

# A New Odyssey for Public Engagement: The O.D.E.SS.I. Framework and Emerging Pathways

29-30 September 2025  
Reading Room, 10–11 Carlton House Terrace (the British Academy)

## Rationale of the sessions:

This is a small, invitation-only event that brings together trailblazers from different fields who have expanded the scope of public engagement and advancing the practice of science diplomacy. The development of the O.D.E.SS.I. framework has been deeply shaped by ongoing dialogues with them and by observing their work in action.

The pillars of O.D.E.SS.I. are imbricated and mutually conditioning. Each speaker is well equipped to speak across the full spectrum of public engagement, and we anticipate that rich, organic connections will emerge across the thematic sessions. Nevertheless, the programme has been structured around distinct themes to allow for focused, in-depth exploration of each pillar.

The event will unfold over four blocks across two days:

**Day 1** – Morning: **Open. Deliberative.**

**Day 1** – Afternoon: **Deliberative. Enabling.**

**Day 2** – Morning: **Sensible and Sensitive.**

**Day 2** – Afternoon: The 'I' in We.

You'll notice that '*I*', *Innovation* does not appear as a standalone theme in the programme. This is intentional: we assume that innovation will permeate all discussions. Instead, the final block invites us to return to the core of the O.D.E.SS.I. agenda through the lens of '*The I in We*', a concept drawn from Axel Honneth's work on recognition and ethical life.

It asks: How do our interactions with the world shape our sense of the 'I in We'? How might we build public engagement practices with diplomatic capacity—capable of fostering a shared framework for recognition and a common grammar of communication? In doing so, we aim not only to articulate what public engagement *does*, but to explore how it might help constitute the relational conditions for *social freedom* in science and its uptake—freedom realised through cooperation and mutual recognition.

The O.D.E.SS.I. initiative is informed by 3 ongoing research projects:



We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of:





## Day 1

9:15-9:25	Registration
9:25-9:30	Welcome and Introduction
9:30-10:00 (20 min with short Q&A)	<b>Keynote of the Day: Shaofeng Hu</b> (Director of Science Policy and Capacity Building, Natural Sciences Sector, UNESCO)
10:00-10:05	Short break
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme 1      Open. Deliberative.</b></p> <p>What do 'openness' and 'deliberation' mean in different parts of the world and across various sectors of science and innovation? How important are these two pillars in shaping science–society relations in the coming decades?</p> <p>Chaired by <b>Sophie Gilbert</b> (Programme Lead – Science Breakthrough Radar, Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator)</p>	
10:05-11:20 (15 min each)	<p><b>Martin W Bauer</b> (Professor of Social Psychology and Research Methodology, London School of Economics and Political Science)</p> <p><b>Natalia Pasternak</b> (President of Instituto Questão de Ciência; Adjunct Professor of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University)</p> <p><b>Ian Wiggins</b> (Director of International Affairs, the Royal Society, London)</p> <p><b>Annette Boaz</b> (Professor of Health and Social Care, Kings College London)</p>
11:20-11:40	Tea/Coffee Break
11:40-12:40	<b>Group Reflection and Discussion on O.D.</b>
12:40-13:40	<b>Lunch</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme 2      Deliberative. Enabling.</b></p> <p>How can deliberative processes be transformed into actionable agendas? How can we move beyond impasse without sacrificing inclusivity? Empowerment can sometimes be seen as a zero-sum game—so how do we create a sense of genuine enablement across diverse actors and institutions? What does it take to enable bold, boundary-pushing science while also enabling communities with diverging, and sometimes conflicting, priorities?</p> <p>Chaired by <b>Katharine Dow</b> (Independent Specialist)</p>	
13:40-15:00 (15 min each)	<p><b>Tracey Brown</b> (OBE, Director of Sense about Science )</p> <p><b>Bankole Falade</b> (Research Fellow, Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science, London School of Economics and Political Science)</p> <p><b>Trupti Patel</b> (Programme Lead, Sciencewise)</p> <p><b>Robin Lovell-Badge</b> (CBE, Senior Group Leader and Head of the Laboratory of Stem Cell Biology and Developmental Genetics, Francis Crick Institute)</p>
15:00-15:20	Tea/Coffee Break
15:20-16:20	<b>Group Reflection and Discussion on D.E.</b>
16:20-16:25	<b>Day 1 Summary</b>
18:30-20:30	Conference dinner (Mildreds Soho)



## Day 2

9:00-9:05	Welcome and Recap
9:05-9:35 (20 min with short Q&A)	<b>Keynote of the Day: Françoise Baylis</b> (Distinguished Research Professor Emerita, Dalhousie University and President-Elect of the Royal Society of Canada.)
9:35-9:40	Short break
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme 3      Sensible and Sensitive</b></p> <p>How can consensus and compromise be reimagined as generative tools for transnational governance of science and innovation? What forms of diplomatic engagement and bridge-building can help mitigate division and foster an ecosystem for science that is not only inclusive but <i>response-able</i>—capable of meaningfully attending to difference and helping to make collective sense of uncertainty, disagreement, and hope?</p> <p>Chaired by <b>Lynn Frewer</b> (Professor of Food &amp; Society, Newcastle University)</p>	
9:40-10:55 (15 min each with Q&A)	<p><b>Jan Marco Müller</b> (Team Leader Global Approach, Multilateral Dialogue and Science Diplomacy, European Commission, *online)</p> <p><b>Amit Kumar</b> (Research and Information System for Developing Countries, India)</p> <p><b>Emma Cook</b> (Head of Engagement, BBSRC)</p> <p><b>Rebecca Asher</b> (Engagement Labs Lead, Wellcome Trust)</p>
10:55-11:25	Tea/Coffee Break
11:25-12:30	<b>Group Reflection and Discussion on SS</b>
12:30-13:30	<b>Lunch</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theme 4      The I in We</b></p> <p>What kind of shared framework for recognition and common grammar of communication is needed to develop responsible science and innovation—without losing sight of, and while expanding, our visions of the “I in We”?</p> <p>How might we build public engagement practices with genuine diplomatic capacity—capable of charting an odyssey toward epistemic justice and social freedom in science and its uptake across global communities?</p> <p>Chaired by <b>Oliver Pritchard Moore</b> (Postdoctoral Researcher, GSEJ, University of Kent)</p>	
13:30-14:35 (15 min each with Q&A)	<p><b>Alice Howarth and Michael Marshall</b> (QED)</p> <p><b>Annette Markham</b> (Professor of Media Literacies and Public Engagement, Utrecht University)</p> <p><b>David Ludwig</b> (Associate Professor in the Knowledge, Technology, and Innovation Group, Wageningen University)</p>
14:35-14:45	<b>Joy Y. Zhang</b> (Professor of Sociology, GSEJ, University of Kent) - a short update on O.D.E.SS.I. events outside of the UK.
14:45-15:00	Tea/Coffee Break
15:00-16:00	<b>Group Reflection and Discussion on O.D.E.SS+I.</b>
16:00-16:20	<b>30 sec concluding remarks from everyone</b>