

Beltane Public Engagement Fellowships Call for Applications

Deadline 9am, Monday 4th February 2013

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.

Fifteen Beltane Public Engagement Fellows and two honorary Beltane Fellows were appointed during the Edinburgh Beltane Beacon for Public Engagement project.

- [Beltane Fellowships completed between 2008 and 2012](#)

The Fellowships were integral to the Edinburgh Beltane project from the outset and were its flagship funding scheme. The Fellowship scheme will continue to run until at least the end of the 2012/13 academic year.

Purpose and scope

Beltane Fellowships are for early- and mid-career academic and research staff at the four Beltane partner institutions (The University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh Napier University and Queen Margaret University). They 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 some of their time working out of Beltane's office in 7 Bristo Square, central Edinburgh.

For this call, we are inviting applications which address at least one of the following themes:

- **Inclusive, Innovative and Secure Societies**
- **Wellbeing in an Ageing Population**

We plan to appoint two Fellows under this call. Depending upon the quality of applications we receive, we may appoint one Fellow for each theme or two Fellows for one theme.

Future Fellowship calls are also likely to be themed. Themes for future calls may be different, so if the current themes are relevant to your work, we would encourage you to apply now.

Inclusive, Innovative and Secure Societies

We have chosen Inclusive, Innovative and Secure Societies as it is one of the six original challenges which made up the Better Society pillar of the European Commission's Horizon 2020 strategy. Horizon 2020 will be the main means by which the Commission will award research funding between 2014 and 2020.

- [More information about Horizon 2020](#)

Given that Beltane is supported by four Edinburgh universities, we are particularly interested in funding Fellows who wish to address Inclusive, Innovative and Secure Societies in a Scottish context.

The European Commission has recently broken down Inclusive, Innovative and Secure Societies into two:

- Europe in a Changing World: Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies
- Secure Societies: Protecting Freedom of Europe and its Citizens

Europe in a Changing World is concerned with how Europe will manage the social and economic challenges which it will face in coming years. These could include social exclusion and poverty, gender inequalities, youth unemployment, ageing and demographic change, political apathy, and a growing digital divide. Secure Societies aims to anticipate, prevent and manage threats from, for example, crime, violence, terrorism, natural and man-made disasters, cyber-attacks and privacy abuses.

Fellowship applications addressing Inclusive, Innovative and Secure societies can address any examples given here in the descriptions of Europe in a Changing World and Secure Societies. Applications may also cover anything else not mentioned which could be argued to be relevant to the theme Inclusive, Innovative and Secure Societies (broadly-conceived). However you choose to approach the theme, it is important that you relate your work to the Scottish context.

Wellbeing in an Ageing Population

Wellbeing in an Ageing Population was the theme of our autumn 2012 Parliament Fellowship call.

- [Autumn 2012 Beltane Parliament Fellowship call](#)

It also has strong relevance to Research Councils UK's Lifelong Health and Wellbeing initiative and Horizon 2020's Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing challenge.

- [Lifelong Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [More information about Horizon 2020](#)

Fellowships addressing Wellbeing in an Ageing Population might look at cognitive and mental wellbeing, physical health in older age, extending healthy working lives, or improving the mobility and independence of older generations; again, this list is not exhaustive or prescriptive. The holder of a Beltane Fellowship addressing this theme will be in a great position to share best practice in public engagement with our newly-appointed Parliament Fellows.

However you choose to approach this theme, it is – again – important that you relate your work to the Scottish context.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Beltane Fellowship, you must be a member of academic or research staff at one of the four universities who currently support Beltane (The University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh Napier University and Queen Margaret University). You must be employed at grade 6 level or above. If you are employed on a fixed-term contract, your termination date must be after the proposed end-date of your Beltane Fellowship and the secondment must not conflict with the terms of your contract.

Funding 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.

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

Application process

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

- **Deadline for form submission:** 9am, Monday 4th February 2013
- **Interview for shortlisted candidates:** Thursday 14th February 2013
- **Deadline for notification of interview outcomes:** 5pm, Friday 22nd February 2013
- **Earliest Fellowship start date:** 1st April 2013
- **Latest Fellowship start date:** 1st June 2013
- **Latest date for Fellowship completion:** 29th November 2013

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.
- Working with media partners to develop materials (print, film or podcast) for a media campaign about research in an area relevant to public policy.
- Investigating the use of novel media (such as virtual worlds) for public engagement activities.

We hope 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 one or both of the call themes.
- 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.

The Beltane Public Engagement Network
Institute for Academic Development, 7 Bristo Square, Edinburgh EH8 9AL
T: 0131 650 4874/5
info@beltanenetwork.org
www.beltanenetwork.org
[@edbeltane](https://twitter.com/edbeltane)