Learning from the Food Futures public panel

A GFS Food Futures panel report

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Executive summary

About the Food Futures panel

The Global Food Security (GFS) programme brings together the UK's major public funders of research into food security. A central part of the programme is to understand and respond to public views on global food security challenges and potential solutions. To help meet this aim, the GFS programme commissioned a panel of 600 members of the public to take part in engagement activities, including deliberative and online activities exploring different aspects of food security research. The GFS programme will be using the findings of the public panel to inform the direction of publicly funded food security-related research in the UK. The panel is co-funded by the Sciencewise[1] programme.

Overall reflections on the public panel

The public panel aimed to do two things:

- to produce evidence about the views of the public, which could influence the GFS programme;

- to learn about using an online panel for public dialogue.

In this report we reflect mostly on the second aim, how the online panel methodology has worked as a method of engaging a sample of the public with the topic of food security. A separate report, prepared by an independent evaluator, reflects more on the quality of the evidence produced and how it is being used. This, and all other project reports are available on the GFS website: http://foodsecurity.ac.uk/programme/activities/public-panel.html

Through the lifetime of the panel, we have used a wide range of research methods, from deliberative approaches such as workshops and online discussions with specialists, to more traditional research methods like online surveys. The panel has covered eight main topics, with a report produced for each that provides insights into participants' views, and in many cases how those views are formed and change through discussion with specialists and others. In addition to these eight projects, the panel has been a space for informal discussion among participants, helping us to understand what food security issues most capture attention and

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[1] Sciencewise is funded by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS). Sciencewise aims to improve policy making involving science and emerging technology across Government by increasing the effectiveness with which public dialogue is used, and encouraging its wider use where appropriate. It provides a wide range of information, advice, guidance and support services aimed at policy makers and all the different stakeholders involved in science and technology policy making, including the public. Sciencewise also provides co-funding to Government departments and agencies to develop and commission public dialogue activities. www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk

generate debate. The panel has produced a huge volume of data, which has been analysed here, and in the topic reports, and is published anonymously for further research.

There have also been challenges: for example, the panel started with a broadly representative sample of 600 members of the public, over time a smaller sample of active participants has emerged with a different demographic profile. Early decisions have had significant impacts on the operation of the panel: for example, the data sharing agreement with participants affected how we could involve specialists, and choices about software design affected the development of the panel as a 'community'. We were able to reflect on and learn from the early months of the panel, but there is still much to explore in any future project and this report presents analysis and recommendations under several themes.

Governance and management

The public panel benefited from a Steering Group made up of specialists from the GFS partner organisations and beyond, which has been extremely valuable to the project. However, we would have welcomed more involvement from the Steering Group in the development of the individual topics and the life of the panel. Given the length and scope of a panel project we recommend a flexible approach such as smaller topic Steering Groups to help manage demands on Steering Group time while ensuring their expertise is available. We recommend that, in any future projects, steering group members and other specialists are invited to join the panel, allowing them to observe and interact directly with the process.

The public panel has been a complex as well as innovative programme, and the management of this project has been demanding for both contractor and Project Management Team (PMT). Developing effective tools to help the PMT keep track of progress, without detracting from the actual delivery work has been important throughout, and the value of these tools, and the management time required, should not be underestimated. For any future project we recommend allocating sufficient budget to managing the panel as a whole (rather than the delivery of specific activities), as well as allowing time available to reflect and maximize learning.

Innovation, context and scope

The Food Futures panel had an explicit aim of exploring the possibilities of digital tools to provide an 'ongoing, flexible and responsive mechanism' for public engagement. The approach we have taken to designing each project has been driven by the specific topic to be addressed and the outcomes required by the organisation proposing that topic. This has resulted in a focus on a small number of large and deliberative activities. We feel there is an opportunity in future panels to experiment with a larger number of smaller projects, mixed with the deliberative activities, to make best use of the opportunities the panel offers for agile, responsive design and simple information gathering. This could offer benefits in terms of value for money by increasing the spread of activities, particularly if a long list of questions of interest to the funding partners is agreed at the outset, these questions could then be put to the panel using a range of techniques as the opportunity arises.

Developing topics has been an iterative process, which has evolved and improved over the lifetime of the public panel programme. We have found that time spent upfront with topic leads has resulted in a more streamlined and focused approach to developing research questions and materials. One particular challenge has been ensuring adequate representation from industry as specialists with the panel. This has required early, focused recruitment of industry specialists with the help of Steering Group and partners. For any future panel we recommend consideration of the possible benefits to industry of being involved in public engagement of this type: this may help with recruitment and help to ensure that a range of specialists is involved.

Online Platform: set-up and design

The decisions informing the selection and set-up of an online platform used to host a programme of this type can have consequences throughout its lifetime, for design, ongoing engagement, data extraction and analysis and calls on management time. This is particularly the case when purchasing an off-the-shelf package that cannot be updated without additional expenditure. The software used for the Food Futures panel was relatively inexpensive (around 4% of the total budget) and represents good value for money compared to alternatives. However we recommend careful consideration of which features are needed at setup, as early decisions can have significant impacts, for example in increased administrative time.

The design characteristics of online platforms have a significant impact on the form of interaction between participants. This includes the extent to which online activities are run in real time (for example online chats where all participants are online at the same time) or are asynchronous (for example a forum where participants can reply in their own time). Other design decisions made early on such as the anonymity of participants, the lack of visibility of user profile pages and the inability of panel members to create new threads on the topic specific forums have affected the extent to which the Panel has functioned as a community. Thinking about these factors at the setup phase in any future project may help encourage higher participation rates: another approach would be to hold face-to-face events locally for participants to meet each other shortly after recruitment.

User activity data exported from the online platform has proven to be a valuable resource, providing us with insights into Panel members' online behaviour (e.g. how they interact with the platform, how long they spend online etc.), in the aggregate and by individual group types (e.g., location, gender, age etc.). The behavioural data generated through online engagement enables a new type of analysis not possible with traditional face-to-face dialogue, as it goes beyond participant's self-reported opinion to look at actual behaviours, particularly for the more active participants.

Panel Recruitment: set-up and sample

The Food Futures Panel aimed for 600 members, and this has been broadly maintained throughout the project, however the core of active members is smaller. A number of different options for panel size were considered at the outset, ranging from one or two hundred

participants to a larger panel of a thousand or more participants. The decision was taken to aim for a panel sample of 600 participants, on the basis that this would be large enough to explore in depth the perspectives of a diverse and inclusive group of people yet still able to generate a sense of community over time. We have found that a panel size of around 600 members works well where any project requires a sample of no more than 250, however it should not be assumed that having 600 registered participants will produce 600 responses to any one activity.

On-street recruitment was contracted to a third party recruitment agency and started in July 2015. The recruitment process was slower than expected due to a number of challenges, some relating to the unfamiliar nature of the topic of global food security. Others were related to the use of digital tools, for example the need for potential participants recruited on-street to register independently on the online platform (conversion from recruitment to registration averaged around 50%) or lower levels of confidence in using online tools among older age groups. Finally, there were practical changes around the limited capacity of recruiters to respond to recruitment challenges in certain locations, and lack of clarity around amount and frequency of incentives over the year for which the panel would run. We used a range of mitigation measures to improve recruitment rates, and we carried out top-up recruitment in one area (Dundee) where engagement was lowest. It will be important for any future panel not to underestimate the challenges of recruiting to this type of activity.

In the context of these challenges to recruitment, it is not surprising that there is some discrepancy between the original sample quotas (designed to be broadly representative of the UK population), and the achieved sample of the Food Futures Panel. The achieved sample departs from the quota on three measures: gender (women are over-represented), age (the 66+ age group is under-represented) and education levels (lower educational levels are under-represented). However, we have found that participation levels counteract some of these factors: for example, the over 65-age group are some of the most engaged participants, while the 18 to 25 group have been much less engaged. For any future panel, we recommend offering user guides or guided 'walk throughs' of the online platform by phone to help increase conversion rates (i.e. registrations on the site) and reduce the risk of new members becoming quickly disengaged because they cannot work out how to navigate the site. This may also help increase recruitment among more difficult to engage demographic groups.

Engagement Methods: set-up and sample

Over the lifetime of the panel we covered eight main topics, as shown in the chart below.
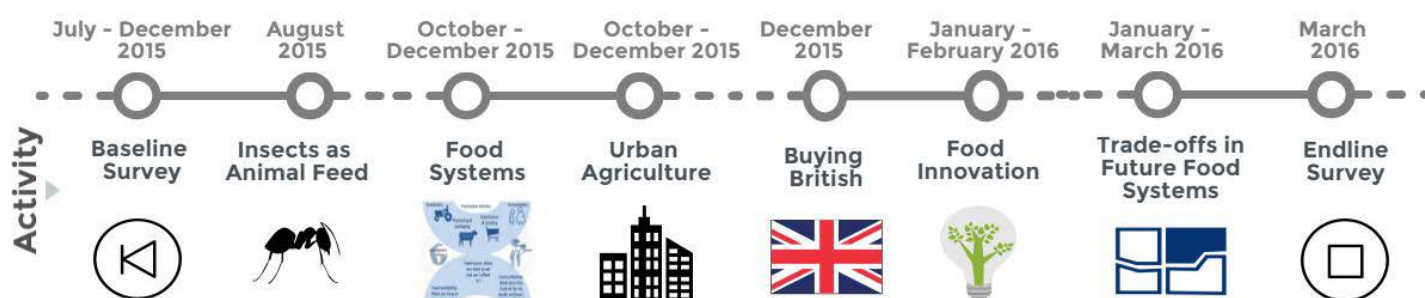
Across all eight projects, 57% of the panel took part in at least one activity. This is comparable to participation rates reported by other online dialogue projects.

The Food Futures Panel has used a mix of online and face-to-face engagement methods to engage members on the different topics and has tested a number of different strategies for integrating online and face-to-face activities. We have found that using online and face to face methods in combination has worked well as each channel has its own benefits. Online methods are quick to set up once a topic is agreed, and enable participants to participate when convenient to them. They have also been useful in increasing participants' familiarity with new topics before workshops, resulting in more informed discussions during the workshops. Face to face methods, while more expensive and limited by geography, offer more in-depth and responsive interactions between participants and with specialists, particularly when compared to the discussions on the online forums.

We have found from the interviews with Panel members that a number of elements have worked well regardless of channel: interaction with specialists (particularly in workshops due to the more immediate responses specialists are able to give to member questions), interactive online activities (where members are asked to interact with each other or with family members), visually attractive stimulus materials and 'sticky' content (e.g. interesting facts and stories). These elements should be actively designed into all activities online and offline.

Response rates to online activities appear to be influenced by two factors: the type of activity and incentivisation strategies. More structured activities such as online surveys generally elicit greater response rates due to participants' familiarity with the methods and the perception among participants that the defined nature of the task means it can be done more quickly, or at least within a guaranteed time period. Less structured activities such as forum and blog discussions tended to have lower response rates, particularly among more casual users of the platform. In addition incentive strategies that offer an incentive to everyone appear to be more effective in increasing response rates than prize draws as the reward is guaranteed.

Our main recommendations around engagement methods are to understand the value of different approaches for different purposes, to build in interactivity wherever possible, and to set clear expectations about requirements on participants time at the outset of each task.

