

FOREWORD

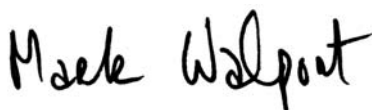
If the public is to trust, debate and value scientific progress, we need a society engaged with contemporary science. Encouraging people's engagement with science – its potential applications, misapplications and impacts, as well as the nature of science itself – is therefore an important part of the Wellcome Trust's work.

For a decade or more, we have supported public engagement activities, funded through grants, partnerships with other institutions, or our own projects. In all, we have invested some £100 million.

This has been an era of profound scientific progress, and considerable social change. Both factors have inevitably influenced public engagement – thinking and practice. This publication is an attempt to take stock of these changes, to reflect on what we have learned and to consider where we might go in the future.

It combines reflective essays from leading figures in public engagement, from a diverse range of fields, with case studies highlighting some of the most significant projects that we have funded. Our aim is to contribute to current thinking about the nature, purpose and future of public engagement, and to communicate how the Wellcome Trust has contributed to the field over the past decade.

The essays have been expertly edited by Jon Turney, who also contributes some thoughtful concluding remarks. The authors have been given free rein. Their thoughts and opinions do not necessarily correspond with ours, but we are sure they will all contribute to further fruitful discussions about the past achievements and future challenges for public engagement.



Mark Walport
Director, Wellcome Trust