

Different methods of training

Not all training needs to take the form of a traditional training course (see [What do we mean by 'training' and 'support'?](#)). People can learn about involvement and develop new skills in a number of ways. Some approaches can also offer effective sources of ongoing support (see [Planning support – general overview](#)). The best approach will depend on people's needs and preferences and the resources available. Useful approaches might include:

- group sessions with a trainer
- attending conferences
- informal approaches such as learning 'on-the-job', networking and shared learning with peers
- online activities
- university or college courses.

Researchers and research staff in organisations may have access to staff development programmes/budgets which can help develop their knowledge and skills. This may be through staff presentations, or more informally, for example by observing colleagues or other researchers 'doing' public involvement. Organisations can therefore promote this learning in different ways, for example by running 'study days' or workshops, or helping researchers to find out who else in their department, university or local area is doing public involvement.

It may be possible for researchers to access training from someone working in an external organisation that promotes public involvement – perhaps through the [Clinical Research Network](#) or a local [Research Design Service](#). Others may have a user support manager, a paid full- or part-time member of staff, who works in their department, unit or university (see [case study five](#)). These staff may be able to offer a range of training and support for a group of researchers including:

- advice when first starting to involve the public
- training courses for researchers and members of the public
- help with finding members of the public to be involved
- support for researchers when they first put their learning into practice, for example commenting on draft job descriptions and person specifications for members of the public
- help with planning and budgeting for public involvement in a grant application.

Members of the public do not always have access to these organisational and informal learning opportunities and might require a more concerted approach to meet their development needs (see [Carrying out a needs assessment for training and support](#)). The following sections contain advice and guidance on developing training and support for members of the public in a range of roles:

[Training and support for research panel member](#)

[Training and support for project advisory group member](#)

[Training and support for project steering group member](#)

[Training and support for public reviewer](#)

[Training and support for peer interviewer](#)