Panel Participation

We have found that there are significant differences in participation between certain demographic groups: participation is lowest among the youngest age group (18-25) and members with lower education levels. These differences in participation replicate similar patterns to participation rates reported for other online panels (with the exception that we have not observed any differences by gender). In addition to age and education levels, there are also differences by location, with members in Dundee and Plymouth having significantly lower levels of participation.

To reflect that deliberation is not just about talking but also about listening and reflecting, we created a simple typology based on user activity data to enable a more nuanced understanding

of how members participate. This typology is based on two variables: Engagement with the online platform (page views have been used as a proxy measure) and Participation levels (total number of contributions made on the online platform). Segmenting users according to their performance against these two variables results in four distinct 'types' of panel member:

- Disengaged members who have never viewed or contributed to the platform

- Lurkers who have viewed the platform but have very rarely actively contributed

- Casually involved members who have lower engagement with the panel but do contribute occasionally

- Super users who have high levels of engagement with the platform and who have contributed (within this group there are a number of outliers who have significantly higher contributions).

Older age groups are over-represented in the 'super user' group while younger age groups are over-represented in the 'lurker' group. While this may be as a result of generational differences in terms of time availability and commitment, the desire to learn about new topics also seems to increase the likelihood of a member becoming a 'super user' or not. There is some evidence from the learning interviews with members identified as 'casually involved' that incentives are more of a motivator for this group, and that they are more reluctant to take part in forum discussions (due to a perception that they take longer and a preference for more task-based structured activities). This suggests that when advertising new activities, it will be useful to make explicit reference to both intrinsic motivators (e.g. learning about new topics) and extrinsic motivators (e.g. incentive rewards) and use a mix of engagement methods appealing to the different groups (e.g. not using forum discussions as the sole method).

In the learning interviews with members identified as Disengaged and Lurkers, two factors seemed to present the most significant barriers to participation. The first was straightforward time pressures. Second, familiarity with other types of Panel – for example, survey-based market research exercises – meant they had expectations about the nature of their involvement from the point of recruitment, and the more varied nature of the Food Futures panel activities meant these were not met.

Any future panel should be aware of these differences in participation levels and target the younger age group and those with lower education levels. This may be through encouraging participation with targeted activities (e.g. 'warm up' methods like online surveys to introduce participants to the topic), or through over-sampling.

User journeys

There are three points in the user journey where particular attention is important: between registration and the launch of the first activities; the launch of each individual activity; and, the timing of workshops.

Providing a good user experience at the point of registration and during the weeks following registration is critical to sustaining long-term engagement. This is because new panel members are more likely to become active contributors if they participate within the first 2-3 weeks

following registration: a lack of activity on the online platform and difficulties navigating the platform are barriers.

The Food Futures Panel experienced a lag between new registrations and the launch of panel activities due to escalating dissatisfaction with project delivery and a period of panel suspension during which management and delivery issues were resolved. This lag had a negative impact as new members risked becoming quickly disengaged. However the fact that the active user base (37% of members having made at least one contribution at the 9-month point, up to 57% by the close of the panel in March 2016) is comparable to other online dialogues suggests that panel 'health' was restored. For any future panel we recommend ensuring that activities are launched as soon as possible after registration to ensure there is no extended period of inactivity.

A second important point in the user journey is occurs at the launch of new activities. Most engagement occurs in the days immediately following the launch, suggesting that online activities could be run over shorter, more intense time periods. Finally, face to face workshops create opportunities to increase online engagement: some workshop participants report feeling more motivated to get more involved in online activities, following the workshop.

More generally, feedback loops are important to sustaining engagement; more immediate acknowledgements of contribution and more immediate delivery of rewards help create this feedback loop. The incentive system we used relied on participants building up points, so could make rewards feel less tangible, breaking the feedback loop. We recommend regular communication with the panel (weekly), even when no activities are being launched, to help sustain engagement over the longer term. However in order to avoid members feeling overburdened and dropping out as a result it may also be useful to consider reassuring members that it is okay to drop in and out of engagement.

About this report

This report is compiled in two parts, reflecting data collected at different points in the public panel programme.

Part 1: Learning at 9-months

The Food Futures public panel was designed to run for one year, to ensure that learning was taken into account throughout the project and not just at the end; we produced a report 9-months in (December 2015). This forms chapters 1 to 7 of this document, and is arranged thematically:

- Chapter 2 discusses governance and project management

- Chapter 3 looks at the innovative approach taken in this dialogue and at issues of context and scope, including topic development and the involvement of specialists

- Chapter 4 looks at the set-up processes, including choice of online platform on which to run the panel and recruitment of participants

- Chapter 5 discusses engagement methods, both online and face-to-face, and the integration of these two broad approaches

- Chapter 6 looks at levels of participation, what facilitates or impedes this and some of the strategies used to increase participation

- Chapter 7 looks at user journeys since the start of the panel, at an aggregate and individual level and at the impact of particular activities on those journeys

Part 2: Learning at the end of the project

During the final three months of the public panel (January to March 2016) we continued to reflect on how the panel was working, and implemented some of the recommendations we made at the 9-month point. This forms chapters 8 and 9 of this document.

- Chapter 8 summarises learning from the activities of the last three months (January to March 2016) of the Food Futures panel, covering the projects completed and methodologies used, and participation levels at the end of the project.

- Chapter 9 draws together the main points raised throughout the report and sets out recommendations for future panels.

A note about terminology

We use the following terminology in this report:

- When we talk about the complete public panel programme we refer to the "**public panel**".

- "**Topic**" describes the main content focus of the project – for example, sustainable intensification. Topics are specifically policy directed.

- "**Topic lead**" is the representative of the GFS partner organisation that suggested the topic. One way to describe the topic lead is as the person asking the question which the project explores.

- "**Project**" describes the implementation of a topic, using a method or methods.

- "**Method**" describes the approaches used to implement a project, for example, survey, blog, online forum discussion or workshop

- "**Specialist**" describes people with specific knowledge and/or expertise who have contributed to the project, without also holding a formal role (e.g., on the Food Futures/GFS public panel Steering Group, Project Management Team or as an employee of one of the GFS partner organisations).

Chapter 1:   Introduction

1.1.   About the Food Futures public panel

The Global Food Security programme brings together the UK's major public-funders of research into food security. One of the aims of the programme is to understand and respond to public views on global food security challenges and potential solutions. To meet this aim the GFS programme commissioned OPM Group to set-up and manage a public panel of around 600 members of the British public to take part in deliberative dialogue activities exploring different aspects of the food security research space. The project is supported by Sciencewise[2] and informed by the Sciencewise Guiding Principles and Quality Framework.

The design and operation of the panel has been shaped by four main aims, shown in Table 1:

Table 1 Public panel aims

A1	To open up and strengthen GFS decision making by efficiently and transparently discussing with, and listening to, a diverse cross-section of UK residents about their views and values relating to GFS's activities, funding priorities, policies and plans
A2	To understand how participants' views and attitudes (including those of GFS, the public and stakeholders) evolve through deliberative engagement on food security
A3	To help foster a conversation among participants and, through their networks, the wider UK public about the issues raised by food security by opening up GFS decision making and discussions
A4	To trial and learn about the effective use of public panels (and the combining of mixed methodologies, including digital methods) for public dialogue and engagement

Our focus in this report is on aim 4, though the interrelationship between the aims means that we do touch on factors relevant to aims one to three.

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[2] Sciencewise is funded by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS). Sciencewise aims to improve policy making involving science and emerging technology across Government by increasing the effectiveness with which public dialogue is used, and encouraging its wider use where appropriate. It provides a wide range of information, advice, guidance and support services aimed at policy makers and all the different stakeholders involved in science and technology policy making, including the public. Sciencewise also provides co-funding to Government departments and agencies to develop and commission public dialogue activities. www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk

Public dialogue is described in the Sciencewise Guiding Principles in the following terms:

Sciencewise Principles	
Context	
The conditions leading to the dialogue process are conducive to the best outcomes	
Scope	
The range of issues and policy opinions covered in the dialogue reflects the participants' interests	
Delivery	
The dialogue process itself represents best practice in design and execution	
Impact	
The dialogue can deliver the desired outcomes	
Evaluation	
The process is shown to be robust and contributes to learning	

Public dialogue is a process during which members of the public interact with scientists, stakeholders (for example, research funders, businesses and pressure groups) and policy makers to deliberate on issues relevant to future policy decisions.

(Sciencewise Guiding Principles)

As do many dialogue projects, the Food Futures panel draws on other disciplines and other approaches, including qualitative and quantitative research, consensus decision-making and communications theory. What makes Sciencewise dialogue distinctive is the set of principles which provide a context for the design of a process which combines these different approaches. These principles extend from the inception of a project –discussion between Sciencewise, policymakers and others with an interest in a particular topic leads to a business case for a dialogue – right through to the impact of the findings on policy decisions, which is reported on by the independent evaluator.

The Guiding Principles sit alongside the Sciencewise Quality Framework, which provides a set of questions designed to stimulate thinking on how the principles can be implemented. Ensuring that a dialogue has regard to each of these principles is the shared responsibility of all those involved: the delivery contractor, the Steering Group, the evaluator, the commissioner and the wider policy community involved with a dialogue.

1.2. Digital dialogue

Developments in digital technologies have long been viewed as creating an opportunity to scale public dialogue by allowing larger number of citizens to participate in the process (Dahl, 1998). This is because online platforms challenge the traditional barriers to citizen participation associated with time and geographical constraints, and larger numbers of citizens can be involved without incurring the costs of physically bringing people together (Smith, John & Sturgis, 2012).

In the market research industry, the use of online consumer panels has become increasingly common over the past decade (used for example in product testing, brand tracking and surveys). There has also been an increase in public authorities' use of the Internet to interact with citizens. However the literature observes that examples of online citizen engagement are 'typically rather basic in nature' with little or no interactivity between participating citizens (Smith, John & Sturgis, 2012: 2). Where more interactive examples have been identified in the literature (for example Wales, Cotterill & Smith's randomized control trial assessing the potential of large-scale online dialogue on the topic of youth anti-social behaviour), these typically lasted for a relatively short period e.g. around three weeks.

The Food Futures Panel therefore represents a relatively novel approach – incorporating as it does both online and face-to-face engagement methods, interactivity between participants and a longer time scale.

1.3. Learning from the public panel

This dialogue takes a novel approach, offering an extended opportunity for iterative learning about online engagement methods and tools and the interaction between online and face-to-face engagement. We have used qualitative, quantitative and deliberate approaches, in mixed-methods projects and as individual tools. The Food Futures panel is a genuinely innovative approach to engagement and gives learning about process great importance and value, both to the continued improvement of this project and to any future projects. Of course, process and content cannot be completely divorced, and one measure of the success of the panel method is the production of credible and useful outputs. In this report, we discuss what we have learned about the process of running the panel: we do not look at the content of discussions or at how the outputs may or may not have influenced policy or research funding decisions. These issues will be covered in other reports, including those written by OPM to look at particular panel activities and by the independent evaluator, 3KQ. These reports will, we hope, contribute to discussions on the future of the panel and support policy makers and research funders to run effective and efficient public dialogue panels in future.

This report is based on the following data sources: 13 interviews with panel members, carried out specifically for this report, user activity data from the platform and the reflections of the Project Management Team (PMT).[3]

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[3] See Chapter 2 for a description of the governance and management structure of the project, including the role and membership of the PMT.

