



The Open
University

Attributes of digital engagers

Academic identity and role in
engaged research online

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Overview

- Introduction: OU survey and interview findings
- Activity: Visitor and residents mapping
- Discussion: Attributes of digital engagers
- Activity: Examples – what would you do?
- Actions: Take away plans for action
- Feedback: Session evaluation

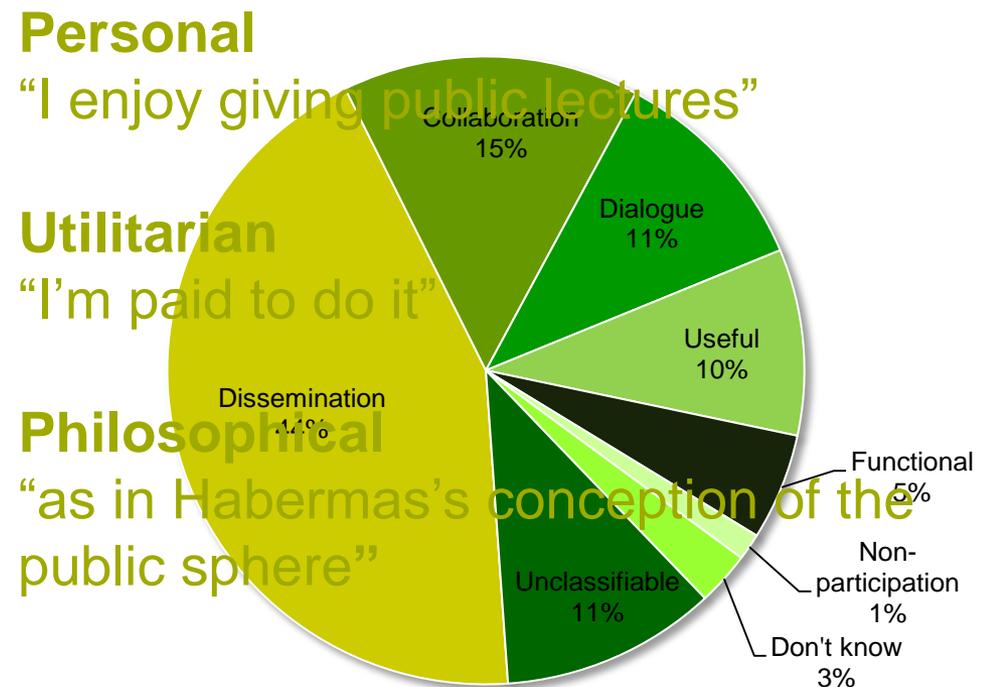
Public engagement

- Vitae's online surveys in 2013 (www.vitae.ac.uk)
 - CROS: Careers in Research Online Survey (n=57)
 - PIRLS: Principal Investigators and Research Leaders Survey (n=114)
- Additional institutional survey questions
 - How would you define 'public engagement with research'?
 - Describe an activity involving PER
 - What publics have connections with your research?



