectively navigate the crisis and its

aftermath. Schools University Partnerships Officer Jess Spurrell shares more on this below.

The emerging 'Civic University' scoping work, led by our PE Hubs Manager Ronda Gowland-Pryde, becomes increasingly important in light of COVID19 challenges and the need for strong partnerships and a collaborative response. There is great potential for support and partnering with local community groups and organisations. Our **Public Engagement Hubs** will be involved in, and shaped by, these 'civic' developments. More from Ronda on the Hubs below.

Sadly, Southampton Science and Engineering Festival (SOTSEF) 2020 was an early casualty of the pandemic; but emerging from this disappointment, we are very excited to be presenting '**SOTSEF Goes Digital**' later this month running through to late July – read on to find out more!



Our Operations Lead,
Silvia Lanati

whets our appetite for #SOTSEF re-imagined!

SOTSEF 2020 is back with a twist as 'SOTSEF Goes Digital'! The digital takeover of [Southampton Science & Engineering Festival](#) (SOTSEF) will run from Friday 22 May until Saturday 25 July 2020.

SOTSEF Goes Digital will include a variety of different activities, from downloadable resources, virtual tours, talks, podcasts and blogs to live workshops, performances and Q&A sessions and include citizen science projects. The programme will gradually be released throughout the weeks of the Festival and will host 4 featured sections:

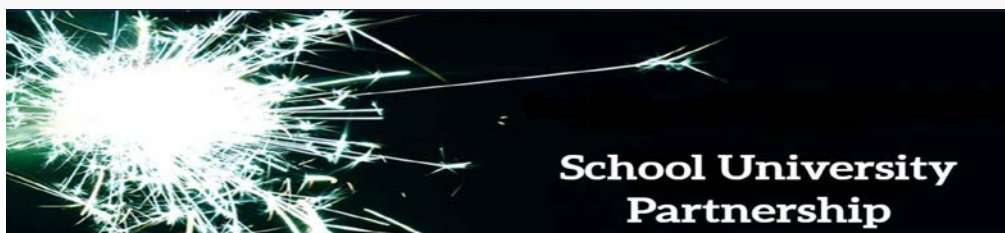
- SOTSEF presents **COVID-19 Special** (for all types of activities with a focus on Covid-19 and related themes, e.g. lockdown, PPE, etc.)
- SOTSEF presents **The Southampton Sound Festival** (in collaboration with ISVR and UoS Music)
- SOTSEF presents **The Southampton Science and Engineering Shed** (for DIY projects at home)
- SOTSEF presents **The UoS Roadshow: on the road from home** (to collate citizen science projects, i.e. asking the public to help you gathering data for a project, e.g. Aurora Zoo)

Exhibitors from SOTSEF 2020 have already been invited to submit to the new format; but if you are a new contributor wanting to take part, please contact the Festival team at festival@soton.ac.uk for instructions on how to submit.

Follow us on Twitter [@UoS_Engagement](https://twitter.com/UoS_Engagement) [#SOTSEF](https://twitter.com/SOTSEF) as the event unfolds!



[SOTSEF 'Goes Digital' Website](https://www.sotsef.co.uk)



Our Schools University Partnership Officer,
Jess Spurrell

gives us a glimpse of the ground breaking work going on to keep us all
connected!



Outreach and Engagement might not seem like the sorts of activities that would
suit working from home - but it's amazing what you can come up with after
enough cups of tea! Here's a little taster...

Online Educational Resources - We have been working on these for a number of years so were
able to offer teacher, home educators and community groups a number of exciting activities linking
the curriculum and our research straight away - and, thanks to a lot of hard work and imagination
from across the university, we now have even more to share! From how to design a flag to the
science of Roald Dahl, following medieval ships to the dinosaur on your windowsill, there are
MOOCs, forums, videos, podcasts, lesson plans, quizzes and more!

