**Summary of NIHR INVOLVE (2017) Top Tips for PI in Research**

This summary is based on information available on the NIHR INVOLVE website: <https://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/top-tips/>

**1. What makes good PI in research?**

This top tip is for researchers, public involvement managers, members of the public and anyone interested in the public perspective / contribution.

* Base your research on the six INVOLVE PI values and principles: respect, support, transparency, responsiveness, fairness of opportunity, accountability. See <https://www.invo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Top-Tips-1-What-makes-good-public-involvement-v1.pdf> for more details.
* Ensure you facilitate representation of groups with relevant characteristics and diversity of experience.
* Ensure you try to explore and monitor the impact of your PI.
* Promote equality, by being aware of power relationships and ensuring that everyone has an equal voice. See I-ASC “Supporting People with Communication Impairment” document.
* Enable access to all, by facilitating reasonable access to those less able by having a welcoming / empowering environment (listen to the physical, cultural and psychological needs of public contributors without pre-conceived ideas). See link above for more information.

**2. Things to consider when reviewing research applications / proposals**

This top tip is for patients, members of the public and anyone interested in the public perspective / contribution.

* Make sure the plain English summary is clear and understandable, and can be used on its own to describe the proposed research.
* Check that there is someone on the research team responsible for managing the public involvement aspects of the project.
* Check that PI is meaningful and evident throughout the research project, from design to dissemination where practical; check it is appropriate for the type of study design and stage of the research.
* Check that relevant people are involved in the different stages of the research cycle, including dissemination.
* Check that PI plans are realistic / feasible, and that the proposed intervention (or service) is ethical.
* Make sure that adequate budget has been allocated for PI. Experience on the I-ASC project indicates the PI budget needs to include staff time and training (for all team members), personal support for co-researchers, specialist equipment to enable access for people with disabilities. See “Budgetary considerations” document.

**3. Things to consider when participating in a meeting with a mix of professionals, patients and the public.**

This top tip is for meeting participants, particularly public members.

* Be prepared to contribute (e.g., read the agenda in advance, make notes of anything you wish to raise/ask).
* Ensure everybody introduces themselves and remind everyone to avoid jargon and to avoid or explain acronyms.
* Actively listen to others.
* Take steps to contribute effectively (e.g., communicate concisely and clearly, or if support to do this is required, ensure all attendees know how to facilitate this). See I-ASC “Supporting People with Communication Impairment” document for more information.
* Behave professionally: be respectful of other people’s views, provide constructive criticism.
* Ensure that everyone is clear about any decisions taken, actions identified and next steps.
* Complete actions in a timely manner.

**4. How can PI strengthen research?**

This top tip is for researchers and public involvement leads.

* PI can improve the quality, relevance, efficiency and value for money of the research.
* PI complies with democratic and ethical principles and should improve the acceptability of the importance of the research.
* PI fulfils our health and social care policy commitment in the UK.
* PI enables different perspectives to be included and greater partnership working.
* PI enables researchers to meet funding requirements.
* PI can support more effective research management and monitoring.
* PI leads to higher quality research findings that are more easily transferable to practice.

**5. Learning and development for members of the public**

These tips may help you think through what knowledge, skills or experience you might want to learn or develop to support you in your role, and how you might find suitable opportunities to learn and develop.

* Talk with your involvement contact or coordinator about what training or development might help you in your role.
* Identify what you may need to learn or develop, for example by using a Learning Needs tool. See [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/)
* Consider how you prefer to learn or learn best, e.g., visual learner, early provision of documents to consider for future meetings/activities.
* Explore possible learning or development opportunities, e.g., via [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/)
* If you find a learning or development opportunity, talk to your involvement contact or coordinator before booking.
* It might be useful to observe somebody doing a role before taking it on yourself.
* Ask whether you can have a ‘buddy’ or mentor.
* Record your activities and what you have learned / what skills you have gained. Consider keeping a skill development log.
* You can learn about new involvement opportunities or roles via [www.peopleinresearch.org/](http://www.peopleinresearch.org/)

**6. Learning and development for PI managers**

These tips may help public involvement managers to think through what knowledge, skills or experience they might want to develop to support them in their work, and how they might support public contributors. I-ASC experience suggests that some of these elements should be considered at the time of bid development.

* Identify your own learning and development needs, for example using a ‘Learning Needs Analysis’ tool. See [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/)
* Find a learning or development opportunity, e.g., via [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/)
* Find a shared-learning group who might offer support and guidance.
* Discuss with each PI contributor what they might like to learn or develop to support them in their role; consider using a Learning Needs Analysis tool or Role description or Terms of Reference document. See “Terms of Reference” documents in “I-ASC Resources”.
* Consider offering a mentor for each PI co-researcher.
* Keep a record of the training you provide for public contributors and their feedback on the usefulness of training.
* Let others know about the training you provide, so they could benefit from it. See I-ASC examples in the “I-ASC Resources”.
* Keep a record of your own training and development.

**7. Learning and development for researchers**

These tips may help traditional researchers to think through what knowledge, skills or experience they and their colleagues might want to develop to support public involvement activities, and how they might support public contributors / co-researchers.

* Identify your own learning and development needs. See [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/)
* Explore learning or development opportunities for you and your team/s, e.g., via [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/)
* Ensure someone in your team has overall responsibility for facilitating PI contributions. I-ASC experience suggests that it will be helpful to secure administrative support too.
* Support your PI contributors / co-researchers to identify what they might need to learn or develop for their role, and how they prefer to learn. See [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/learning-and-development/learning-needs-and-tools/)
* Include learning and development costs for PI contributors / co-researchers in your budget. See [www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/involvement-cost-calculator/](http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/payment-and-recognition-for-public-involvement/involvement-cost-calculator/)
* Consider offering a mentor to PI co-researchers.
* For PI contributors new to a role, consider offering a chance to observe someone else in the role.