



fuse

The Centre for Translational
Research in Public Health

A guide to Planning your Quarterly Research Meeting (QRM)

Why run a QRM?

Fuse QRMs are a key opportunity for dissemination of research, dialogue about the implications for policy and practice, making new and strengthening existing contacts, and building a dialogue around research results and potential future projects. Ideally QRMs act as a forum for knowledge exchange.

What are the steps in planning a QRM?

The following notes are intended to be helpful, rather than prescriptive. They call on 'lessons learned' during the first ten years of running QRMs and evaluations of QRMs, but you should feel free to innovate and depart from custom where you have a good plan and reason.

Who can help?

In general, Programme Leads within Fuse take turns in organising a QRM and select a topic that fits with their research programme, although topics can also be suggested by other Fuse members and external partners. Wherever possible a Programme Lead will always be assigned to the planning group to provide academic input and oversight.

- The Programme Lead will be supported by a Research Associate ideally attached to the programme/project, to help scope the agenda and key note speakers for the QRM.
- Administrative support is available from the Fuse Administrator (Cheryl Wiscombe), who can help with venue bookings, registration, and publicising the event on the Fuse website.
- In addition the Communications Officer (Mark Welford) can assist with relevant media and promotion materials.
- If you need help in brokering contact to relevant policy and practice partners, the AskFuse Research Manager (Peter van der Graaf) is another resource you can call upon.

Confirming a date – QRMs are generally held in January, March, July and October. If in doubt contact the Fuse Administrator (Cheryl Wiscombe). QRM evaluation has shown midweek days are most popular, for example, Fridays, followed by Mondays and Tuesdays were the least popular for QRMs amongst the audience.

Selecting a venue – In general the venue has been on University premises, rotating between the five Universities. Other venues have been used as well, particularly where either University premises are not available or a non-academic partner is jointly organising the event. Non university premises are often less daunting for policy and practice partners, but usually involve higher costs for room booking. If possible, if non-University premises are considered the non-academic partner should be asked about accommodation that they can book, free of charge.

Issues to consider when selecting a venue:

- Accessibility by public transport and amount and siting of available car parking
- Quality of rooms offered, e.g. IT facilities, general ambience, sound systems
- Size of rooms and number of breakout rooms required, on average 70 people sign up for a QRM – your needs will be different if you plan a meeting with workshops or a great deal of movement between tables as well as lecture style formats. The evaluation showed that meetings co-hosted with other organisations (policy/practice partners and/or academic groupings) broaden and increase the attendance. Seeking opportunities to organise meetings with other partners is therefore recommended as it is also helpful to diversify and strengthen the quality of the programme. Consideration should be given to whether you require cabaret style layout for round table discussions and separate areas/rooms for workshops to minimise disruption. Cost – in general the aim has been to keep costs low, since the events are offered free to participants. In the event of a charge above and beyond refreshments, approval should be sought through the Fuse Manager (Laura Ritson). A modest budget is available for this purpose. Fuse does not expect to pay for venues.

The Fuse Administrator (Cheryl Wiscombe) will organise venue bookings with secretarial support at the five universities if necessary.

Selecting a theme – The QRM programme is generally decided a year ahead to enable time for planning and booking speakers. If you have an idea for a QRM please feed this forward through the Fuse Administrator (Cheryl Wiscombe) so that it can be tabled when the matter is discussed at a management group meeting. Usually a title and a short paragraph about your intentions, and a clear statement of aims for the QRM is sufficient, together with an indication of the small planning group that will take responsibility for making the day happen with the assistance of Fuse support staff. Occasionally a practice partner will approach Fuse with ideas for a theme and/or speakers, in which case this is a good opportunity to build a joint programme and obtain local ‘buy in’ to the event. It is also invaluable in building a practitioner and policy audience alongside the academic contributors. The AskFuse Research Manager (Peter van der Graaf) can help with brokering contact to relevant policy and practice partners.

Developing a programme – The ‘leader’ or planning group for each QRM determines the programme in consultation with Fuse staff, other members of the Fuse “family”, policy and practice partners and invited speakers from any quarter relevant to the topic. We try to encourage policy and practice partners to take the lead on organising some of the programmes with input from Fuse. Fuse likes to emphasise its role as a capacity building

organisation, so involving students in planning or presenting is encouraged. Generally QRMs are held in the morning, as this seems to be the best time to get practice staff along to events, and run within the following rough time parameters:

A time period between 9.00am and 10.00am	Arrival period, registration, housekeeping and introduction
10.00am-11.15am	First session
11.15am-11.30am	Coffee and comfort break
11.30am-12.50pm	Second session
12.50pm-1.00pm	Final summary, thanks, news about forthcoming Fuse events etc.
By 1.00pm	QRM to have dispersed

There is no Fuse budget for lunch. Occasionally, lunch is funded by an external partner, and, if this can be negotiated it can enhance the networking opportunities.