Chapter 2: Governance and management

2.1. Governance and project management

Steering Group Members
Riaz Bhunnoo, GFS
Tim Benton, GFS
Caroline Drummond, LEAF
Lucy Foster, Defra
Tara Garnett, University of Oxford
Peter Jackson, University of Sheffield
Roland Jackson, Independent Chair
Huw Jones, Rothamsted Research
Hannah King, NERC
Suzannah Lansdell, Sciencewise
Jennie Macdiarmid, University of Aberdeen
Alison Mohr, University of Nottingham
Kieron Stanley, Defra
Geoff Tansey, Food Systems Academy
Jon Woolven, IGD

From the delivery perspective, this project has two formal governance structures in place: a Steering Group, membership of which is listed on the right, and a Project Management Team (PMT), comprising:

- GFS, represented by the Project Director and Project Manager: these two members wear other hats too, acting as secretariat to the Steering Group and having 'everyday lives' at one of the individual partners – in this case BBSRC. For the purpose of this report, they are wearing GFS hats unless otherwise stated.

- Sciencewise, represented by a dialogue and engagement specialist

- 3KQ, the independent evaluator

- OPM Group, the delivery agency, represented by the OPM Project Director and Project Manager.

The Chair of the Steering Group, Sir Roland Jackson, sits formally on the PMT but takes a strategic perspective. In his involvement in the operational side of the process is limited to reviewing and approving materials prior to submission to the Steering Group.

The Programme Coordination Group (PCG) sits behind the Steering Group and funding partners and these three groups share members in common. The PCG's role is to coordinate research themes across GFS as a whole; lead and deliver thematic work, manage risks and draw in specialist advice and support as required.

Both the Steering Group and the PMT members have multiple interests and pressures to balance and respond to and different hats to wear. Open communication about the wider interests informing a project enables the delivery team to understand some of the reasoning behind requests for tight timelines, a particular proposal topic or the desire to avoid particular topics. This in turn helps with process design and with ensuring that the range and nature of interests in the process and reports can be taken into account.

Likewise, the delivery team can help the PMT and others by communicating clearly any issues that might present current or future risks to project delivery. As the interim evaluation report discusses, communication breakdown played a major role in the problems we experienced in the early stages of this project and transparent and regular communication has been essential to overcoming these problems.

As with any process involving many and diverse interests, the interaction of the delivery team with those elements of the governance process that are visible to it can be more or less straightforward. In this section, we look at some of the factors that have contributed to effective delivery.

2.1.1. Steering Group

The Steering Group comprises 15 people, from a range of organisations, all of whom are specialists in their own right. We have met with the Steering Group twice since our formal appointment to deliver the project. The first two meetings focused on panel design, composition, sampling and naming. The third, in September, was the first opportunity for OPM Group to present back some early findings from the panel, including the baseline survey and the first project (the insect feed survey), as well as initial feedback on levels of panel engagement.

We have also sought feedback from the Steering Group at regular points on the design and delivery of the two larger activities (food systems and urban agriculture), and asked for their help in identifying potential case studies and individual stakeholders who could contribute to activities.

Our experience with the Steering Group has been largely positive, and they have provided helpful challenge and support in the development of the panel approach as a whole. The main potential improvement is to increase the level of engagement of the Steering Group with the project. The quarterly schedule of meetings reflects the level of time/resource available from the group, but this does not allow for their input into ongoing changes that necessarily follow from initial agreement on a topic. Mixed method and multi-topic dialogues and the fast moving nature of some methods used – for example, taking outputs from an online method and feeding them into a face-to-face method – would benefit from opportunities to involve them more frequently.[4] We have made efforts to engage the Steering Group regularly as activities have developed but this has been largely ad hoc. Steering Group involvement in this project is similar in quantity to that typically involved in a single topic dialogue project.

One notable difference between this project and others is that the delivery team is less involved in the wider discussions on the Steering Group, tending to 'report to' rather than 'collaborate with' the SG as whole – though we have worked collaboratively with individual SG members as topic leads. One of the values to a delivery team of a collaborative approach is learning about the wider factors informing topic selection and the range of debates and perspectives on how best to approach topics. This enables a more anticipatory approach, with concerns and potential 'no go' or priority areas being built into a project design from the start. It also enables the delivery team to learn about the use of language in relation to a particular topic – for example, the resonances associated with different terminology, which can mean that potential pitfalls in later presentation of topics, to the public or to the Steering Group can be avoided.

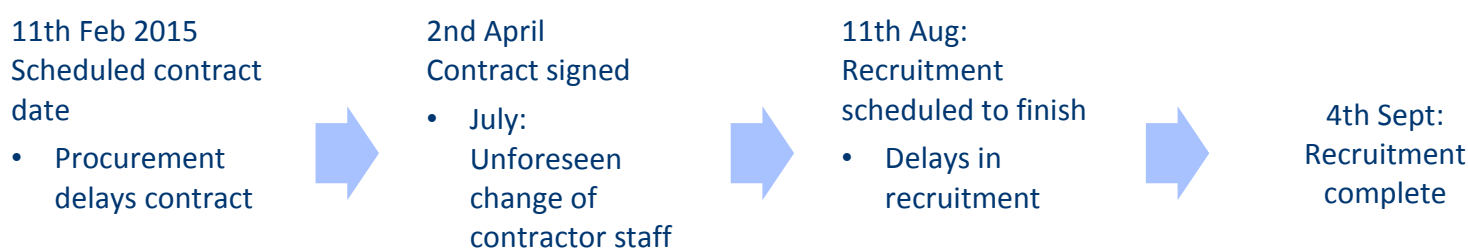[4] See discussion on Topic Steering Groups later in the report.

2.1.2. Project management, timetable and budget

Project management

The Food Futures project is managed by the Project Management Team (PMT), which comprises representatives of BBSRC, Sciencewise and the independent evaluator, 3KQ, as well as the contractor team. The PMT initially met for 30 minutes each week (by telephone) to discuss the project, but this has since been revised to fortnightly meetings lasting an hour. This change allows sufficient time to address immediate project actions and risks and for discussion of some of the wider thinking informing the project and ongoing learning. One of the most valuable tools for the PMT is the monitoring tool showing levels of ongoing engagement with the panel. Developed during October and early November 2015, with first data available in the second week of November, the tool is updated weekly. The development process provided a useful opportunity to explore in detail the data requirements of the project and the capabilities of the software platform chosen to run the panel. The tool itself provides a simple and easy to use means of providing ongoing information about participation and response levels to inform future decisions about process and content design.

Overall the Food Futures project is a complex undertaking, with many simultaneous activities, a large and varied stakeholder group and a lot of moving parts. Potential commissioners and contractors should not underestimate the level of resource required to monitor and manage this type of process, unlike traditional dialogue projects the process is not linear and to make the most of the agile nature of the panel development and sign-off processes also need to be flexible and responsive. This has been achieved on the project, largely due to the commitment of the PMT to managing the individuals and groups involved in oversight. We recommend identifying a simple process for sign-off of activities at the outset, and planning and allocating sufficient resource to achieve a quick turnaround of review.

Timetable

11th Feb 2015
Scheduled contract date
• Procurement delays contract

→

2nd April
Contract signed
• July: Unforeseen change of contractor staff

→

11th Aug:
Recruitment scheduled to finish
• Delays in recruitment

→

4th Sept:
Recruitment complete

The timetable for the first year of the Food Futures panel was scheduled to run from February 2015. A delay in the award of the contract pushed the start date into early April. Perhaps because of the novel approach, a number of things that should have been anticipated but were not, created further delays: these included ensuring that the appropriate Data Protection policies and protocols were in place. Once this was in place, recruitment began. Challenges

with recruitment and problems on the contractor's side, including a change of delivery team, meant that focused delivery did not start until late July 2015.

Detailed learning from these delays is reflected in chapter four, which looks at the panel set-up, and in the interim report from the evaluator.

Budget

The Food Futures project represents a significant investment by the funding partners, and Sciencewise, with a total budget for the first year of £250,000. In this section we review the allocation of the budget to different activities and make some recommendations for future years. This section deals with the allocation of the budget, not the total amount, recognising that other projects may have different total budgets, but still benefit from this learning.

Allocation of budgets

Table 2, below shows how the budget has been allocated across the Food Futures programme. The four largest activities comprise 67% of the budget, reflecting the biggest investment of time and resources. This is partly reflective of the face-to-face elements of these activities, which have higher costs. In contrast the four smallest activities make up just 4% of the budget, and the weekly activities which take place outside of topic-based activities account for just 2%.

Determining value for money for engagement is a thorny topic, and there is no widely accepted metric to use. Credibility of outputs is the ultimate measure of success, but what determines credibility will differ according to the approaches used, the expectations of stakeholders and the uses to which outputs are likely to be put. For example, the criteria for the credibility of a short survey that aims to provide a rough snapshot of views without aiming a representativeness will be very different to those for a mixed-method on- and off-line project or a contained online discussion generating qualitative data only. Determining value for money crudely, according to the numbers participating in or responding to any particular project or method tells us very little.

The insects as animal feed survey generated 138 responses (either to the initial survey or to the blog post sharing the results) and took 1% of the project budget. In contrast the urban agriculture project comprised 18% of the budget and generated 418 online responses of various kinds. Distributing the budget differently and making more use of the rapid turnaround methods, including surveys and online chats and perhaps holding fewer 'large' projects such as Food Systems and Urban Agriculture may offer better value for money. This is not the only way to use the panel but it would be one way of making use of the unique properties of the panel as an ongoing space in which people accumulate knowledge of the topic over time.

As with any project, the appropriate approach is determined by the topic, the depth of exploration required, the speed with which outputs need to be produced, learning from any previous research or engagement, the tools available and the preferences and skills of the client and the delivery team – and, of course, the available budget. So while a high response rate can be achieved for low cost when the topic is clear and quantitative data is adequate as an output, this approach will not provide the depth or deliberation required in dialogue.

Table 2 below shows the allocation of budget to the four largest topics in comparison with panel elements. It does not include the cost of ongoing engagement activities, for which there was no budget.

Table 2 Budget allocation

Activity	Portion of total
Four largest topics: *Food Systems, Urban Agriculture, Innovation, Sustainable Intensification*	67%
Recruitment of participants	13%
Baseline, endline and 9 month learning reports	8%
Software and setup	4%
Four smallest activities: *Insects as animal feed, where does your dinner come from, FSA report,* *Buying British*	4%
Panel management	2%
Programme management	1%

Software, project and panel management budgets

The portion of the budget allocated to software licensing and setup, project and panel management totals 7% of the project budget, this includes a decision at the set up phase to increase the software budget by almost 50%. This decision was taken in the context of a discussion involving contractor, PMT and Steering Group about whether the panel software needed to provide a simple data collection platform, or host a community with participant interaction. While a data collection platform is a simple and inexpensive tool to build, an online community platform is more complex. The PMT tested a shortlist of software options, of which the chosen platform (CMNTY) was mid-priced. The decision to use the CMNTY platform was based primarily on the wider range of functions offered in comparison to other options and the budget was increased accordingly. Because this represented such a significant increase from the initial estimate there was caution about how much to invest, which meant that some of the modular functions which could have been added on were not. As discussed elsewhere we also think that allocating a portion of the budget to design would help maximise the usability of the platform for participants.