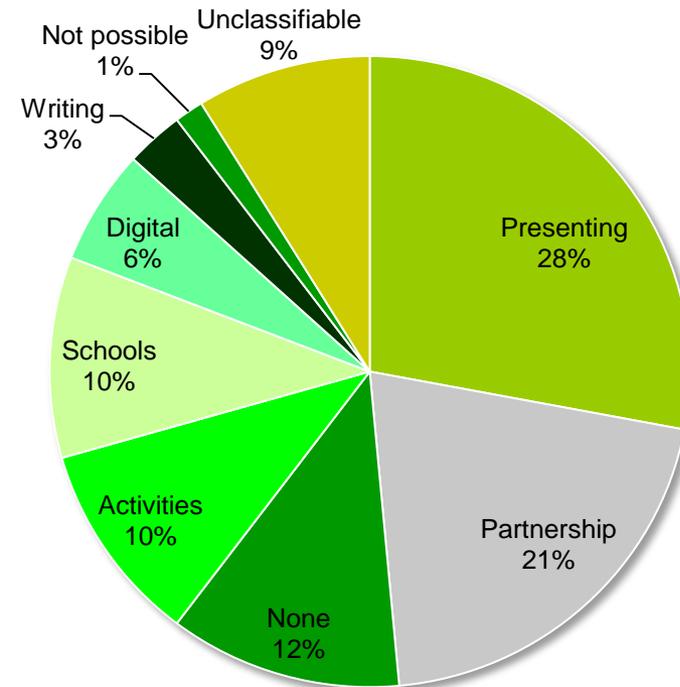
Public engagement with research

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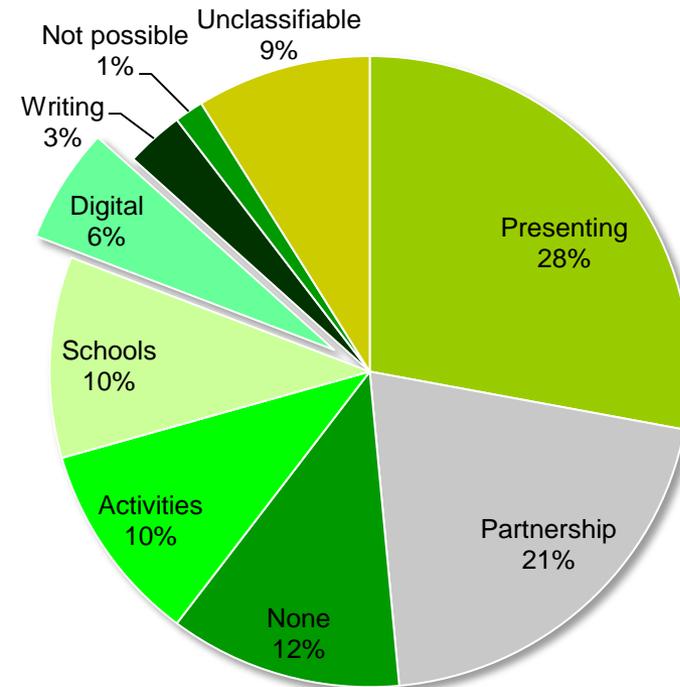
Engagement activities

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Interviews: questions

- Researcher interview questions focusing on:

- Publics
- Processes
- Participation
- Performance
- Purposes
- Politics

“At one stage they’re talking to people about... with publications, contributions, an entry for each of those, if we’ve sent students on research trips here or there, exchanges; ... things like that which sort of bring things into the public domain.” Interviewee 4

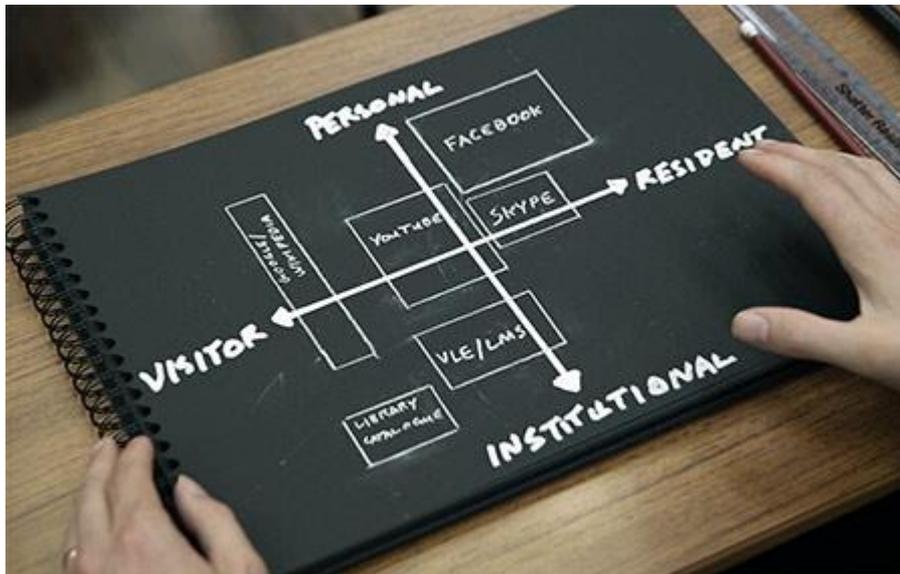
“... we’re asked to do by the university people interested,” Interviewee 6

