



Royal Academy  
of Engineering

| Ingenious

# Recruiting and training engineers



## Recruiting engineers

Feedback from previous Ingenious projects has shown that recruiting engineers can be more challenging than expected. However, the Academy can provide some hints to help overcome these problems.

- Plan sufficient time to recruit and train engineers and go wider than you may think you need, as not all initial leads for recruitment will result in the number of engineers required.
- If engineers are to be engaged over a longer-term timeframe, ensure that this is understood from the outset and that engineers will be available at all stages where they are required, including the project planning stage.
- Be clear about what is required of them, especially the time commitment and what support and training you will offer.
- Remember to stay in touch with your engineers, even when they are not actively involved, so that they maintain a connection to the project.
- Highlight the proven benefits of taking part in your project including:
  - improved skills such as communication, project management, recruitment, financial planning and negotiation
  - developing new professional contacts and networking
  - gaining new perspectives on their work
  - supporting evidence for an application to become a chartered engineer.

Surveys of engineers who have previously taken part in Ingenious projects demonstrate that they gain longlasting personal and professional benefits.

- Remember that engineers may be very enthusiastic about public engagement but face barriers to participating including:
  - conflicting time pressures
  - no understanding of public engagement's value in their workplace
  - lack of training or support
  - low confidence – especially when interacting with audience they haven't encountered before
  - lack of awareness of the training they need.



## Where can you recruit engineers?

- STEM Ambassadors network
- Psci-Comm mailing list
- Research networks/CDTs
- Local interest groups e.g. maker spaces
- Local businesses
- Universities
- Organisations such as the Women's Engineering Society

## Training

Training participating engineers is a key part of Ingenious. One of the scheme's key goals is to create a growing community of engineers who are proactive and skilled in public engagement.

Even if they have experience of public engagement your engineers will benefit from additional training, especially if you are using techniques or working with audiences that are new to them.

It is also important to brief your engineers about the aims and ethos of your project, what their role and responsibilities are, and how they will be supported throughout the project.

If you do not have your own training planned there are lots of organisations that offer training sessions or resources including:

- The National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)
- Involve
- Science Made Simple
- Engineering Development Trust
- Royal Society
- Science centres and science museums
- University outreach/public engagement departments



Image credit: SMASHfest UK, Wyn Griffiths

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