Having learned from the first nine months of this project, we would recommend increasing the proportion of the budget allocated to panel and programme management. While the budget allocates 2% of total budget to panel management, and 1% to project management the actual requirement in terms of staff time is very much higher, and this cost is not currently accounted for: this is due to factors discussed elsewhere, including the nature of the panel and what is understood by 'management' of the panel. While increasing the software budget would introduce some efficiencies around data management, the majority of panel and programme

management is taken up with the scale of involvement: for example, managing incentives and queries from 600 participants, managing the input of specialists, Steering Group and PMT. Although in some cases project management time has been incorporated into topic budgets, a significant amount of time has been dedicated to the project without corresponding budget.

Three factors in particular are perhaps responsible for this. First, difficulties in proposing an accurate budget for such a novel project: we perhaps underestimated the time required to manage a panel of this type. Second, the difficulties on our side part way through the project led to nervousness on the client side, manifest in requirements for additional project management tools. Finally, the project has evolved and continues to evolve, as a learning exercise. This means that each element produces learning which feeds into the next element: for example, discussions on the PMT management calls are wide-ranging and informative, each one leading us to return to the design and materials to improve and hone them further.

2.2.   Recommendations

- Include Steering Group member involvement in activities at the earliest stages (during topic proposal development): to reduce calls on time, nominate members of a Topic Steering Group, comprising two or three representatives from relevant SG organisations (including the SG member). Members of the Topic Steering Group would take part in the project delivering that topic.

- Engage the Steering Group as panellists, enabling them to contribute directly to online discussions. This could have benefits in sharing their perspectives with participants and encouraging stakeholder/public interaction, but would need to be managed to ensure their views did not dominate by dint of their status. This would require revision to the data sharing agreement and Terms and Conditions for the online panel, and consideration of whether members should be able to comment/take part or just observe.

- Identify a simple process for signing off topics and project materials and design at the start of each new topic, and planning and allocating sufficient resource to achieve a quick turnaround of review. The PMT can sometimes have a large volume of materials to sign off at the same time, which can demand a lot of their attention.

- Allocate a portion of the budget to design, helping to maximise the usability of the platform for participants.

- Agree a suite of appropriate project management tools at the start of a project and ensure that sufficient budget is allocated to panel management and ongoing panel engagement activities.

Chapter 3:   Innovation, context and scope

3.1.   Introduction

In this chapter we look at the innovative approach taken in this project – namely, the use of online software to engage a substantial number of participants over an extended period of time – and the extent to which this approach has met the GFS wish for an 'ongoing, responsive and flexible mechanism' for engaging on global food security. We look too at some of the wider factors that have informed both the design and ongoing delivery of Food Futures projects and activities. These include context and scope, the two first principles described in the Sciencewise Guiding Principles for Dialogue; topic development and involving specialists.

3.2.   Innovation

In a 2013 paper on "Science and technology policy dialogues in a digital world" Sciencewise note that "digital engagement is much more than an alternative delivery mechanism; it is a culture and an approach" The speed of communication possible online leads to engagement that is "more active and more conversational" than many offline methods.

The flexibility and responsiveness of this approach was identified at the outset of the Food Futures panel as one of the principles underlying the project:

GFS would like to establish UK public panels to act as 'sounding board' for GFS to provide an ongoing, flexible and responsive mechanism to engage with the public on food security issues and to inform the development and direction of GFS's research priorities. (Request for Proposals)

Activities involving several stages – particularly those with face-to-face elements – have taken longer to plan, implement and report, though are likely to be delivered more quickly than similar scale projects done from scratch, because recruitment has already been done. To date, this includes the Urban Agriculture and Food Systems projects. The online software also enables a relatively rapid turnaround time of particular elements within a project. For example the Food Systems forum discussion elicited questions in the first week, which were then addressed by a specialist in a video that was posted as part of a live chat session just two days after the discussion.

Highlight: The agility offered by the panel approach is best demonstrated in smaller activities such as Insects as Animal Feed and Buying British (ongoing), where a policy team has been able to suggest a topic and receive findings within just a few weeks. More broadly, the ability to combine online and offline methods, and, in particular to use the former as both information gathering and preparatory activities to face-to-face methods has enabled a more complex

design and faster turnaround of larger projects, such as Food Systems, than would have been the case in the absence of an existing panel and package of software tools.

One question should be asked of these quick turnaround activities however: would a similarly rapid turnaround be possible using more conventional approaches, such as an omnibus survey. In responding to this question, the wider context in which these small activities take place needs to be factored in: what additional value is gained from running quick processes such as surveys through a panel such as this? Are there particular benefits in participants being part of the wider Food Futures community? Are these realised differentially – for example, by running surveys earlier or later in the life of the panel? We do not have answers to these questions at present.

3.3.   Context and scope

Context and **scope** are the first two principles set out by Sciencewise. They guide the set-up and setting for a dialogue project, rather than the process of delivery. In this section we look at those aspects of context and scope over which we have had most influence, reflect on how these have worked so far and highlight learning, where possible.[5].

Context

Much of the context for dialogue projects is set prior to the involvement of the delivery partner and this early work is discussed in the independent evaluators report. However, it is worth noting that context is glossed by Sciencewise as: "The conditions leading to the dialogue process are conducive to the best outcomes". For this to be possible, and for these conditions to feed through the design and delivery process to the production of outputs and generation of outcomes, this context needs to be discussed and explored.

From a delivery perspective, two contextual factors in particular stand out and have played a role in our approach to the project. The first is the innovative nature of the process, discussed earlier in this chapter. The context for Food Futures is shaped in part by the explicit decision to adopt a new approach to engaging the public on a complex topic with technical, social, ethical, political, economic and environmental dimensions. Ensuring the best outputs and outcomes in this context means several things, including:

- careful attention to the relationship between a topic and the approach taken to engaging the public in this topic in a project using one or many methods;

- the balance of online and face-to-face elements and the design of online elements in particular.

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[5] The delivery of the panel is what makes up the bulk of this document, and the evaluation is covered in the separate independent evaluators report.

Scope

There are two opportunities for the delivery team to influence the scope of the dialogue, which is glossed as: "The range of issues and policy opinions covered in the dialogue reflects the participants' interests". The first is through discussion with the multiple sets of policy owners involved in Food Futures as a whole, including the Steering Group, project funders and GFS partner organisations and with the topic leads who determine individual projects – for example, the BBSRC team leading the urban agriculture topic on behalf of GFS. By using our ongoing learning and experience of previous dialogues, we can work with them to ensure that the scope of a topic is accessible to participants, practically manageable and meets its intended aims.

The second opportunity is through our interactions with participants: this takes place primarily through process design, style and tone of delivery and responsiveness to queries or concerns, both practical – in terms of using the panel – and content focused, in relation to specific questions raised about topics. Interaction with specialists and the wider PMT is crucial to this.

3.3.1. Topic development

The original formal process for topic development was for a topic lead (for example, a GFS partner organisation such as Defra or BBSRC) to identify an idea or policy interest and scope it out on a proposal form. The form asks a series of questions about the scale of dialogue envisioned that topic, stakeholder involvement, approaches to be taken and context within which the project sits – for example, what previous research has been done. Topic lead, delivery contractor and the Steering Group all played a role in answering these questions. Once complete, the proposal is evaluated by the Steering Group and signed off by the secretariat or Project Management Team (PMT).

Over the nine months of the project, the process of topic development has become more iterative and collaborative. The topic proposal form provides a good starting point, initiating discussion between the topic lead and the PMT, including the delivery team and enabling a process of refinement and clarification. However, the breadth of information needed by the delivery contractor to produce a credible and appropriate project plan cannot be accommodated in a form and it is not always clear who the audience is for the information provided on the form. The more collaborative approach has enabled us both to focus the specific research questions to be asked, clarify the scope of the topic and develop the method or methods that will best meet requirements.

We have found that topic development involves lengthy conversations with topic leads, the PMT and sometimes specialists in the topic area. This helps to ensure that the final plan captures what is essential to the topic lead whilst being manageable within the timescale; affordable, given the available budget; credible, in terms of the outputs generated through the process designed and in accordance with Sciencewise principles and quality framework.

One important aspect of the development process, learned most clearly at the start of the urban agriculture topic, is a face-to-face meeting between topic lead(s), delivery team and

members of the PMT: an intensive and searching look at the topic, focused on building a manageable structure for what can be very expansive policy or research questions, helps to ensure that the delivery team understands more about what precisely the topic lead is looking for, where their priorities lie and the topic lead learns more about the advantages and limitations of different process design options.

3.3.2. Involving specialists

Involving specialist knowledge, experience and interests in dialogue with the public is an integral aspect of Sciencewise projects. In both of the two main Food Futures activities run to date – urban agriculture and food systems - we needed to consider how to engage specialists in both online and face-to-face activities and in the development of materials used in both channels.

In this section, we focus primarily on involving specialists who have no formal role on the project – for example, as a member of the Steering Group or PMT. Whilst the involvement of the latter is equally valuable – as evidenced by the attendance of the Project Manager, a policy team member and a GFS representative at the urban agriculture workshops, and the interview with a Steering Group member for the food systems video – it raises different issues, which we touch on at the end of this section.

Specialist involvement in materials development helps to ensure that information provided is accurate, up-to-date and as comprehensive as possible: it is important to reflect different views on a topic and, as far as possible, enable participants to comprehend the range of debates. Specialist involvement in events and activities – both on and off-line – is equally important. The opportunity to engage directly with scientists and researchers (and policy-holders) is often cited by dialogue participants as one of the most rewarding aspects of a process.

Many of the challenges we faced in engaging specialists in face-to-face activities are not new to this project. Events are typically help on Saturdays, to maximise public participation: specialists who work hard all week often have other responsibilities at weekends and cannot dedicate a whole day to a workshop. Specialists may see their role as consultancy and be unwilling to dedicate their time for free. People can be booked up many months in advance and finding people with the requisite expertise *and* availability, from what are often small pools, can be hard.

At the nine-month point of the public panel, specialists have been involved in Food Futures in different ways:

Table 3 Involvement of specialists and stakeholders

Online involvement	Face-to-face involvement

Urban agriculture	
Specialists and stakeholders were involved in the early stages of development of materials used both on and offline, primarily through telephone interviews.	
Providing responses to questions raised by panellists during forum discussions	Interviews (45 minutes-hour) to inform development of case study materials, included edited versions of interviews used as voice overs for case study animated videos shown at workshops
	Attending workshops to participate in discussions and provide specialist input (e.g., through presentations, question and answer sessions, challenging assumptions etc

Food systems	
Each of the three case studies was developed in collaboration with specialists.	
Recorded interview, edited and shown on Food Futures online platform (SG member)	Attending workshops to participate in discussions and provide specialist input (e.g., through presentations, question and answer sessions, challenging assumptions etc

We identified and recruited specialists by a variety of means. Some were recommended by policy leads or members of the Steering Group, others were identified during the scoping research.

This project provides both particular challenges and particular opportunities for involving specialists. One of the principle opportunities arises from the asynchronous nature of some of the online activities. This means specialists can provide their expertise at a time that was convenient to them, or at a distance: for example, by answering questions emailed to them, the responses being posted onto the online platform after by the PMT or, by reviewing and amending responses to questions that we had drafted or by taking part in telephone interviews. This enables a more flexible approach to specialists' involvement than 'be at this address on this Saturday'.

