Engagement at The Wellcome Trust

A perspective from a private research funder

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We are a global charitable foundation dedicated to achieving extraordinary improvements in health by supporting the brightest minds.
Sir Henry Wellcome’s Will in 1936

“The Research Fund” .. “for the advancement of … research which may conduce to the improvement of the physical conditions of mankind”

“The Research Museum and Library Fund” .. for the maintenance, equipment and/or extension of any of my Research Museums or Libraries”

“that the Directors and others having control of the several institutions and organisations use their best influence to secure total abstinence from wine, beer, spirits .... and tobacco by the staff”
Strategic Plan 2010 – 20

Our **vision** is to achieve extraordinary improvements in human and animal health.

Our **mission** is to support the brightest minds in biomedical research and the medical humanities.
Major Overseas Programmes

Focus countries

Other eligible countries
Total Financial Plan Expenditure 2009/10: £591m. Additional Special Dividend Budget £500m of which £32m was committed in 2009/10
Engaging the public with science

To embed biomedical science in the cultural landscape so it is valued and there is mutual trust between researchers and the public

• Placing medicine within a cultural context
• Inspiring and educating young people
• Embedding mutual trust and understanding
• Opening up information
Public engagement...what is it?

• Informing
  • inspiring, telling, educating
  • media, talks, lectures, publications, exhibitions

• Engaging
  • conversations rather than transmission
  • opportunity for views/questions/values to be explored
  • consultations, panels, discussion events

• Collaborating
  • jointly working on a research topic
  • involving the public in research
Why do it?

• Must do
  • to secure ethical compliance
  • to recruit study participants

• Smart to do
  • improve understanding about research & outcomes
  • improve communication skills to broad audiences
  • enhance your research

• Wise to do
  • ensure research is in broad cultural conversation
  • inspire future generations of scientists
How do we do it

• **Trust-led activities**
  • Wellcome Collection
  • Education resources and policy
  • Broadcast & gaming strategy

• **Grant funding**
  • Audience focussed schemes
  • Collaborative and facilitative approach
  • Peer review
Placing medicine within a cultural context

Miracles & Charms

Two free exhibitions exploring faith, hope and chance

6 October–26 February
VARIETY - “Deeply touching, resonant and... very funny”

Shot in a Ukrainian hospital full of desperate patients and makeshift equipment, “The English Surgeon” is an intimate portrait of brain surgeon Henry Marsh as he wrestles with the dilemmas of the doctor-patient relationship.
Inspiring and educating young people

Leading debate in science education

Providing education resources
  • Big Picture
  • Great Plant Hunt – with Kew
  • In the Zone Olympics project

Focusing on priority areas
  • Informal education
  • Primary science

Embedding continuing professional development
  • National Science Learning Centre

Working with our local schools
Embedding mutual trust

Supporting and encouraging our researchers to engage

Support for public engagement through grants
Support for public engagement through grants

- Capital and Strategic Awards
- Society & People Awards, Arts Awards
- Broadcast Awards
- International Engagement Awards
- Engagement Fellowships
Public engagement...does it work

- IMPACT
  - Knowledge
  - Behaviour or attitude change
  - Enjoyment/entertainment/emotion
  - Skill acquisition
- VALUE FOR MONEY
- QUALITY
  - Production values
  - Content rigour
  - Artistic expression
- REACH
  - Primary audience
  - Secondary audience