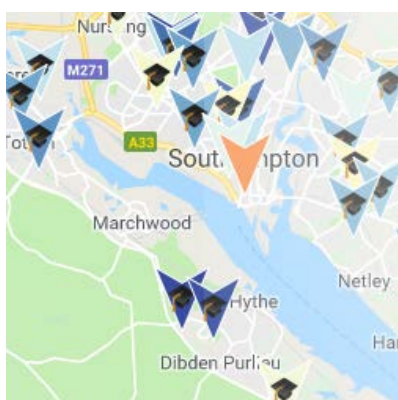
www.sotontalk2us.org.uk/resources

Bridging the Digital Divide - As teaching, learning, and many social services are forced to move online, consistent access to the internet has never been a more important resource. [In a recent report the Children's Commissioner](#) highlighted the need of school and college students with no internet access - and data from our colleagues in [SUN](#) suggest that this number may be only scratching the surface, not least because it doesn't account for teachers without internet access at home. This is no small issue and its legacy will last far beyond the end of lockdown.

To address this, we're working with colleagues in ECS to see if innovative technology can expand school and college internet access to their staff and students at home; [Southampton Hub](#) are delivering activity packs to 7-11 year olds most in need; and we're supporting cultural organisations across the city sending packs of art resources to young carers and children in care.

Homeward Bound: Recording Southampton Life in Lockdown - As part of the Southampton Cultural Education Partnership, we're working with cultural and arts organisations across the city to support children and young people in recording their lockdown experience through art, music, dance, poetry, film and more - more anon!

Staying connected - to see what else we've been up to, follow [@UoS_Schools](#) where we're collating good news stories of all the amazing things going on in our city - forever [#SouthamptonProud](#)



Please remember to use the Activity Mapping Tool, for logging your activities, reporting and connecting to like-minded folk across the university!

For any comments please email supo@soton.ac.uk

Activity Mapping Tool



Our Community Engagement Hubs Spectrum Manager,
Ronda Gowland-Pryde
provides an update on recent developments:

In these unprecedented times as we navigate our way through the COVID-19 health emergency, we've been thinking about how best to reconnect with and support our Health and Wellbeing and Nature and Biodiversity Community Hub friends.

During the crises, for many of our Hub friends working in health and nature self-care is vital to the maintenance of individual wellbeing. As a result, we have established Hub self-care sessions which provide an open forum for discussion on issues friends want to share with others along with entertaining activities, including virtual games and challenges.

Our first Health and Wellbeing Community Hub Self-Care session on the 15th May covered a number of areas including: proposed research/activity responding to Covid-19 related issues through art, online engagement activity within the community and discussions on the future of the social care sector.



As Olatundun Gafari, the Health and Wellbeing Community Hub Coordinator Intern and University of Southampton MSc Public Health student observed:



As a former social care worker, the crucial work that health and social care workers and researchers contribute to civic life must be recognised. Similarly, those that help to protect nature and biodiversity are essential to the sustainability of our environment and wellbeing. To all those that support and provide key services both within the community and University, we

THANK YOU.

The Nature and Biodiversity Hub Self-Care session will take place on **Tuesday 26th May at 3pm.** All are welcome. Please contact the main Hub email address should you wish to participate, see below.

For further information about the Public Engagement Community Hubs visit our PE Hubs pages using the button below.

PE Hub Pages

The logo for the Health and Wellbeing Community Hub features the text "HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMUNITY HUB" in bold, black, uppercase letters. The text is centered on a blue background with a pattern of white hexagons.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMUNITY HUB

To join or contact the
Health and Wellbeing Community
Hub
please email:

healthhub@soton.ac.uk

To join or contact the
Nature and Biodiversity Community
Hub
please email:

biohub@soton.ac.uk





Dr Lucy Green, BSc PhD

Associate Professor in Developmental Physiology and Head of Engagement,
Faculty of Medicine



Congratulations to Lucy Green who has been appointed Head of Engagement for the Faculty of Medicine!