One particular challenge is built into the initial foundations of the project. It was designed to enable rapid turnaround of projects and quick delivery of outputs. This shortens the time

available to identify and recruit specialists: wooing them over time can be an important aspect of gaining their trust in the integrity of a process. One of the main ways of short-cutting this process – particularly for senior academic or industry specialists - is for the initial contact to be made by members of the Steering Group or a senior member of the PMT.

In this project, we found that engagement from the third sector and academics has been enthusiastic and frequent – one of the urban agriculture specialists attended three out of the four workshops - there has been less interest from industry or business stakeholders, particularly when approached as a result of scoping research and without a direct introduction. This is not unusual: the immediate benefit of involvement in dialogue and engagement activities such as this is perhaps less evident to industry and business. It also raises some additional questions: for example, does the involvement of industry/commercial interests affect the way in which a project is perceived by the participants or by other interested parties. If so, how and what, if anything, might this mean for design and reporting? At present, specialists tend to be treated as politically neutral information sources and interrogation of the specific content of their contribution and analysis of its impact on the process and/or findings are limited.

This has had differential impacts on the two main projects to date: for urban agriculture we were able to involve an academic, a third sector organisation and an entrepreneurial business person in the three case studies, as well as animal welfare and farmers' union representatives, a PhD student and academics. However for the food systems workshops it was not possible to find industry representatives to attend workshops and bring the perspective into the discussion directly. This was mitigated by the involvement of Steering Group industry representative in developing the materials but remains a weakness of the process.

Stakeholder involvement

By stakeholder, we mean people with specialist knowledge *and* a specific formal interest in the project. The group includes members of the Steering Group and the PMT as well as employees of the GFS partner organisations**.**

Each project developed for the Food Futures panel has a topic lead who puts forward the idea, contributes to the development of the process and takes ownership of the outputs. Aside from their role in the initial topic development process, topic leads are involved primarily in the set-up and design stages of a project: for example, in refining questions asked in a survey, or reviewing stimulus materials used in a workshop. They have also suggested individual topic specialists who might be involved in a particular project.

The involvement of Steering Group members in project delivery has been relatively limited. In Food Systems, Tim Benton took part in a video interview, shown online, which provided a broad introduction to the main issues that would be discussed during the course of the project. This was of immense value, in terms of both of the knowledge he brought to the project and because the involvement of people with a formal stake in the outputs of a project sends at least an implicit message to participants about their interest in the process by which those outputs are generated.

The involvement of Steering Group members varies across dialogue projects: sometimes, they are reluctant to play too great a role, particularly in providing information, concerned that this could lead to accusations that a process has been 'steered' towards particular findings or interests. We don't subscribe to this view. In Sciencewise projects in particular, the governance processes – and in particular the presence of an independent evaluator – are adequate to managing any attempt at 'steering' a process. Second, the composition of a Steering Group and the careful process by which individuals are selected tends to mean that, whilst a range of interests are represented on a group, the individuals themselves are mostly – though not always – sufficiently reflective to recognise how their own interests affect their perspective on a topic, or at least to acknowledge this impact if challenged. Finally, we think that first hand experience of engagement processes, and of face-to-face events in particular, helps those responsible for commissioning them to understand some of the opportunities and challenges involved.

On a more practical level, involving Steering Group members in project delivery meets the same challenges as are met with other specialists: time pressures, Saturday events and sometimes short advance notice periods for involvement.

Main learning

Successful topic development is an iterative process that takes time. Planning the individual projects needs to take this into account, and recognise the importance of managing multiple expectations and helping people from different backgrounds and with different expertise and experience of dialogue, project management and policy to view the process from multiple perspectives.

Online engagement offers wider opportunities for specialist involvement, whilst the requirement for rapid turnaround of projects increases the challenge of attendance at face-to-face activities.

Steering Group and/or PMT involvement in approaching specialists can add greatly to the positive outcomes of specialist recruitment, particularly to face-to-face events held on a Saturday.

Steering Group members' involvement in project delivery could add value.

3.4.   Recommendations

- Build a list of specialists at the earliest possible stages of a project and enlist SG members and GFS partner organisations to provide personal introductions to specialists, particularly those in industry.

- Identify potential benefits to specialists of being involved: this is particularly important for industry specialists who do not have the same incentives as academics might (for example, public engagement as stipulated condition of research awards). Consider if and how the involvement of commercial interests could affect participation and whether it has implications for reporting.

- **For future projects**: the involvement of industry representatives in dialogue seems increasingly common and learning to date – from this and other recent projects – suggests that this will have budget implications: these need to be considered during the proposal and planning stages.

- Topic proposal forms should be high level and very clearly drafted. The focus should be on providing succinct information that will enable the delivery partner and topic lead to initiate more detailed discussions about process design. This includes background information (e.g., policy drivers; previous research); 'non-negotiables' (e.g., must include a survey; must involve industry stakeholders); approval process (e.g., does the whole Steering Group need to approval the final topic proposal / plan?) and two or three primary research questions.

- The iterative approach to topic development is continued, but project managers (delivery and client-side) maintain a watching brief on the time dedicated to this process, so that topic proposals are signed off in a timely manner and the process does not eat into design and delivery.

- Make more use of smaller engagement activities by developing a set of research questions with the Steering Group that can be addressed on an ad hoc basis. This would need to have a specific portion of the budget allocated, which would be justified by the focus on topics of interest to the Steering Group.

- Give explicit thought to the distribution of different methods of engaging participants over the entirety of the panel's life (e.g., a year) to ensure that trade-offs between speed of generating outputs, numbers of panellists involved, costs and quality of data generated are discussed. This will provide a framework for decisions about the different methodological approaches taken to individual topics.

Chapter 4: Panel set-up: online platform and recruitment

In this chapter, we review what we have learned from the process of choosing and selecting the online platform for the project and the design, set-up and recruitment of the panel participants. We look at the challenges encountered and at the impact of early decision-making on the ongoing panel process.

4.1. Set up of the online platform

The decisions informing the selection and set- up of an online platform used to host a dialogue project can have consequences throughout its lifetime, for design, ongoing engagement, data extraction and analysis and calls on management time. This is particularly the case when purchasing an off-the-shelf package that cannot be updated without additional expenditure. On this project, we have learned a lot about what we need to anticipate during the set-up phase and whether a platform will be able to deliver what is required and at what cost (for example, staff time or additional one-off costs).

4.1.1. Selection of panel platform software

OPM Group's original tender proposed building the panel website in house. However, given the complexity of the desired functionality and the build time, it was decided to look at available specialist software.

Several panel software platforms were reviewed and costs and functionality compared by the OPM project team, leading to a shortlist of two: Engagement HQ and CMNTY.

CMNTY was chosen as it was felt to offer the best functionality and value for money. CMNTY were also willing to discount the cost, as they were keen to work on the subject matter and work with small/medium sized research agencies such as OPM.

See section on project management for discussion of software budget.

User activity data has proven to be a valuable resource, providing us with insights into Panel members' online behaviour (e.g. how they interact with the platform, how long they spend online etc.), in the aggregate and by individual group types (e.g., location, gender, age etc). The behavioural data generated through online engagement enables a new type of analysis not possible with traditional face-to-face dialogue, as it goes beyond participant's self-reported opinion to look at actual behaviours.

4.1.2. Design of the online platform

Existing research suggests that the design characteristics of online platforms used in public dialogue have a significant impact on the form of interaction between participants. Janssen& Kies (2005) highlight two of these characteristics.

The first is the technical architecture used, in particular whether the online discussions are real time such as online chats, or asynchronous, such as forums. The authors suggest that the latter 'constitutes a more favourable place for the appearance of some form of rational-critical debate' (Janssen & Kies, 2005: 321). The Food Futures Panel has taken a mixed approach combining real time and asynchronous elements, although to date the engagement has primarily been asynchronous in nature, enabling participants to log-on and contribute at a time convenient to them. By the nine-month point of the public panelone online chat had been conducted as part of the Food Systems project; this was conducted in real time over 30 minutes. This was useful as part of a wider portfolio of methods, though participants tended not to provide reasoned comments. It was a very efficient way of gaining insight into participants' immediate and spontaneous responses to a topic, which then fed into the shaping of the topic. To date, we do not have sufficient evidence to comment on whether Janssen and Kies's findings about the importance of technical architecture are borne out by this project.

The second characteristic identified by Janssen& Kies (2005) is the way in which online platforms are organised, e.g. the anonymity of participants, the visibility of other responses, the form of moderation and the extent to which participants are able to set the agenda for debate. The Food Futures Panel has been organised so that:

- When logging in for the first time, participants are greeted with a video from the Global Food Security team leader (Riaz Bhunnoo), outlining the aims of the Panel and how it will be used

- Participants are not given an option to share background information on their gender, age, ethnicity etc. with other participants; profile pages are kept private to support the ability of participants to comment without fear that comments are viewed in the context of their personal circumstances

- A general forum provides an informal space for engagement beyond specific policy projects

- When policy specific projects are launched, easily accessible information about the topic is offered: short briefing articles and audio-visual materials including videos made by OPM summarising the written information

- Project activities are designed to ease participants into discussion through a sequential process: blog articles introduce and summarise a topic, an initial forum thread

captures first reactions and questions (to be answered by specialists) and then specific activities are launched (e.g., real-time discussions, workshops etc)

- Visible moderation to prompt contributions, probe responses and summarise arguments

- A results page to share the results of the project activities to the Panel

- Panel members not able to create new forum threads in the policy specific forum spaces, but can do so in the 'general topic' forum

4.2. Panel design

Sample

One of the first decisions to be made was whether the sample design for the Panel should reflect the UK population, the population of the six different locations selected or, be weighted in some way. For example, we might target active users of social media or people with a prior interest in food. Sample design for Sciencewise projects typically reflects the broader UK population, aiming for a diverse and inclusive sample and this was the approach discussed and agreed by the Steering Group.

However, the nature of the GFS project provided strong arguments for a more targeted approach. First, it was unlikely that the wider publics would be familiar with global food security as a topic. Whilst this is often the case in Sciencewise projects, likely unfamiliarity with the topic combined with the novel approach and the length of commitment asked of people presented a new mix.

Following discussion with the Steering Group and PMT we agreed that we would try to balance this tension between the demanding nature of the project and the benefits of a broadly inclusive sample. The final sample design was guided by the Sciencewise principles and reflects broadly the range and variety of social groups across the UK population, but includes some quota for people with a prior interest in food and for social media use.

As we discuss below recruitment to the panel was difficult and time-consuming, both when recruiting on street to a quota, and when seeking to recruit via social media and food interested intermediaries. It is our view that the panel design was a contributor to this difficulty, but that the final composition of the panel is fit for purpose.

Panel size

At the proposal stage, OPM recommended that the Panel consist of 600 participants. The Food Futures Panel is an innovative approach to engagement, rather than a mechanism for producing statistically robust quantitative outputs, so determining the size of the panel meant considering how different numbers of panellists might affect the quality and credibility of the

different types of output envisaged. Crucially, it was important to provide opportunities to explore in depth the perspectives of a diverse and inclusive group of people from across the UK, and reflecting a mix of urban and rural participants. This meant balancing a number of different factors, including:

- **A large panel** (between 500 – 1,000) increases the chance of each engagement method or project involving a sufficiently large and diverse group of participants, so that findings are credible. A large panel also provides a sufficiently large number of participants in each location from which to recruit people for face-to-face activities. These benefits have to be weighed against the increased costs of setting up and managing a large panel, which include recruitment costs, panel refresh and incentives, as well as administration and management time.

