

Beltane Public Engagement Fellowships Call for Applications 2014/15

Deadline 11am, Monday 17 November 2014

Interview date: Monday 24, 25 or 26 November 2014

Background

The Beltane Public Engagement Network (Beltane) is a network for people interested in making academic research accessible to a wide variety of audiences. We are supported by four Edinburgh universities: the University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh Napier University and Queen Margaret University.

The Beltane follows on from, and builds on, the work of the Edinburgh Beltane Beacon for Public Engagement project. This project was one of six UK Beacons for Public Engagement funded by Research Councils UK, the Funding Councils and the Wellcome Trust. The Beltane Network will continue the original Beltane project's aim of embedding a culture of public engagement in universities.

To date we have appointed thirty Beltane Public Engagement Fellows and two honorary Beltane Fellows were appointed during the Edinburgh Beltane Beacon for Public Engagement project. A further sixteen Fellows were appointed in 2012-14, including two Parliament Fellowships. [Beltane Fellowships undertaken between 2008 and 2014](#)

The Fellowships were integral to the Edinburgh Beltane project from the outset and were its flagship funding scheme. This Fellowship call is a development from the original format that ran until the end of the 2013/14 academic year. We are now offering fellowships which are sponsored by specific institutions. This year we will host fellows from each of the following institutions:

- The University of Edinburgh
- Edinburgh Napier University
- The Centre for Cognitive Ageing & Cognitive Epidemiology

Purpose, scope and themes

Beltane Fellowships are for academic and research staff. The Fellowships buy out staff time to allow academics and researchers to participate in the development of public engagement activities and events.

The Fellowship is part-time and equates to one day a week for up to six months, although there is flexibility. During the Fellowship, the Fellow has the status of being seconded to Beltane and is required to spend a combined total of more than 50% of their Fellowship time working out of Beltane's office and/or with non-academic organisations involved with the project.

If you work at **Edinburgh Napier University**, we are interested in proposals which will develop Edinburgh Napier's institutional support for public engagement activities through links to the new Public Engagement Strategy.

If you work at the **College of Science and Engineering** at the **University of Edinburgh** you are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal which will meet the College's 2014-15 and 2015-16 Public Engagement Strategic Priorities:

- **Energy and Sustainability**
- **Human Health**
- **International Year of Light 2015**
- **Big Data and the Digital Organism**

For **other applicants** it is not essential, but it is desirable that you are able to show that your engagement activity is relevant to one of the six [European Commission's Horizon 2020](#) themes in a Scottish context. The themes are:

- **Health, demographic change and wellbeing**
- **Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research, and the bio-economy**
- **Secure, clean and efficient energy**
- **Smart, green and integrated transport**
- **Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials**
- **Inclusive, innovative and secure societies**

In addition the Beltane has a close partnership with [Scotland's Futures Forum](#) based at the Scottish Parliament and there is an opportunity for the Fellowship to be hosted by SFF if the topic chosen is relevant to Scottish Parliament future business.

All Fellowship applications must show how the proposed work is relevant in the Scottish context.

Eligibility and funding

To be eligible for a Beltane Fellowship in 2014-15 you must be a member of academic or research staff at the **University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, or the Centre for Cognitive Ageing & Cognitive Epidemiology**; support staff are not eligible to apply. You must be employed at grade 6 level or above. If you are employed on a fixed-term contract,

your termination date must be beyond December 2015 and the secondment must not conflict with the terms of your contract.

Funding for **University of Edinburgh** and **Edinburgh Napier University** applicants is capped at £8,000 per Fellowship and will fund either buy-out or the cost of replacement teaching. For staff employed on higher salaries (e.g. professors), it is likely that only replacement costs can be covered. Beltane funding can only be used to cover salaries and “on-costs” (e.g. National Insurance); we do not fund estates or indirect costs.

Applicants from the **Centre for Cognitive Ageing & Cognitive Epidemiology (CCACE)** are not eligible for any funding to cover salary, however CCACE will cover the costs associated with the training and support elements of the programme. CCACE applicants are advised to contact *Robin Morton* (robin.morton@ed.ac.uk) before submitting an application.

All applicants must provide written support from their supervisor, line manager, Head of School or other equivalent as part of their initial application.

All applicants must be provisionally available to attend for interview on the dates specified in this document – your interview will be on one of these three dates. The interview time and date will be confirmed in the week beginning 17 November 2014.

Application process

The application process consists of a short form and an interview. Key dates are:

- **Deadline for form submission:** 11 am, Monday 17 November 2014
- **Interview for shortlisted candidates:** Monday 24, 25 or 26 November 2014
- **Deadline for notification of interview outcomes:** Early December 2014
- **Fellowship start date:** 1st January 2015
- **Latest date for Fellowship completion:** 30 June 2015

Expected outcomes

Examples of suitable activities for consideration would include but are not limited to:

- Developing and managing a cross-discipline or cross-institution public event in an area relevant to public policy.
- Working closely with government, charitable or public-interest agencies to foster links between academia, policy makers and the public.
- Developing training programmes for staff development in the skills required for good public engagement. This could include transferring existing models of best practice in training to or from the Fellow’s own institution.
- Stimulate, support, and facilitate public engagement activity across an institution, School, Faculty or department by developing a network of PE practitioners, creating a web presence about PE activity and/or Co-ordinating and recording engagement activities across the institution.
- Working with media partners to develop materials (print, film or podcast) for a media campaign about research in an area relevant to public policy.

We expect to see qualitative evaluation by the Fellow of their experience and activities. We also hope that Fellows will share their learning with the members of the Beltane and beyond; this could be achieved through the maintenance of a reflective blog, or by publishing a detailed case study.

On completion of the Fellowship, the Fellow is expected to act as a key contact and ambassador for public engagement within their institution. The Fellow is also required to disseminate the outcomes of the Fellowship to colleagues at their employing institution.

Appointment criteria

Factors which will be taken into account when choosing candidates for appointment are:

- Timeliness.
- How relevant the applicant's research is to the call theme (where applicable).
- Whether the Fellowship will include cross-disciplinary or cross-institution activities.
- Whether the Fellowship will be supported by contributions in-kind, such as hosting at a non-academic organisation.
- Whether the Fellowship has the support and involvement of non-academic partners.
- Whether there are plans for evaluation and dissemination strategies.
- Whether the proposed work has the potential to leverage further funding.
- Whether the proposed work has potential to feed into public policymaking process.
- Whether the applicant has plans for post-Fellowship propagation of engagement activities in their home institution.

Previous experience in public engagement activities will not necessarily be an advantage and we would encourage staff new to this area to apply.

Questions and advice

We encourage anyone considering an application for a Beltane Fellowship to contact us before submitting their form. Beltane staff will be able to offer informal advice and answer any specific questions you may have. Or join us at the Beltane Fellows Twilight:

bftnov14.eventbrite.co.uk

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