You should feel free to flex these arrangements to suit your programme ideas, but be aware of people's need for a break – apart from the obvious, these are good opportunities for networking – and allow enough time for people to access their refreshments etc. Ample time for discussion and debate should be factored into the programme. Chairing arrangements for the event should also be considered – someone usually needs to move the programme along and make sure that good timekeeping is observed. It is unfair to later speakers if those scheduled earlier in the programme overrun. Evaluations have shown that, good timekeeping, generous time for questions, debate and networking are valued by delegates. The AskFuse Research Manager (Peter van der Graaf) can assist with developing a programme, if necessary.

Programme content – This is ultimately at the discretion of the 'leader' or planning group, but it's worth thinking around the possible range of formats. The following is not an exhaustive list and is intended to provide examples of approaches:

- Presentation with Q/A including special guest presenters, allowing for agreement with the Fuse Manager (Laura Ritson) on any additional costs this may accrue
- Workshop(s)
- Panel discussion
- Short inputs on different topics, with delegates moving between tables, speed dating style
- Some form of action planning – working on next steps
- Video presentation...and to support any of the above.....
- Provision of exhibitions, displays and posters
- Provision of pop-up stands
- Materials left on conference tables
- Delegates pack.

Variety in the programme is obviously a good idea – few of us like to sit and be 'lectured at' for a whole morning, and, in any case, in so doing you are missing the opportunity to see

topics from another point of view, to learn from practice what the problems and barriers to implementation are, and so on. The evaluation showed that greater variety, more 'hands-on' learning and sessions geared to non-academics are valued by delegates.

It is custom and practice that the Fuse Director, Professor Ashley Adamson gives final approval to the draft programme prior to publicity. The earlier this can be done in the planning process, the better. In addition it is required that the Fuse Communications Officer (Mark Welford) be consulted about the programme/publicity flyer to provide an input on the content and appearance.

Publicity – As a matter of course the Fuse Administrator (Cheryl Wiscombe) will publicise the event amongst Fuse contacts and arrange registration via the sign up facility on the Fuse website and Fuse e-mail, registration numbers may need to be capped depending on the capacity of the venue and format of the programme, a reservation list can be set up if a meeting proves to be popular. Mark Welford (Fuse Communications Officer) can assist in dissemination through posters and flyers, social media, and the media etc. In addition practice partners directly involved in the planning of the QRM should be asked to publicise the event through their own networks; past experience shows that this is important for audience building from the non-academic community. Consideration should be given to the accessibility of the language used for the intended audience(s).

Other forms of publicity to consider:

- A personal request to each speaker to publicise in their host institution(s)
- A personal request to each speaker to publicise via any networks they relate to, e.g. on a regional or national scale which Fuse would not normally be linked into
- Targeted personal invitations to VIPs/key experts from academia and practice
- Wider e-mailing within Universities
- Encourage other key individuals (e.g. DsPH) to cover their networks
- Advertise through communications in Clinical Commissioning Groups, Public Health England, the Commissioning Support Unit(s), Foundation Trusts and other networks within the post April 2013 structures
- Advertise to user/carer groups, local authorities, the voluntary sector
- Ideally, publicise the next QRM at the previous QRM. Ask attendees to recommend a QRM to a colleague
- Through social media, such as an organisation's Twitter or Facebook account
- Pre or post publicity through writing for the Fuse Open Science Blog
- Creating a [research brief](#) related to the theme of the QRM and based on Fuse research which will supplement the event.

The 2010/2011 evaluation showed that personal invitations are effective in securing attendance. The Fuse Communications (Mark Welford) and AskFuse Research Manager (Peter van der Graaf) will be happy to work with you to review which networks and publications might be happy to carry information about the event. Once you have a draft programme it should be passed to the Fuse Communications Officer (Mark Welford) to make the task of publicity easier and ensure message consistency.

Other aspects of pre-planning:

- Fuse would normally place speaker presentations on the website, along with a report of the event and, on occasion when the appropriate support is available, also a video or audio recording of the presentations. Permission from the speakers should be obtained for this
- Permission should also be sought in the taking and future use of event photos
- You will need to arrange rapporteurs to make summary notes of the proceedings, unless abstracts are used for this purpose. On occasion, other materials arising from the QRM, for example, key messages from workshops may be placed on the website and the QRM leader(s) can advise on particular situations
- You need to ensure that there is a named person receiving presentations and taking responsibility for the IT at the venue. Where a venue provides IT support, someone from the organising team will still need to liaise with this service
- The Fuse Administrator (Cheryl Wiscombe) will confirm final numbers, prepare name badges and staff a registration table at the event
- Set aside time in the week before the event to work through final arrangements. This could take the form of a phone conference using a final checklist. A suggested checklist follows at the end of this guide
- Consider whether to offer certificates of attendance. Evaluation show some delegates would value this
- Future Fuse events particularly QRMs should be advertised during the event
- The Twitter hashtag #FuseQRM and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/fuseonline) should be advertised before and during the event to encourage consistent use by delegates when tweeting about the QRM.