- **A small panel** (between 100 – 499) is more likely to generate a sense of community over time and this may raise the level of activity of individual Panel members and help foster conversation among participants. It may also increase the chance that panel members will engage in multiple engagement activities (particularly when activities are space-limited) and thus may provide more valuable data on how views evolve as a result of engagement. However, small panels may be challenged for not including a sufficiently broad spectrum of attitudes and perspectives.

A 600-strong panel has to date enabled us to run face-to-face activities in four of the six locations to date, and to recruit participants to specific online activities. However, given the tendency for Panel members' engagement to decline over time ongoing monitoring is essential, so that top-up recruitment can be done prior to, rather than after, any significant drop in numbers.

Recruitment locations

Panel members were recruited from six locations across the UK. This number was felt to be the minimum within which we could accommodate the requisite diversity of location profiles across the UK. The availability of recruiters in these locations was also a factor in agreeing locations: however, the issue is not just about numbers, but about the specific challenges of recruiting to this particular approach. The specific locations were selected to ensure:

- Representation from the four nations of the UK

- Different agricultural and food culture profiles

- Spread of urban and rural participants

- inclusion of areas with different distinctive and relevant characteristics:

Location	Characteristics

Harrogate	Market town with distinctive identity based on heritage; connection with arable farming; close rural population but sufficiently large for face-to-face venue-finding to be reasonably straightforward
Plymouth	coastal town with a more industrial character and connection to fisheries
London and Belfast	Both locations chosen because they are their nation's largest cities. Each is very different. London has an exceptionally diverse population, socially and culturally complex, with large stable and transient population. Belfast is much smaller, closer to rural areas.
Cardiff	Selected primarily for practical reasons: Wrexham and Aberystwyth were both considered but lack of recruiter availability ruled them out
Dundee	Provides another coastal location, with historically industrial character and, on a practical level, sufficient recruiter availability.

To date, there have been benefits and disadvantages in this package of locations. Early analysis of qualitative data suggests that locations like Plymouth which are used less frequently in market research is generating distinctive insights. However the distance of some locations from policy centres has made recruiting specialists more difficult, with increased costs associated with travel (as with the Urban Agriculture topic where some specialists were flown to Belfast). It is our view that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages, and if anything we would recommend considering whether further recruitment to the panel could involve the addition of new locations as well as topping up the existing samples.

4.3.   Panel set-up and recruitment

On-street recruitment was contracted to a third party recruitment agency (Plus Four). Recruitment started in July 2015 and the original plan was to have recruited 600 members by August. However the recruitment process was slower than expected due to a number of challenges (see next section). In September, an achieved sample of 600 was circulated and reviewed by the PMT. Engagement levels were reviewed regularly and, by mid-October, it was

clear that the sample recruited in Dundee was failing to engage. We therefore undertook top-up recruitment, using the contingency budget allocated to this in our original proposal.

As of 8th December 2015, 658 members of the public have been recruited to the Food Futures Panel. The number of active panel members fluctuates: the snapshot of the panel taken on 8th December shows 597 active members.

4.3.1. Recruitment challenges

Recruiting 600 panel members was scheduled to take around four weeks but in fact took seven weeks. The achieved sample at the end of the seven weeks did not meet all of the initial demographic criteria, as is true of the top-up recruitment. The challenges we faced in recruitment are discussed here in detail.

Recruiters reported both low initial interest and low conversion of interest to registrations. To address these challenges, we put in place a wide range of mitigation measures, including use of alternative recruitment methods (telephone, email), expanding the geographical areas open to recruiters, varying the recruitment materials, targeting food events, recruitment via intermediaries (local community groups, food groups, snowballing) and simply increasing the level of recruitment activity in each area.

The next sections outline some of the recruitment challenges in more detail.

Challenge 1: Framing the topic

The first issue faced was how best to frame the topic of 'global food security'. Typically, people are poor at engaging with risks which are geographically or temporally distant from them, when they perceive themselves to have limited agency or efficacy in influencing the risk. The challenges of the global food system meet many of these criteria and thus the topic is not immediately accessible or interesting to many potential participants. Feedback from recruiters, who report a much lower level of interest than for comparable panels focused on engaging people on local issues (such as citizen panels run by local authorities, which often combine on- and offline elements) or on more specific topics, supports this view. The pool of people who are aware of this as an issue and interested in issues relevant to food security is likely to be small in any location: the learning interviews make clear that we have recruited some of these people. However, to much of the wider population, the topic is likely to be remote.

The specific challenges arising from the combination of panel type and length and complex and unfamiliar topic may have been mitigated by adopting a different approach to recruitment and to the design of projects to engage recruited members. The latter could have been viewed as, in part, an incentive to participation. Recruiting people directly to face-to-face activities would have provided an opportunity for them to meet each other, in their locations and to meet the

project team and members of the Steering Group. This could have served as the first step in forming a community, which would then be built online and in subsequent face-to-face work.

Framing the topic in a way that encourages potential participants to see how it is relevant to their lives may also help. In the learning interviews, Panel members often reported that they were motivated to join because the topic was already of personal interest (even if this just meant that they enjoyed cooking or were 'foodies'), or because they could see the importance of the topic and its potential impact on their family in the coming years. As noted above, the pool of people with this interest is likely to be small: reframing the topic to increase the size of the pool of those likely to be interested – perhaps by finding a topical 'hook' might help with this.

> "It's an important topic, food is central to our lives. I want my kids to grow up knowing where their food comes from."(Richard, 41-55, Harrogate)

Challenge 2: Conversion to the online platform

Potential participants recruited on-street needed to register on the online platform before being counted as panellists. To ensure that participants were able to navigate the panel website, they were required to register independently, without support from the recruiter.

The conversion from recruitment to registration averaged around 50% across the recruitment as a whole. Feedback from recruiters suggests that this could have been reduced if recruiters had been able to walk participants through the site immediately on recruitment, rather than recruited participants having to go home or to the library to register. Whilst immediately attractive, this approach could have practical and longer-term implications for participation. Practically, recruiters would need the relevant technology, at home or on-street. Over the longer-term, the impact on participation and drop-out would need to be considered. Recruiters reported feeling that people were either 'being nice' or 'trying to get rid of them' by agreeing to take part. Whilst immediate registration might reduce the number of people saying these things (as the time required for engaging with the recruiter would increase), there is also the potential that people registered with or by recruiters would not take part later and dropout levels would increase.

Challenge 3: Availability of recruiters

In some locations where recruitment was proving difficult, there was insufficient resource in the local recruitment force to respond. Harrogate, Dundee and Plymouth are not used frequently for research and had limited recruitment capacity (e.g. availability of on-street interviewers for face-to-face recruitment, existing lists of potential participants). A significant learning from this project has been the importance of understanding recruiter quality and availability for each location.

Challenge 4: Sample criteria

Particular aspects of the sample design presented challenges. The most prominent of these was recruiting to the oldest two age groups. To ensure sufficient representation of the older population, the 56+ age group was split into two (56 – 65, and 66+) to ensure a good range amongst this older group.

The requirement to have internet access at home reduced the pool of available participants. Interestingly feedback from recruiters suggests that more frequently participants did have internet access but were not interested in an 'online' panel regardless. Feedback suggests this is an issue of confidence with online tools, meaning that the theoretically available pool of participants (over-65's with internet access at home) is actually much smaller in practice (over-65's with internet access at home who are confident enough in technology to sign up to an online panel).

> "It took me a few goes to sign on properly, and I had to spend quite a lot of time trying to learn how to navigate the site. If you haven't got someone sitting with you, then it can be quite stressful to get it right." (Sally, 66+, Harrogate)

Offering phone 'walk-throughs' with participants could be useful in building their confidence, however it is important to be realistic about the scope of any one methodology to reach all groups. As the 2013 Sciencewise report on digital dialogue notes: *"universal access to the Internet does not mean universal use or familiarity, and current research suggests that even with broader access those over 65 years, and of lower socio-economic status, may be excluded from exclusively online engagement for many years to come*[6]*."*

Challenge 5: Participant expectations

Some people participate in research because they are interested in the topic or process, and find it personally satisfying (intrinsic motivation). However for others this is not a sufficient motivator and so financial incentives are used as additional (extrinsic) motivators. In this project because the activities were not planned in advance of recruitment, it was not possible to give participants precise information about the level and frequency of incentive payments or, indeed, about the nature of the activities or topics that would be discussed (see earlier discussion about the possibility of recruiting directly to workshops).

> "I thought it was going to be online surveys where you put your thoughts in and never hear back from it." (Abby, 26-40, London)

As well as lowering recruitment rates generally the uncertainty about the level of extrinsic motivators – that is, financial reward - is likely to have a disproportionate effect on less

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[6] Sciencewise, 2013. "In the goldfish bowl: science and technology policy dialogues in a digital world". Accessed online 22/12/2015: http://www.sciencewise-erc.org.uk/cms/assets/Uploads/In-the-goldfish-bowl-FINAL-VERSION.pdf

affluent socio-economic groups. Intrinsic motivation is perhaps lower amongst less affluent groups– or perhaps the way that the project was described precluded awakening interest in people with lower levels of intrinsic motivation. It could be that uncertainty about level of extrinsic motivation presents a greater risk to less affluent socio-economic groups and without intrinsic motivation as a secondary reward, they are perhaps less willing to run that risk.

Top up recruitment

As these challenges emerged, we responded to them during top-up recruitment. Recruitment materials were simplified and additional recruitment resource was arranged. Through the first months of the panel operation after recruitment finished, levels of panel engagement were monitored closely.

Engagement in Dundee was significantly lower than in other areas (only around half of participants had taken part in any activity by October). Budget had been allocated for a second round of recruitment to address potential drop-out and it was decided to focus this on Dundee as participation levels in other locations were reasonably good. In November an additional 32 participants were recruited in Dundee, bringing total participants as of early December to 658, of whom 597 were active.

While the top-up recruitment was successful the recruiter reported similar challenges to those experienced in the first round.

4.4.   Achieved Panel sample

In the context of these challenges to recruitment, it is not surprising that there is some discrepancy between the original sample quotas and achieved sample. This has an impact on the representativeness of the Food Futures Panel. This section compares the achieved sample of the Food Futures Panel against the original quotas, and highlights learning gained during the recruitment process.

Location

Table 4 Recruitment by location (n=658 registered participants, 597 active, as of December 2015)

	Belfast	Cardiff	Dundee	Harrogate	London	Plymouth	Total
Total registered	94	117	134	105	110	97	658
Active base	93	106	91	101	110	96	597

The number of Panel members is higher in Dundee than the other locations as top-up recruitment had to be carried out in November and December due to the lower than average engagement levels compared to the other locations.

Demographic measures

A comprehensive comparison of the achieved sample versus the quota in terms of performance against demographic measures can be found in Appendix B. There are three demographic measures on which the achieved sample deviates from the quota:

- Gender – the quota specified a 50:50 split (+/-5%) between men and women; this was not met. The achieved gender balance of the panel is weighted towards women, with women constituting 56% of the panel. The tendency of over-representation by women reflects our experience in other dialogue projects.

- Age – the quota specific that 17% of the panel sample should be aged over 66, but we struggled to meet this. Currently only 7% of members are over 66. As described in the section above, we found it extremely difficult to recruit this age group. Latest ONS figures show 84% of households have internet access, but only 41% of households with a single adult aged 65+ have access, and 80% households with at least one adult over 65. While the figures indicate that this criterion was likely to be an obstacle, recruiters also report that lack of confidence with digital technology amongst these age groups is likely to have exacerbated the difficulty of recruiting participants who met the requirement.