“viral!” Interviewee 13

Digital engagement

- *“That means for each of the different ... engagement levels ... you have to cater for the people that are very active, they want tools that support them in producing stuff, getting out their blogs, editing. The people that casually do something, they ... probably have more questions than answers, they want to raise awareness about the things they do, and so on. I think that, in general, applies to any sort of research community; that once you go out of the core of people that are really specialised on exactly this, and open up to the public, the ways you communicate have to change as well.” (Interviewee 14)*

Visitors and residents mapping



- A tool for exploring Blogging
- learner-owned literacies
- Google search • Twitter
- Critique of digital OERs
- Google docs • OERs
- immigrants and natives
- You Tube • VLES
- Explore how people
- Skype • MOOCs
- use online places

David White and Alison Le Cornu ([2011](https://doi.org/10.1177/1070496511419888)) “Visitors and residents: A new typology of online engagement.” In *First Monday*, Vol. 16, No. 9, September 2011.

Further information: <http://daveowhite.com>

Attributes of digital engagers

- People
 - Identity: our multiple roles and their corresponding identities
 - Publics: the groups that are involved
 - Motivations: personal motivations for engaging
- Purposes
 - Openness: open research and open-mindedness
 - Development: learning through partnership
 - Rigour: validity, authenticity and contextualised knowledge
- Processes
 - Teamwork: co-creation, shared ownership, complementary differences
 - Active listening: understanding practice, dialogue in action

Examples – what would you do?

- In small groups pick an example
- Put yourselves in the place of the researcher/team
- Discuss and generate ideas/suggestions for one or two examples of digital engagement opportunities...
 - People: Who (identity, publics, motivations)
 - Purposes: Why (openness, development, rigour)
 - Processes: How (teamwork, active-listening)

Sexuality & relationships

- A. Influencing UK policy on sexuality and relationships
 - Enduring Love project (ESRC)
 - “...our research will focus on the meanings and everyday experiences of long-term relationships”
 - The Bisexuality Report (OU & BiUK)
 - Meg Barker (psychotherapist and sexuality researcher)



Enduring Love: <http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/enduringlove>

Rewriting the Rules: <http://rewritingtherules.wordpress.com>

Building on history

- B. Using history to develop relationships between religious groups



- Building on History: Religion in London (AHRC)
 - promote awareness and conversation of London's rich and diverse religious heritage
 - contribute to the self-understanding of faith groups
 - stimulate & guide community and schools engagement with religious heritage

Blog: <http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/boh>

Website: <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/religion-in-london>

Floodplain meadows partnership

- C. Protecting plants in floodplain meadows



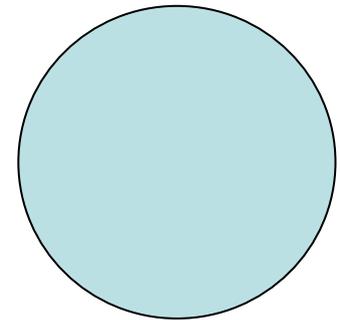
Website:

<http://www.floodplainmeadows.org.uk>

- Floodplain management
 - “...developed a new method for quantifying the relationship between the composition of plants in a floodplain area, and variations in soil wetness.”
 - “...interacts with conservation practitioners, landowners and other stakeholders to put into practice new understanding arising from the research.”

Summary, conclusions and actions

- Attributes of digital engagers
 - People (identity, publics, motivations)
 - Purposes (openness, development, rigour)
 - Processes (teamwork, active listening)
- Conclusions?
- GROW your practices...
 - Goal
 - Reality
 - Options
 - Way forward



“engaged scholarship not only enhances the relevance of research for practice but also contributes significantly to advancing research knowledge in a given domain.” ([Van de Ven and Johnston, 2006](#))

Workshop feedback & evaluation

- **Marks out of five**
 - one (a bit rubbish) to five (awesome)
- One thing you really **liked**
- One thing you'd suggest we **change/avoid**
- Any other **comments**

