

Guidelines for Evaluating Publicly-Engaged Scholarship

Definition of Publicly-Engaged Scholarship

Publicly-engaged scholarship is characterized by scholarly work directly related to a faculty member's academic expertise, is of benefit to the external community, is visible and shared with community stakeholders, is collaborative, has public and scholarly impact, and reflects the mission of the University. This scholarship includes artistic, critical, scientific, and humanistic work that influences, enriches, and improves the lives of people beyond the academy. It requires the rigorous application of discipline-related expertise, breaks new ground or is innovative, can be replicated, documented, and has significant impact and public consequences. This scholarship integrates engagement with the community into research and teaching activities (broadly defined). Concurrent engagement with the community is a vital attribute of these scholarly activities, not a separate activity. The product of this effort is disseminated in ways that are both rigorous and accessible to audiences beyond the academy.

Criteria for Evaluating Publicly-Engaged Scholarship:

- Is discipline-related expertise used to develop the publicly-engaged scholarship?
- Is it innovative and/or novel?
- Does it use expert knowledge to synthesize information, interpret findings, or outcomes of the scholarship?
- Does it involve translation of new knowledge to the public (such as the creation of policy papers, legislation, etc.)?
- Are the outcomes measurable in terms of impact and public consequences?
- Can the specific products resulting from this scholarship be evaluated by independent experts?
- Has the scholarship been shared with the academic community, and in what form?
- Is the work rigorous in its application of academic expertise?
- Is positive engagement with the community a key component of this research?

Examples of matters to be included in the candidate's personal statement:

It is the candidate's responsibility in his/her personal statement to explain how and in what ways his/her scholarship is publicly engaged as defined by Rutgers guidelines on publicly-engaged scholarship.

- Explain how the candidate's disciplinary expertise informed this research.
- Explain the co-creation process of the scholarship in terms of who was involved, what were their roles, and what they contributed to the process. How was the candidate's work and the partners' work blended in the product(s) of the scholarship?
- How is the work innovative, and what about the work is innovative?
- What is the predicted (or actual) impact of the work? Address impact on both the disciplinary field(s) and the community.
- How and when was the work publicly disseminated, and what dissemination process was used?
- How is the work disseminated to academic audiences?
- What new scholarship has this work stimulated?
- What are the measurable quantitative or qualitative outcomes of the work?
- What additional events/scholarship/partnerships did the work stimulate?
- What are the work's implications for policy? Practice?
- Why does this work matter in terms of the community in which the scholarship was conducted (or of broader public or community interests)?
- Like other forms of scholarly activity, how was this effort/work integrated into teaching and/or mentoring?
- Is the work valued by an outside entity? If they received funding, from whom? And if so, how did the candidate contribute to fundraising?
- What are the candidate's concrete plans for future work—either related to this work or something new?

Additional considerations

- Solicit letters from partners—they should be confidential from the candidate, but clearly will not be arm's length.
- Consider soliciting letters from leading public figures, whether or not they have an academic connection.
- May also solicit letters from subject matter experts, such as government agencies, organizations (i.e. the American Cancer Society), leaders in a field (such as museum directors), well-respected practitioners (such as film directors, for example), or community-based organizations.
- If applicable, solicit letter(s) from an organizational representative benefitting from the publicly-engaged scholarship, rather than from a co-author or co-creator.

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