

# Exploring and Enhancing the Impact of Student Ambassadors

## Programme

- ◆ 10.00 Registration and Refreshments
- ◆ 10.30 **Exploring and enhancing the impact of student ambassadors**  
**Dr Clare Gartland**  
Associate Professor of Education and Course Leader MA Education Studies, University of Suffolk

During the past two decades in the United Kingdom, United States and other countries, university students have been widely used to work with younger students to encourage and support progression. These student ambassadors are generally assumed to act as positive 'role models' for school students because of their proximity in age and life stage. This presentation draws on findings from two research studies, in the UK and US, exploring student ambassador STEM outreach activity with school age students. The studies reveal the potential of ambassadors to support progression to HE and to challenge younger students' self-identities in relation to STEM. The studies also point to problems in the organisation and funding of outreach activity. During the presentation Clare will discuss challenges that can hinder ambassador outreach activity in effectively reaching and engaging with large numbers of young people from underrepresented groups. The need for a sharper focus on pedagogy in the organisation of outreach activity will also be discussed. The presentation will highlight the need to identify and support best practice and will suggest ways theory can be used to support research and evaluation and promote effective and far reaching ambassador outreach activities.

- ◆ 11.15 **A sector-wide analysis of widening participation ambassadors: recruitment, training, working practices and evaluation**  
**Roberts Zivtins**  
PhD Researcher, Imperial College London

The WP sector often relies on the work of student ambassadors, yet most research on ambassadors is in-house. While case-study reflexive evaluation is invaluable, there is always scope to learn from others and share good practice. This presentation focusses on results from a sector-wide survey on widening participation ambassadors, exploring and comparing practices across many WP institutions concurrently. Results are grouped into five broad areas: organisation level information on ambassadors, selection and recruitment of ambassadors, training of ambassadors, working practices and finally, the evaluation of ambassadors. Using the insights gained from NERUPI members, Roberts will describe how ambassadors are deployed, explore how far they help members to meet NERUPI aims and consider issues for future research and evaluation.

- ◆ **11.45** **Student ambassador case studies from the network**  
**SMILES Sports Mentorship Programme** — Earle Abrahamson & Daniela Bishop, University of East London  
**Student Leader Programme** — Heidi Yeandle, South Wales Reaching Wider Partnership  
**Sussex Student Ambassadors Programme** — Mandy Cudby, University of Sussex
- ◆ **12.30** Lunch
- ◆ **1.00** **The NERUPI Framework and evaluating the impact of student ambassadors**  
**Annette Hayton**  
Senior Research Fellow / NERUPI Convenor, University of Bath
- ◆ **1.30** **Student ambassadors — the X factor: what they bring and how we capture it in evaluation (workshop session)**  
**Kate Holmes**  
NERUPI Development Officer, University of Bath
- ◆ **2:30** **Group feedback**
- ◆ **2.45** **Implications for training and development**

