



**PPI** IGNITE  
NETWORK

# IMPACT CASE STUDY



## Opening the door to PPI

### Who was involved?

- 6 Lead Sites
- 2 national partners
- 2 local partners
- 2 PPI contributors
- 2 PhD students
- 1 Network national office
- 1 researcher with PPI experience
- 1 researcher without PPI experience
- 3 Communications professionals from academic (2) and charity (1) sectors

### Summary

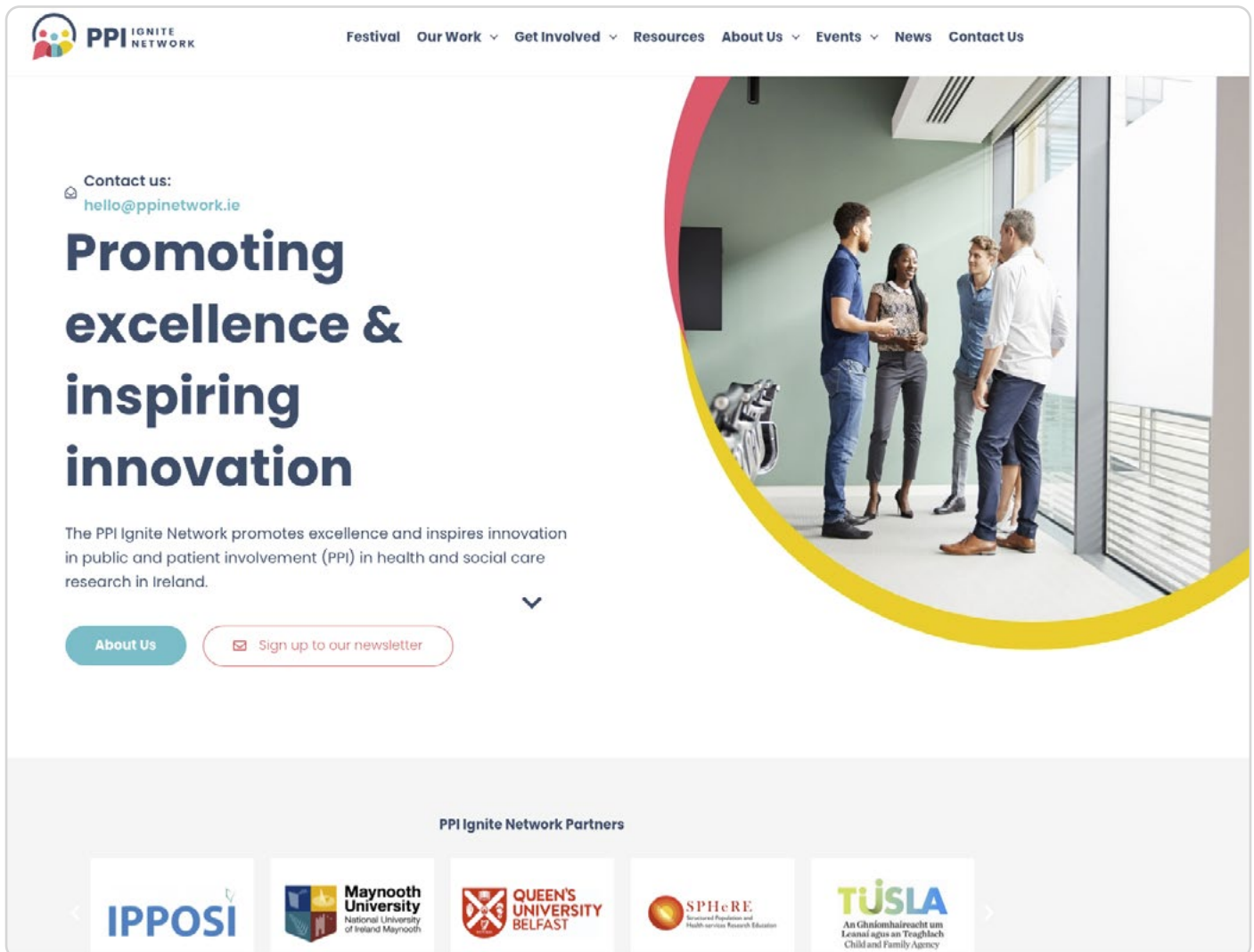
The PPI Ignite Network communications initiative brings PPI to new and existing public audiences and health & social care researchers. Central to these efforts is an online hub ([www.ppinetwork.ie](http://www.ppinetwork.ie)) that offers a wealth of information, increasing and expanding people's understanding of PPI and how they can use their lived experience to make a difference. The hub is available free and accessible to all. The hub also contributes significantly to building PPI capacity among third-level students and academics, becoming the first-ever national PPI portal, and the central port-of-call for anyone interested in learning more about and becoming involved in PPI.

