Motivations for ‘Science in Society’

- No ‘crisis of trust’ in UK – 83% trust university scientists; 88% think scientists make a valuable contribution to society; and 82% think they ‘want to make life better for the average person’
- Are concerns around particular issues or about speed of development of science
- Public endorsement of the purpose and direction of publicly funded research must be earned, as part of researchers’ licence to practise
- As research funders, public engagement helps maximise the economic, social and cultural impact of our research
Benefits to researchers

- Skills development and career enhancement
- New research perspectives
- Enhancing your research quality & its impact
- Higher personal and institutional profile
- Influence and networking opportunities
- Forming new collaborations and partnerships
- Enjoyment and personal reward
- Inspiring the next generation of researchers
Obstacles to public engagement
Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research

• A single, unambiguous statement of the **expectations and responsibilities** of research funders with respect to public engagement

• Provides **guidance** for those who receive our funding to better value, recognise and support public engagement

• **Briefings available** for senior managers and managers of researchers and senior managers
1. UK research organisations have a **strategic commitment** to public engagement
The Principles

2. Researchers are recognised and valued for their involvement with public engagement activities
3. Researchers are enabled to participate in public engagement activities through appropriate training, support and opportunities
4. The signatories and supporters will undertake regular reviews of their and the wider research sector's progress in fostering public engagement across the UK.
Research Excellence Framework

• Outputs (originality, significance and rigour of research) - 65%.
• Impact (the ‘reach and significance’ of impacts on the economy, society and/or culture) – 20 %
• Environment (the ‘vitality and sustainability’ of the research environment ) – 15%
• Assessment framework and guidance to review panels published in July 2011
• The panels have responded with draft criteria and working methods (consultation closed 5 October 2011)