

Strategies for reaching underrepresented audiences

The following strategies are a summary of recommendations from various research studies including: ASPIRES Report: Young people's science and career aspirations age 10-14 (Kings College London); Culture on demand (DCMS); Experiments in engagement (Wellcome Trust) and No longer us and them (Paul Hamlyn Foundation). These reports are available on-line for free.

- Research your target audiences to identify: their needs, values and interests; potential cultural, social, personal and practical barriers to their involvement; potential for collaboration and co-creation; trusted sources of information; potential partners and ambassadors for your project
 - This should involve researching the published literature as well as conducting your own audience research
- Brief your team about understand the needs and interests of your audience and the importance of reaching under-served audiences. Make engaging with under-served audiences part of everyone's role and build it into the planning from the very beginning of the project
- Involve the audience in the planning, development and delivery of the activities
 - But NB if you are planning to run a co-creation project it is important that you are clear about the extent to which participants will have control over the content
- Develop content that is relevant to the cultural heritage, daily lives and interests of the audience
- Develop activities that provide opportunities for shared social experiences with friends or family and active participation. Ensure that activities can involve extended families and intergenerational learning
- Address geographical barriers due to lack of transport or unwillingness to travel to unfamiliar locations (e.g. run activities at locations your audience are already familiar with and can easily reach)
 - NB geographical barriers also involve attitudes as well as physical barriers. People may be unwilling to travel to an unfamiliar location or somewhere that they believe they will feel out of place
- Address financial barriers to participation (e.g. discount tickets, subsidised transport, locations close to where the audience live)
- Work in partnership with trusted 'gate-keepers' / ambassadors (youth workers, coaches, club leaders, places of worship, community groups) who understand needs and interests of the audience
- Work in partnership with schools to reach families through their children
- Promote through trusted sources of information (e.g. the trusted 'gate-keepers', local or specialist media). Ensure language and imagery effectively illustrates what the activities will involve e.g. shared social experiences, active participation, content that's relevant to their interests, accessible location etc.