- Education levels – the achieved sample under-represents lower educational levels and over-represents the higher levels. The quota specified that 23% (+/-10%) of the sample should have no qualifications or GCSEs grades D-G; the achieved percentage is 10%. We have found it particularly challenging to recruit participants with no qualifications; however our experience does suggest that a proportion of participants will self-report as holding 'other qualifications' where it is an option, rather than 'no qualifications'. Feedback from recruiters is that participants with lower educational levels found the topic matter of less interest, and that the uncertain incentive level and long term commitment meant that where incentivisation might typically compensate for this, it was less effective in this case.

4.4.1. Decisions on community type

At the early stage of the project, there were extended discussions between the SG, the PMT and the contractor about what type of panel would deliver the objectives of the GFS project. Our understanding evolved from an initial assumption that the panel structure would be a relatively straightforward research channel to a more fully formed community with interaction between participants.

Also part of this discussion was whether or not participants would be able to put forward their own topics for discussion within the Food Futures Panel. Allowing participants to do so would risk topics less relevant to the Global Food Security team dominating discussions. Following discussion at the Steering Group, the PMT decided that the Panel should be focused on the specific policy areas of interest to the GFS team and that participants would not be able to

prompt the creation of new topics. However, to leave the door open for interesting topics to emerge from the panel, we included spaces on the site like the forum where participants can generate their own content and discussion in a lightly moderated environment. However, this has not generated any ideas for additional topics.

Another factor that counted against the community approach was uncertainty around Panel engagement outside the specific policy area activities. OPM Group had budgeted for Panel management but not Panel engagement in its bid (due to budget size). Panel management included reviewing engagement levels amongst the participants and answering any participant queries, but not general activities to engage the Panel during periods when no policy specific activities were taking place. In the future, it would be beneficial to have a clearer plan for engaging the Panel during 'quiet' periods and a dedicated budget to doing so.

4.4.2. Decisions on incentive payments

The level of incentives and the blend of prize draws and cash payments were influenced by:

1. A review of other research panel incentives e.g. YouGov

2. Advice from the recruitment agency on suitable incentives for Panel members.

The strategy for incentivisation has developed over time and in response to participation levels and the nature of the method of engagement being used – for example, the level of commitment required by participants.

Participation is incentivised on the basis of activity completion (either via prize draws or payments to each participant completing an activity. Other options for incentivising could have included payment for minutes spent online (the strategy used by Wales, Cotterill and Smith, 2010). Rewarding participants on the basis of activity completion rather than time spent on the platform was chosen as we felt that this would encourage active contribution.

One important factor that, with the benefit of hindsight was not given proper consideration at the start of the project was how incentive payments would be paid to participants. OPM Group reviewed a number of approaches to payment over certain intervals of time or points accrued and selected the latter. However more consideration should have been given to the amount of time required to administer these payments, from the project team, finance staff and Directors e.g. identifying amount of rewards for different panellists, writing, signing and sending cheques.

Interviews with Panel members found that some members would prefer to receive online codes redeemable at online shops (e.g. Amazon) because the reward feels more instant.

4.5.   Summary of learning

Learning on panel set-up and recruitment

- The proportion of the total budget spent on the online platform has been relatively small. Overall we feel that the off-the-shelf CMNTY platform represents good value for money compared to the expenditure required for a more bespoke platform. There are functions available that we did not, at the start of the project, know we would need. Getting the spec right at the start of a project such as this may be difficult so having some flexibility in the budget to add functionality later may be useful.

- Data outputs can provide insights into participants' behaviours, support the identification of new typologies (e.g., who counts as 'hard-to-reach' in an online community: can we apply existing typologies – e.g., monitorial, lurkers, active etc, or does this form of online dialogue call for a new typology?)

- The organisation of the Food Futures platform appears to have had some negative impact on its ability to become an online 'community', at least in the sense of it being recognised as a community by the members of the Panel. The decision to not make Panel members' profile pages visible to other members in particular seems in particular to have created a barrier to community building.

  "It doesn't feel like there's a community. On other [market research] panels you do get a feel of who other people are, you get to know more about their lives. If you asked me to name one person other than myself of the panel I couldn't." (Abby, 26-40, London)

- Recruiting to the panel has been challenging due to the unfamiliar nature of the topic of global food security, the conversion process (whereby potential participants have to independently register on the site), the limited capacity of recruitment agencies to respond to these challenges in certain locations and the lack of confidence in using online tools among older age groups. These factors significantly slowed the recruitment process down and have impacted on the representativeness of the panel.

4.6.   Recommendations

- Invest more in the online platform being used to host the panel during the set-up phase and/or increase the proportion of total budget spent the panel software. We recommend prioritising spend on additional functionality that automates routine administrative tasks (such as updating reward points) and increases access to user data

- Ensure software platform provides easy access to data required for monitoring and reporting on activities.

- Enable panellists to personalise their online profiles, for example by making more use of profile pictures (currently less than 5% of Panel members have personalised their

profile picture) or encourage panel members to write a short bio about themselves that other participants can view (e.g. sharing their location, interests etc.). This should be voluntary rather than compulsory as some panellists may not have the time, inclination or skills to do this. Data sharing agreements and Terms and Conditions on the site are likely to need amendment.

- Introduce a 'general chat' forum – we currently have a general forum that describes itself as an informal space but this has not been used frequently

- Invest more time in ascertaining quality and availability of recruiters and use information gathered to inform selection of locations. Ensure that recruiters are made aware of the additional challenges likely to face them in recruiting to this type of activity, including the resources required to recruit within the required time. Ensure mitigation measures are discussed early and that contact with recruiters is frequent and regular.

- In future top-up recruitment, frame the topic of global food security more directly, including information about the relevance of this to the UK and individual lives. Consider recruiting directly to a face-to-face activity, with panel sign-up following this.

- When new members join the Panel, offer them guided 'walk throughs' of the online platform by phone to help increase conversion rates (i.e. registrations on the site) and reduce the risk of new members becoming quickly disengaged because they cannot work out how to navigate the site.

- Consider alternative approaches to incentive management and consider using codes as rewards that can be redeemed in online shops, not only to reduce administrative burden but also to make rewards feel more instantaneous for members. Consider incentivisation strategies that make greater use of social rewards to reward most active members, for example, using site functionality to show contribution levels and assign 'user status' to individuals (e.g., 'super-user').

- Develop a schedule of topic-based activities before recruitment and panel-set up, to launch in parallel with recruitment.

Chapter 5:   Engagement Methods

This chapter describes the methods used to engage the Food Futures Panel and outlines the successes and challenges encountered. We focus on the learning around engaging members in both single-method and mixed-method dialogue integrating online and offline engagement.

5.1.   Factors influencing choice of engagement methods

The scale and geographical spread of the Food Futures Panel means that planning and designing engagement methods has to take into account the following factors:

- **Speed of delivery** – the panel aims to provide a responsive channel for engagement and data gathering, to inform speedy decision-making. This required a rapid turnaround of outputs for some of the topics (for example Buying British). Panel engagement for these topics in particular has to be quick to set-up and responsive to the specific aims of the topic brief.

- **Sample** – there has tended to be a requirement for a broadly representative participant sample across the topics. Achieving broadly representative samples for both the online and face-to-face engagement takes time, even when the panel itself has been set-up to be representative. This is because if invitations are sent out to the whole panel in the first instance, the sample will be skewed towards to the most active panel members (who are not necessarily representative, as we explore in depth in chapter 6). We have therefore had to stage recruitment to some activities: limiting invitations to pre-selected panel members in the first instance to encourage engagement from the less active members and then widening to the whole panel to ensure a big enough sample size. Therefore we have found that there can be trade-offs between the speed of delivery and sample representativeness.

- **Costs** – topic budgets have ranged from £250 to £50,000. While a benefit of the panel is that the recruitment and online platform costs are one-off (with the exception of top-up recruitment to mitigate attrition), engagement methods have differing costs depending on the time needed for set-up, incentives, specialist involvement, moderation and analysis.

- **Type of evidence** – the complex and often unfamiliar nature of the topics means that there has often been a need to include an educational information-giving stage following the launch of a new topic, so that panel members are able to engage effectively with the topic. We have however found it more difficult to gauge whether participants have read the content shared online and/or understood it compared to information-giving face-to-face (where workshop facilitators can guide participants through the content together and check it has been understood). In the future, it will

be useful to track panel members' engagement with the content shared online through the use of weblink shortening services that count click-throughs.

Table 5 presents the benefits and disadvantages of online vs. face-to-face engagement methods used with the panel against these four factors. These benefits/disadvantages have guided our approach to panel engagement for the different topics and we have broadly found that combining online and face-to-face methods has enabled the Food Futures Panel to access the benefits associated with each channel.

Table 5 Considerations of online vs. face-to-face engagement methods

	Online	**Face-to-face**
Speed of delivery	• Quick to set-up once approach and content have been agreed • As most contributions are typed, data is quickly available for analysis (no need for transcriptions) • Unless it is a timed activity (e.g. a 30 minute online chat taking place at a specific time), activities need to run long enough time to give participants the opportunity to fit their participation around work, family, life commitments	• Although the set-up takes longer once participants are in the room taking them through content can be more efficient than online (e.g. what needs to be done in stages over the course of two weeks online can be done in a day-long workshop)
Sample	• Larger sample sizes possible due to lower costs of engagement than face-to-face • Inviting the whole panel to take part in an activity could result in the (unlikely) scenario of 600 participants; incentive budgets therefore influence target sample size (for example prize draws have been used to avoid restricting numbers) • Without quotas, participation is likely to be skewed towards the more active participants online and not representative of the broader panel • Not limited by geography	• Higher cost of face-to-face engagement limits workshop sample sizes • Limited by geography (workshops to date have been confined to two locations per topic – engagement with topic in locations without face-to-face engagement can be lower as a result) • More accessible for less digitally confident participants

Costs	• Platform costs are one-off so can be more cost-effective • Limited functionality of platform package purchased used may result in increased time spent on platform admin (e.g. user management, managing data, adding reward points manually) – would be less of an issue if additional functionality purchased during set-up • No transcription costs – data readily available for export	• Higher costs associated (staff time, incentives, venue hire, refreshments, travel etc.)
Type of evidence	• Quantitative and qualitative • Behavioural data (e.g. platform usage)	• Qualitative

There have been two types of activity run online: topic activities and engagement activities. The first type, **topic activities**, are designed to answer specific research questions on a defined topic. To date four topics have been completed:

1. Insect as animal feed (lead organization = BBSRC) – an online survey on insects as animal feed, launched mid-July 2015. This was the first topic the panel engaged with, the results were shared with the panel in August.

2. Food Systems (lead organization = GFS) – a multi-method project launched in the beginning of October that ran to December

3. Urban Agriculture (lead organization = BBSRC) – also a multi-method project launched in mid October that ran to December

4. Buying British (lead organization = Defra) – an online survey launched in mid December and run over one week

- In addition a baseline survey was launched online in July, replicating the survey questions from the 2012 TNS BRNB survey. The baseline survey remained open so that panel members joining via the later top-up recruitment could complete it. An interim report was produced in November and will be followed by a endline survey in March 2016.

