

Community Buddies

The British Science Association runs the Community Buddy programme with support by funding from [UK Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI) as part of our ongoing [community engagement work](#). The programme aims to connect Community Leaders with local researchers to spark new ideas and drive innovative community-led science engagement.

The Community Buddy programme builds on the skills and experience community organisers develop through our [Community Leaders programme](#). These Leaders have a history of developing high-quality, long-term science engagement with communities under-represented in the sciences. They have expressed a desire to work collaboratively with local science role models, so we believe the next step is to enable these connections.

After participating in our Community Leaders programme, we match community organisers with researchers from their local area. We support community organisers and researchers to develop relationships in their own space to create a legacy that will last beyond our involvement in their science engagement work.

We then train these Community Buddies on how to use [relational meetings](#) to learn about each other and discover mutual interests. This approach empowers shared decision-making and develops a collaborative, balanced relationship. This is a different way of working: we encourage the purposeful discovery of common goals in lieu of an agenda-driven approach. This ultimately leads to more meaningful science engagement projects and long-lasting relationships between communities and researchers.

To prepare the Community Buddies for their work, the BSA delivers group training on relational meetings. The buddy pairs then have six months to establish a relationship and discover common interests. In March, Buddies join to share their experiences and workshop their ideas.

We encourage our Buddies to maintain their relationship and access opportunities within the BSA's community engagement programmes and beyond.

For more information about the work the British Science Association does to support and engage with community groups, please visit our [Community Engagement page](#) and follow [BSA Communities on Twitter](#).

If you have any questions about the programme, please email communities@britishscienceassociation.org.