

Co-production



Dr Afroditi Stathi

Reader in Physical Activity,
Ageing and Health

Department for Health





What is co-production?

Co-production recognises participants as experts of their own circumstances, and involves them in generating research knowledge alongside the researcher.

How I use this method of engagement in my research

I established The Avon Network for Promoting Active Ageing, which includes charities and community groups, leisure providers, local councils, and public health teams. Together we came up with ideas for research topics, and co-produced a project called *Active, Connected, and Engaged* (ACE), which tested a peer volunteering model of supporting inactive older people to connect with their local communities.

We used an engaged approach to this project. The content of the ACE programme, its key research questions and methodologies were all discussed and agreed with the Network. Throughout the project, advisory panels provided me with regular feedback about the feasibility and applicability of the research.

The collaborative nature of ACE meant that the work was directly relevant to our charity partners and was immediately adopted by two of them for further implementation with their service users.



My research

My research focuses on the promotion of active ageing.

Other types of engagement I'm interested in

I've just started a project in which, for the first time, I'm working with older people as research partners. The older people sit on equal terms with us in management meetings and they bring a whole different set of knowledge to the table – we can see the research from the participants' perspective now, and they know where to recruit participants from, and what sort of materials and wording works best.

I'm also in the early stages of a citizen science project around active ageing. The idea is that older people collect their data, and they analyse the data, and they present the data, and then we discuss with them how to use the findings to make changes at community level, or further up.

How public engagement benefits me

Public engagement has directed me towards research areas that are meaningful and important, and that has led to the development of successful grant applications and a research income of more than £2 million as a Chief Investigator.

Public engagement has helped me to focus on research that has a proven potential for immediate translation to community programmes therefore achieving high-level impact.



www.bath.ac.uk/public-engagement