

LSE Community Engagement Programme 2023: Key dates, programme details, and writing a project brief

1. Key dates

Preparation for the programme

3 October 2022 Charity applications open

21 October 2022 Charity applications close

Early November 2022 Charities notified of outcome of their applications

7 November 2022 Student applications open (The students' application form will contain summaries of accepted projects for which the students can express a preference)

25 November 2021 Student applications close

Early December 2022 Students notified of the outcome of their applications and are put into teams/matched to charities

November – December 2022 LSE support provision finalised to suit the charities' projects and the needs of our students

Programme commences

18 January 2023 Programme begins with a Welcome Afternoon (Charities need not attend – the afternoon event will consist of an overview for students and will give them a chance to meet the other students they'll be working with)

18 January 2023 Rosalind will connect (via email) the student teams to the charities and alumni with whom they'll be working

19-23 January 2023 Charities and LSE alumni to hold separate introduction meetings with their student team

22 March 2023 Programme ends with a Finals Day conference (Charities' attendance very much appreciated)

2. Programme details

Teams: There will be approximately 7 students in your team. The team will be diverse in all respects and its members drawn from all degree levels (postgraduate and undergraduate) and a variety of academic disciplines. We have found that bringing a variety of perspectives, skills and experiences to bear on the task results in a holistic approach with excellent outcomes. However, if your project requires that your team possesses very specific skills – in quantitative data handling, for example – and this is not evident in the brief, then please emphasise to Rosalind.

Students' time commitment: We will ask each volunteer to commit to 5 hours of work a week for the nine weeks. The majority of the students will be studying

full-time at the LSE simultaneously, but having a team of 7 means that much can be achieved!

Meetings: We request that you meet with your team weekly or every two weeks. Regular contact helps the students to understand your needs, access important information they'll need to complete their brief, and is motivational.

Additional support: Your team will have an LSE alumni mentor who will be volunteering to help to make the project a success. Mentors could be working in fields such as the charity sector, consultancy, policy or research and will meet with the students regularly. Our teams at the LSE will also be helping the students, supporting them in areas including research methods, research ethics, data management, report-writing and presenting. We'll provide resources and support sessions on these matters at the moments we believe will work best: research methods and ethics shall be discussed at the start, for example, and report-writing nearer the end of the programme. Rosalind will be coordinating all of this – any questions please ask.

Confidentiality agreements: We have confidentiality agreements that we will sign with you before the programme begins. The confidentiality agreements are intended to make it clear to the students, in particular, what they need to keep confidential during and after their research. The agreements also state that the reports are yours to own and cannot be published in whole or in part by anyone without your charities' written consent. If you would like to review a blank confidentiality agreement at any point, including before submitting an application to the programme, please contact Rosalind.

Finals Day: The LSE will hold a conference at the end of the programme to celebrate the students' work as well as to bring together the different teams' learnings. There will be a competitive element to this in which a judging panel of experts will crown a 'winning team' – for best report, best team-work, best presentation, and best reflections. We would love it if you could attend this event.

Feedback: Once your team has submitted their report to you, we require that you provide them with some feedback – either in a meeting or in written form. Thank you.

3. Writing a project brief

These below tips and examples correspond to the different sections of the application form. Any questions, please contact Rosalind.

PROJECT BRIEF: Part 1 – Title

Suggest a title which captures the essence of the proposed consultancy project.

Example 1: *Evaluating Charity X's online Skills course*

Example 2: *Preparing for Charity Y's possible new university schemes*

PROJECT BRIEF: Part 2 – Work of organisation (approx. 200 words)

Tell the students about the purpose and work of your charity. Please note: this is background information only and should not discuss the proposed consultancy project.

Example 1: *Charity X is a UK charity which aims to combat homelessness.*

Example 2: *Charity Y is a UK charity which seeks to improve social mobility through mentoring and educational support initiatives for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.*

PROJECT BRIEF: Part 3 – Background to the students' consultancy task (approx. 200-300 words)

Tell the students how the need for the proposed consultancy project arose.

Example 1: *During the pandemic of 2020-21, Charity X moved some of its service provision online. We'd like to reflect on this experience with a view to enhancing our future work.*

Example 2: *Charity Y is considering expanding its services to young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds attending UK universities. We'd like to explore the viability and potential content of these possible new initiatives.*

PROJECT BRIEF: Part 4 – The students' consultancy task (approx. 300-400 words)

Tell the students what the proposed consultancy project entails. In other words, what would you like them to do for you? All of the projects should result in the students producing for you a series of recommendations for action.

Example 1: *Charity X would like our team from the LSE to assess how our beneficiaries and volunteers experienced our online Skills course during 2021 and make recommendations for similar future initiatives.*

Example 2: *Charity Y would like our team from the LSE to gauge levels of interest in these possible new initiatives amongst the stated demographic. In addition, we would like them to identify what the possible new support schemes should contain.*

If you have any questions about the programme or the application form, please do not hesitate to contact Rosalind, the LSE Volunteer Centre Programmes Coordinator, at: R.S.Coffey@lse.ac.uk

Thank you for your interest in the programme.