### Our work

The main Network communication channel is our online hub ([www.ppinetwork.ie](http://www.ppinetwork.ie)), supported by, and directly connected with, our monthly newsletters and our [Twitter account](#) (@PPI\_Ignite\_Net).

In Summer 2021, guided by a Communications professional, we conducted collaborative workshops with representatives from our main stakeholder groups, identifying key messages and preferred communication channels for each of our diverse audiences. Building on this, we designed and developed an interactive online hub, with a strong focus on universal design. Key online hub features include:

- [Calendar of PPI Events](#), shares information about upcoming PPI events submitted by event organisers, within and beyond the Network
- [Resource](#) centre, contains links to resources published both on the hub itself and to resources on the communications channels of our Lead Sites or partners (websites, YouTube channels etc)
- [Get Involved](#), invites all audiences to register with us to receive regular newsletters



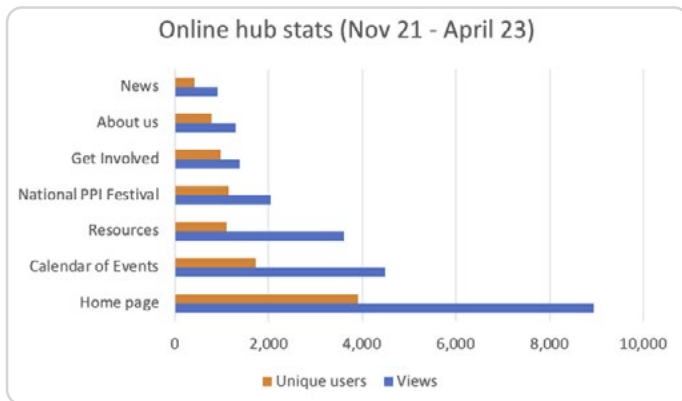
Our online hub [www.ppinetwork.ie](http://www.ppinetwork.ie)

- [PPI Opportunities Noticeboard](#), enables researchers to share PPI opportunities with interested members of the public
- [About us](#), shares brief biographies and photos of the members of all Network governance entities

Our electronic newsletters keep us further connected with our many audiences and connects them with the online hub. Each newsletter includes a *PPI Contributors' Corner* and a *Spotlight for Researchers*, signposting resources and events of particular interest and relevance to those audiences. We also link regularly from our Network [Twitter](#) account, which itself is linked directly to our online hub homepage, to our new additions on the online hub.

## Our impact

Our online hub, supported by our newsletter, plays a pivotal role in communicating the essence of PPI to new audiences, strengthening PPI capacity, and serving as a first ever national repository of practical and reusable resources. These communications serve as the bridge that connects all our stakeholders, a cornerstone in our journey toward transforming research culture in Ireland to involve the public and patients at all stages of research.



Online hub stats Nov 21 – April 23

## Raising awareness of PPI with diverse audiences

Our online hub, specifically designed to maximise accessibility, with information presented in clear, concise language, presents PPI to both newcomers and seasoned PPI contributors and researchers. By expanding the reach of PPI to previously untapped audiences and in providing free access to PPI resources and information about upcoming events, our platform helps develop PPI capacity among all our communities. The online hub is evidence of our EDI strategy in action: a free, accessible resource, available and of interest to all of our diverse audiences in search of knowledge, including those limited by mobility, health or financial constraints.

Our newsletter (12 published since December 2021) is a key communication channel with our many stakeholders, supporting and linking back to our online hub. 80% of our 450 subscribers are from Ireland, and 25% of subscribers are from outside academia, with a small number from eight EU countries and from Canada, the US and Australia. With approximately 30 new subscribers each month and an average of 60% of recipients opening the newsletter, 20% of whom actively click through to read linked items, the power of the newsletter as an information-sharing channel and a support to the online hub is clear.