After the QRM

- The leader or organising group should thank speakers and anyone else who has supported the arrangements
- The presentations and any other outputs from the QRM will appear on the Fuse website with permission from the presenter and with the assistance of the QRM organisers
- There will be a post-event evaluation. This will usually take a standardised form. The Fuse Manager (Laura Ritson) can advise on the latest position with the format and content of evaluations as these are subject to modification based on experience and the accumulated feedback
- Follow up on the outcome of the post-event evaluation, including feedback to individual presenters where warranted. For instance, collect feedback from QRM organisers after six months about impacts that they are aware of, such as follow-up events, new networks, submissions of collaborative research proposals, published articles, blogs, etc. Any presentations and outputs posted on the Fuse website could be accompanied by a request to web visitors downloading these documents to leave a comment on how they have been used within their organisation
- A member of the organising group should write a [Fuse blog post](#) to supplement the QRM, or approach a presenter to write about the theme/their experience.

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Countdown to a Successful QRM

Got an idea for a QRM or a topic that needs sharing? Put your ideas on paper briefly and feed through to the management group via the Fuse Administrator

9-12 months ahead

Got your half day slot and topic agreed?

- Pull together a planning group – include students if possible
- Sketch out the rationale for the event and a tentative list of speakers/activities, send draft to Director
- Divide tasks amongst planning group, but one person will need to ensure that planning moves forward
- Liaise with Fuse Administrator over venues, budget etc.
- Liaise with CO and ARM regarding pre publicity on website and social media and building practice/policy audience.

6-9 months ahead

Got your speakers and programme finalised?

- Confirm programme with ARM and CO and Fuse Administrator to allow them to advertise fully and get dates in diaries
- Deal with the venue housework – catering, table arrangements, IT etc.

3-6 months ahead

Got the domestic arrangements sorted out?

- Make sure people have been allocated duties and responsibilities and that you have asked for help where you need it
- Work with Fuse Administrator to review sign up for event and consider reminders and alternative mailings

1-3 months ahead

Almost there?

- Have a final meeting or teleconference with planning group – use the checklist to see whether there are final tasks to allocate
- Liaise with venue and with partners

The week of the event

Afterwards...

- Send thanks to speakers and to helpers / invite blog posts entries
- Follow up the evaluation
- Prepare the follow up documentation for the website & ensure presentations are uploaded (check with presenters first)

After the event

Generic Checklist for a QRM (Fuse meeting support staff)

Key:

CW: Cheryl Wiscombe

LR: Laura Ritson

PvdG: Peter van der Graaf

MW: Mark Welford

Timescale	Item	Action	Comments
9-12 months prior	If no ideas have been put forward to lead QRM'S allocate Fuse Research programmes and identify dates. Confirm proposal with CMG	LR	
	Book venues. Locations to rotation around region	CW	
	Identify partners/sponsors to fund a lunch	Academic lead	
6-9 months prior	Set up registration link	CW	
	Develop Flyer to advertise QRM	PvdG/MWel	
	Check progress of programme	PvdG	
	Run draft programme past Ashley	LR/CW	
	Put details on website	CW	
3-6 months prior	Advertise amongst networks	CW/MWel	
1 month prior	Final programme to be available on website	CW	
	Check speaker travel and accommodation arrangements and bookings	CW	
	Consider publicity options. E.g. Fuse blog post(s), research brief, media etc.	Lead/MWel	
3 weeks prior	Check how many people have registered Does publicity need boosting?	LR/CW/Lead	
2 weeks prior	Refreshments, timing of breaks understood and need for additional facilities like water/IT made clear?	CW/LR	

	Confirmation of numbers with venue for refreshments and seating. Arrangement of furniture, does it need to change for workshops/different sub-groups		
	Special requirements for any delegates? (Dietary, hearing difficulties etc.) Should have been flagged at registration.	CW to notify venue and lead	
	Follow up evaluation – are arrangements in place for evaluation?	PvdG	
1 week prior	Reminder to attendees confirming place	CW	
	Prepare badges including speakers. Include any logos	CW	
	Delegates Pack – contents to be sent to AP to print /assemble	CW	
	Prepare signage	CW	
	Chairing arrangements	PvdG check with lead	
	Request presentations from presenters	PvdG	
On the day	Signage at venue – outside and inside	MWel	
	Man registration desk	CW	
	Set up and arrangements of exhibitions or displays	PvdG/MWel	
	Load presentations	PvdG/MWel	
	Speaker's needs met?	Lead/PvdG	
	Microphones set up and organise roving mic for questions	MWel	
	Collate evaluations	CW	
	Tweet and take photos	MWel	
1 month after	Link any blogs and briefs to QRM on website	MWel	
	Prepared evaluation summary	PvdG?	
	Prepare summary report of the event	Academic lead	

	Upload presentations from presenters to Fuse website	PvdG	
6 months after	Circulate impact questionnaire	LR	

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