Lucy is also a member of the Engaged University Steering Group and the SOTSEF Steering Group. She was a 2018 British Science Association Media Fellow (BBC Radio Science) and has just been elected Chair of Public Engagement and Policy (EPEP) for The Physiological Society.

Lucy's Faculty role as Head of Engagement (from 1 March 2020) forms a substantive part of her responsibilities alongside her work as a developmental physiologist. She is currently taking stock of engagement activities and stakeholders across the Faculty.

Lucy Green Staff Profile



Our Digital Communications & SPECTRUM support Intern,
Tinashe (Tina) Munyebvu
has been hard at work too!

I have been working on a digital effort to bring together communities from across Southampton and the UK; **WhatsUpSouthampton** aims to open conversations between members of the community and provide online engagement. The first two projects under the WhatsUpSouthampton umbrella are 'Bright Club REVISITED' and 'Bring in the Expert'.

For 10 years across the UK, [Bright Club](#) has been transforming researchers into stand-up comedians. Our local '**Bright Club REVISITED**' will enlist the help of past members to react to their past performances on camera! If you like goggle box, this is right up your street!!



BRIGHT CLUB REVISITED

WhatsUpSouthampton

The '**Bring in the Expert**' project will share virtual one-to-one interviews between a student and an expert from the University or the wider Southampton community. This project aims to motivate and assure younger students that their passions and dreams are still relevant even during times like these.



[This year's projects](#) have passed the interim reporting stage and some exciting work has been undertaken, especially where engagement activity was taking place during the Autumn. Unsurprisingly however, the progress of many has been affected by the current crisis and we are exploring how these projects might be sustained beyond the current funding period in mitigation. On the plus side, at least one project leader has been able to pivot their project to have a COVID19 focus.

Although these times are challenging for public engagement, as with everything else, the crisis is bringing engagement opportunities and it could be a very exciting period for us to review and adapt our approaches and practice. We are considering this closely within PERu HQ, and we'll be looking to see how the annual Development Fund can best be deployed within this new environment.

Meanwhile, we encourage current project leaders to stay in touch and keep us informed on how you are getting on - we are here to support you. And watch this space for 2020/21 Development Funding guidance later in term.

And for ideas and inspiration, check out our growing set of [Public Engagement Case Studies](#) - featuring a variety of projects we've funded over the last six years.



This month we shine a light on our sister team,
Public Policy|Southampton!



Public Policy|Southampton (PPS) is the central team which supports university researchers in engaging with policymakers and increasing the policy impact of their research. Headed up by Gareth Giles, they are a 'sister team' sitting alongside PERu within Research & Innovation Services.

PPS ensures the smooth delivery of the [CSaP fellowships programme](#), [impact capacity training](#) and [specialist policy support to researchers pathways to impact](#). Bringing their various skills and experience to the mix, the team builds and maintains strategic partnerships with local, national and international policymakers through bespoke event management, social media campaigns, policy brief development and training for policymakers. The core aim is to 'change the world for the better' by engaging policymakers with evidence produced at the University of Southampton. The team are currently very busy supporting the University's research response to the current crisis, which is bringing numerous policy-engagement opportunities. For more on this do visit their dedicated web page:

[Covid-19 related policy news and opportunities](#)

To become a PPS Member and receive the monthly newsletter please apply [here](#). Finally, if you use Social Media don't forget to tag @PublicPolicyUoS when sharing policy-related news to let PPS team know!



**We would like to hear from
YOU!**

Do you have suggestions or ideas of how to keep in touch and network while we can't meet face to face?

Maybe it would be helpful to have a more regular mailing to share what we are all up to, or start a conversation on a Teams thread?

Or maybe all the virtual/on-line communication going on right now is rather overwhelming, and you don't want to be bombarded with any more things?

Please feel free to feedback via the button below if you have ideas on how to keep our Network alive and well during WFH and social distancing:

**Suggestion
Box**