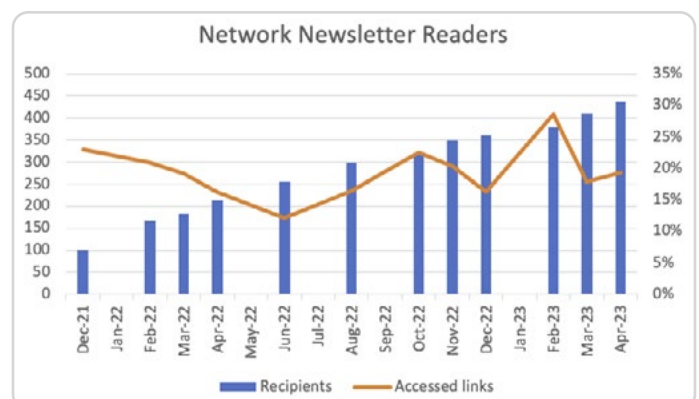
## Increasing PPI engagement levels

Through information sharing and knowledge exchange via the online hub, we are increasing public understanding of PPI in research and shifting perceptions on the rights of public and patient groups to have a say in what research is conducted and to contribute through research co-production. Speaking to the active nature of engagement of visitors to the site, just under half of our almost 10,000 website visitors to date go directly to the Calendar of Events or Get Involved pages.

The impact of our efforts is evidenced by the significant engagement we have witnessed. For example, the Resource section has garnered over 3,600 views, while the PPI Ignite Network Values and Principles Framework has been accessed by 300 individuals to date. We are steadfast in our commitment to expanding the Resource section, through the work underway in Work Package 1, which will enhance the online hub impact further.

## Championing PPI events and opportunities

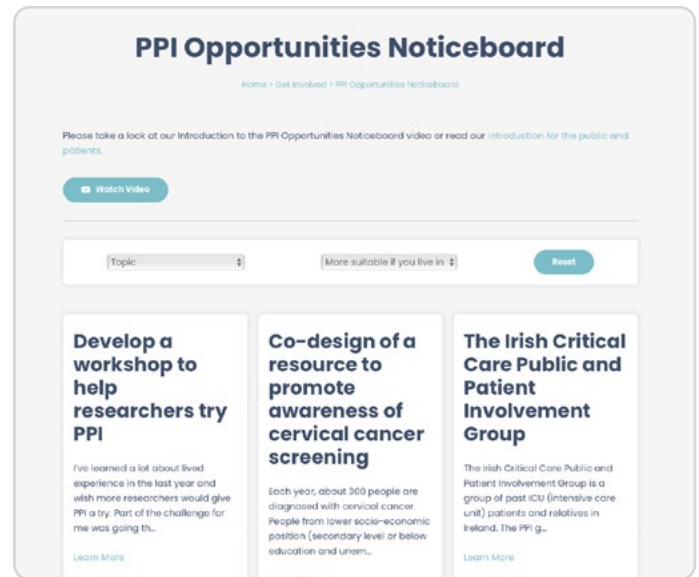
Highlighting upcoming PPI training, seminars and shared learning groups, the [Calendar of Events](#) plays a key role in encouraging collaboration and learning across our many stakeholders. Averaging 10-12 events per month, peaking at over 40 events during the National PPI Festival in October 2022, the Calendar is viewed an average of over 200



Network newsletter readers

times per month, with almost 1200 views during the Festival period.

Responding to a gap identified by PPI contributors when developing a Network vision, we launched the [PPI Opportunities Noticeboard](#) in April 2023, an innovative feature integrated into our online hub. Co-developed with PPI contributors and researchers, researchers can share PPI opportunities with the public and patients, who can then connect directly with researchers if interested. In its first three weeks, over 200 individuals accessed the Noticeboard online, highlighting the future potential of this initiative to further bridge the gap between the public and researchers. To evidence the value of this feature, we will collect impact data from researchers using the Noticeboard. We are currently executing a comprehensive communication campaign to enhance the reach of the Noticeboard.



“The online hub brings PPI right into your living room, to your hospital bed, to carers who can’t leave home much: all you need is your phone. It is an amazing resource, with a wealth of knowledge, available free of charge, designed to be easy to use. It speaks to fairness, to equality of access, to inclusion. It is a structure that can support expansion, I’d love to see more podcasts, a community forum, more opportunity to interact.”

**Ger Halpin, PPI contributor**