



PPI IGNITE
NETWORK

Impact Case Studies

Case Study 1: Supporting PPI in Laboratory-Based Research – A collaborative effort across and beyond the Network

Case Study 2: “The PPI Digital Badge has hugely impacted how I approach research”: A free and flexible PPI educational resource

Case Study 3: Seeding change: Using seed funding competitions to shift power dynamics in PPI relationships

Case Study 4: PPI Ignite Network Values and Principles Framework: a consensus on what matters

Case Study 5: National PPI Festival: celebrating progress, making connections

Case Study 6: Opening the door to PPI

Case Study 7: Growing PPI in the lab: International recognition of Irish expertise in PPI in preclinical and laboratory-based research

Case Study 8: Flying the Irish flag abroad: the international reach of the PPI Ignite Network



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IMPACT CASE STUDY



Supporting PPI in Laboratory-Based Research – A collaborative effort across and beyond the Network

Who was involved?

- 4 lead sites
- 3 national partners
- 2 charities (not Network partners)
- 7 PPI contributors
- 8 PhD students
- 1 communications professional from academic sector

Summary

There is a lack of resources for researchers and PPI contributors in incorporating PPI into laboratory research in Ireland. To address this gap, the PPI Ignite Network has created training resources for PhD students, researchers and PPI contributors. Key impact areas of this initiative include:

- Cross-sector collaboration, leading to extensive knowledge exchange, shared learning and collective wisdom
- Building capacity and knowledge for future cohorts of students, researchers and PPI contributors

- Positioning the PPI Ignite Network nationally and internationally at the forefront of capacity building in laboratory-based research
- Championing PPI in laboratory-based research across sectors in Ireland
- Freely available and flexible resources for everyone

Our work

Work Package 1 (WPI) aims to build PPI capacity across Ireland. Findings of a survey of members of the PPI Ignite Network and expert insights from the WPI core team identified a gap in PPI support for laboratory-based research.

A sub-working group was established to bring together people with experience and knowledge of PPI to co-develop training and resources for PPI in laboratory-based research. The members of the sub-working group represented a diverse cross-section of key stakeholders including: people with experience of living with health conditions;



PPI Contributors reviewing the module outline

academics and researchers; health-related charities; PPI Ignite Network Lead Sites, national and local partners. The wealth and diversity of expertise amongst the group proved a key and novel strength of the project, serving to enhance collaboration, knowledge exchange and shared learning, and, ultimately, the impact potential of the initiative.

The work of the group commenced in November 2021 and was completed in April 2023, chaired by Dr Joanne Masterson, Associate Professor of Biology at Maynooth University, one of the Network's national partners. Key tasks involved identifying national and international publicly available best practice resources on PPI in laboratory-based research, and the development of module outlines on PPI in laboratory research, one for PhD students and **one for PPI contributors**. The list of PPI resources and two module outlines will be shared as Open Education Resources and available from the Network's online hub.

Our impact

Cross-sector collaboration

The development group plan to continue work as a community of practice, highlighting the positive and dynamic collaborative effort undertaken. Furthermore, 8 doctoral students and 6 PPI contributors reviewed the modules, finding the process very positive and the act of reviewing the modules itself raising their awareness of the potential of PPI to shape laboratory research practices. This cross-sector collaboration proved to be an empowering process for all collaborators and reviewers and we plan to write up the process to share our learning with others.

“The PPI Ignite Network is a working community of practice rather than a competition between establishments, which makes it easier for patients and members of the public to be involved with to improve health.”

Honorary Professor Derek Stewart OBE, Patient Advocate

Contribution to knowledge

Addressing the lack of specific training and resources on PPI in laboratory-based research, this group addressed this directly and concretely by developing a doctoral module and a companion module for PPI contributors. This positions the PPI Ignite Network nationally and internationally at the cutting edge of PPI in laboratory-based education, enhancing the potential for building the capacity of academics and postgraduate students at all Irish HEI (and beyond), national and local partners, and PPI contributors to engage in PPI in laboratory-based research.

Potential for long-term gains

With access to the doctoral module materials, Lead Sites are empowered to seek accreditation for the doctoral module in their University, so that doctoral students can take the module as part of their postgraduate course. Over time, this will lead to the creation of a new cohort of early career and senior researchers who embrace and engage in PPI as an inherent element of laboratory-based research. The companion PPI contributor's module can be delivered in parallel, simultaneously building the capacity, knowledge and confidence of PPI contributors as co-producers of laboratory-based research. Both modules have the potential to contribute to embedding PPI in laboratory research within a specific university.

Championing PPI across Ireland and beyond

Further related to the long-term impact of the initiative, and the strength of the underpinning collaborative process, members of this broad and diverse WG will serve as ambassadors and champions for PPI in laboratory-based research. The WG members involved will act as catalysts in promoting the resources available in a wide variety of sectors across Ireland and beyond.

Resources available and useful to all

Resources will be shared as an Open Education Resource (OER) under the creative commons CC-BY licence. This license allows anyone to distribute, adapt and build upon the work (once credited to the original creators). Therefore the resources will be free and open to all interested parties and can reach a larger and more diverse audience than if the resources were controlled by one organisation or entity.



Attendees taking the PPI contributor module at Breakthrough Cancer Research

“I really enjoyed it, especially how you gave the example of how medicines I take now came first of all because of this type of research. I didn’t really know anything about it until then. To be honest, I hadn’t even really thought about where they come from before being made into medicines. It was really interesting and I can understand why this type of research is done, even if it doesn’t effect [sic] my life for a long time.”

Attendee on completion of the PPI contributor’s module

“When these resources are shared nationally, they will support important early steps in providing the framework for excellent training and initiating dialogue between key stakeholders. The discussions that took part and the shared learning amongst broad, cross-sectoral and geographical participants in this sub-WG were key and will provide an example moving forward in increasing conversation and implementing processes that ensure appropriate implementation of the outputs nationally.”

Dr Joanne Masterson, chair of sub-working group, Maynooth University