The second type, **engagement activities**, are designed to promote panel engagement during the quiet periods between topics and help maintain the momentum of the panel. These activities have related to some general issue around either the topic of global good security or the running of the panel, and have included blogs (e.g. 'Who's Who at Food Futures' blog) and

forum discussions (e.g. 'Do you know where your dinner came from?' discussion inviting members to share which countries the ingredients from their evening meal came from).

In the early stages of the Food Futures Panel, there was some confusion on our part as to how these engagement activities would be funded and whether running engagement activities were included as part of the contractor's responsibilities for panel management. Whilst there is a debate for panel *management* – for example, administration of incentives – there is none for running engagement activities. This confusion is perhaps a result of assumptions about the meaning of a 'panel' held at the start of the work, and the distinction between the more typical panel (usually citizen panels on local issues) and the type of panel it has become clear is needed for this project, building which takes more time and resource than envisaged. This has been a topic of some debate and the learning has been to make engagement activities an explicit part of overall panel management and ensure that the panel management budget covers the delivery of these engagement activities. In addition, as discussed elsewhere in the report, agreeing a high level set of one-off topics/questions at the outset which can be drawn on as needed would help ensure that these activities are generating valuable insights, as well as maintaining panel momentum.

5.2. Overview of engagement methods

Before we examine the mix of engagement methods used to engage the Food Futures Panel to date, it is necessary to understand the features available on the online platform (CMNTY) hosting the Panel. The platform's functionality (i.e. the range of functions available on the platform) has shaped the engagement methods used online.

Table 6 CMNTY functionality

CMNTY function	Description	Technical limitations
Blog	- An article posted on the site, usually embedded with content/media produced by team - Participants write comments in response but cannot create blogs themselves - Can be viewed by all participants	

Forum	• Online discussion boards, structured as 'threads' • Team poses questions and moderates discussion between participants • Can be viewed by all participants	Media cannot be uploaded by participants (limits ability to use visual ethnography as a data collection method, as participants cannot upload photos)
Online chat	• Invited participants log onto site at appointed time to take part in a discussion	Limited to 25 participants
Journals	• Invited participants post answers to series of structured tasks posed by team • Private – can only be viewed by team	Media cannot be embedded or uploaded by participants
Stepboards	• Staged task – each stage has to be completed to be able to move to next stage • Media can be embedded	
Poll	• Simple poll function for voting on a single question (cannot be used as a survey)	Limited to one question

The Urban Agriculture and Food System topics used a mix of engagement methods; both included online and face-to-face activities and took advantage of different platform functionality. The diagrams below show the mix of methods used for each topic.

Figure 1 Urban Agriculture engagement methods

Figure 2 Food Systems engagement methods
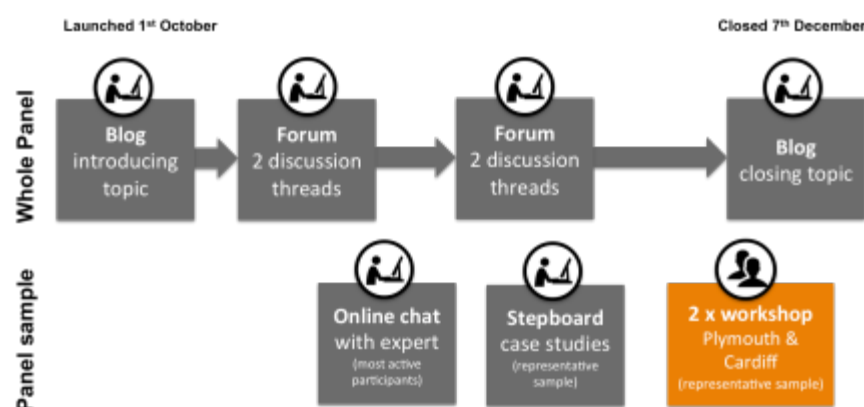
Learning on engagement methods

The learning interviews with Panel members highlight a number of elements that have worked well across the methods in terms of encouraging engagement. Future engagement activities - both online and offline - would benefit from integrating these elements.

- **Interaction with specialists** –nearly all of the learning interviews with Panel members who have attended workshops mentioned that interacting with specialists had impacted positively on their understanding of and engagement with the topic. Whilst Panel members not attending workshops did have access to specialist content, either through pre-recorded videos or Q&A sessions, the impact of online interactions seems to be lower than the impact of face-to-face interaction.

    – There are several possible reasons for the lower impact. First is simply that of timing and recall – the online interaction with experts happened during October/November, while the workshops were more recent. Second is the time delay online between posting a question on a forum and receiving a response from the specialists.

"At the workshop I could ask my questions about the case studies directly to the specialists and get an instant answer, whereas when you ask online you'll get an answer but it'll be some time later and by that time you've forgotten the question or why you needed to know it." (Abby, 26-40, London)

– Future online interaction between specialists and Panel members would benefit from greater immediacy of response, such as in synchronous online chats rather than asynchronous forum based methods. However, this could be less appealing to specialists who might find it less convenient.

- **Interactivity** – the engagement methods most enjoyed by the Panel members interviewed tended to be the most interactive. This ranged from the general topic activity of investigating where meal ingredients came from, which could be done offline with other members of the family, to the Stepboard activity where interactivity is ingrained as a technical feature i.e. the different stages that participants are taken through. The forums and blogs were experienced as less interactive, primarily because discussion threads span a relatively long period of time and could quickly run out of steam.

"You get a topic discussion that's going well on the forum, there's lots of new posts, but then it crashes and burns quite quickly." (Paul, 41-55, London)

- One interviewee commented that she felt Panel members were not always interacting with each other on the forum threads because this was not explicitly part of the task – Panel members may be assuming they are only being asked to reply to the question set by the moderator. We also know from the interviews that the time needed to read through previous comments can act as a barrier to participation on the forums. In future it would be beneficial to be more explicit about encouraging Panel members to interact with other people's responses.

"Online no one seems to debate with other comments, it seems that people just come on, gives an answer and then leaves without reading what anyone else has written. I'll read the first few comments before mine but I won't read through the whole thread if there are 50 comments. It seemed that in the workshops people were more willing to debate their conflict of opinions" (Abby, 26-40, London)

- Encouraging interactivity is important not only as a means of sustaining the engagement of panel members but also as a principle of the dialogue process. We know from the interviews that the experience of interacting with other panel members online feels qualitatively different to interaction face-to-face, and that this can make it more difficult to take into account other people's perspectives when forming their own opinion. The quote below suggests that panel members' views are less stimulated by interaction online than they are face-to-face.

"Interacting with other people sways your opinion. When you're online you're thinking about it solely on your own. It's easier to bounce off ideas face to face" (Catherine, 41-55, Belfast)

- Future activities would therefore benefit from closer consideration of ensuring that the activity feels more interactive. This interactivity could take different forms:

  1. Interaction with family members (e.g. doing tasks that involve family members)

  2. Interaction with experts and specialists

  3. Interaction with other Panel members

  4. Interaction with content

- **Visual aesthetics** – the design and visual identity of the Panel platform online was noted as looking quite 'official' and visually unappealing, particularly compared to the market research panels some interviewees had experienced.

  "The website comes across as quite official – not very fun. You need to hook people in by making it fun and then taking it to the serious stuff." (Richard, 26-40, London)

  This is another area where allocating a larger portion of the budget to software and panel management time could improve the experience of participants. The software package purchased has limited design functionality (this is available at an extra cost) and there is no budgeted time for design work. A refresh of the panel design at the start of the second year would be highly recommended.

- **'Sticky' content –** almost all of the interviewees who have been active on the Panel were able to recall at least one thing they had learnt from the activities they had taken part in. Often this was a new idea or an interesting fact that they had been exposed to which had 'stuck' with them, e.g. rotating lettuces, vertical farming, pigs in cities, British tomatoes with higher energy usage than imported tomatoes etc. When asked what if anything they had discussed with family or friends it was often these stories that they shared.

  "I loved the example of rotating lettuces from China, I got my kids over to the computer to look at it – it was good to get them involved and learning too." (Richard, 41-55, Harrogate)

5.2.1. Engagement methods learning matrix

The variety and mix of engagement methods used across the two mixed-method topics (Urban Agriculture and Food Systems) and the two single-method topics (Insects as Animal Feed and Buying British surveys) has resulted in a wealth of learning around the different methods. To capture the granular detail of this learning, the table below outlines the methods used in each project, how they were used and our observations around the successes and challenges of each.

Table 7 Engagement methods

	Urban Agriculture (multi-method)	Food Systems (multi-method)	Insects as Animal Feed (single-method)	Buying British (single-method)
Survey – online	N/A	N/A	The primary engagement method was a short incentivised online survey, hosted using the SNAP survey platform. The first substantive engagement activity run on the panel. *Learning:* *Survey results shared with panel in a blog attracted a high level of discussion due to novel nature of the topic.*	The primary engagement method was an incentivised online survey (7 questions), hosted using the SNAP survey platform. *Learning:* *Target response rate was reached quickly – within 3 days, with no chasing reminders required.* *The short length of the survey and the newsletter emphasizing the incentive helped maximise response rates.*
Forum - online	Forum threads used to explore participants initial understanding of topic. *Learning:* *Moderators should actively*	Forum threads used to explore participants initial understanding of topic. *Learning:* *Forum discussion produced*	N/A	A (non-incentivised) forum was created as a place where survey participants could make any observations about the Buying British topic.

	participate in thread to ask further questions and encourage conversation. Without active moderation discussion can go off topic. ☐ New forum threads must be announced using newsletters as members do not receive automated alerts for new thread postings	a large volume of high level comments but less in-depth discussion. ☐ A clearer conversation structure (indenting) would have helped participants follow a line of argument more clearly through several comments		*Learning:* ☐ *Only six comments were posted on the forum, far fewer than the Urban Agriculture and Food Systems forum discussions* ☐ *This suggests forums should be used at the beginning of topics or be explicitly be made part of the incentivised activity*
Blog - online	Blogs used to introduce topic, share content and present findings from expert Q&A and poll results. *Learning:* ☐ *Short video (1.30 mins) well received by members, useful to include visual content as can be easier/more engaging to consume* ☐ *Members reported that they missed the expert Q&A as it was posted on a separate thread (rather than back into the original forum thread where the discussion took place).*	Blog used to introduce topic. *Learning:* ☐ *Useful as information giving tool, comment lacked focus as not responding to specific questions.*	N/A	N/A

	Feedback/results should be posted to both blog as well as original forum thread.			
Chat - online	N/A	Online chat with most active participants to gain reactions to expert interview *Learning:* ☐ *Function is effective in enabling a discussion – more so than forums as responses are in real-time* ☐ *Platform limitation of 25 participants is acceptable; anymore would mean that discussion could become unwieldy. However it limits observer engagement with this activity.* ☐ *Participants found it helpful that the chat was scheduled at a specific time as it made it easier for them to reserve the time to engage in the Panel*	N/A	N/A
Polls - online	Poll used to engage members who had not participated in workshops and gain feedback from Panel on	N/A	N/A	N/A

	which case study they thought would make the greatest difference to global food security. *Learning:* ☐ *High participation rates for a non-incentivised activity* ☐ *However, for members who are not familiar with the content via the workshops it felt that there was a lot of material to absorb – so even though the poll was framed as a quick activity, it took longer than some members expected to participate* ☐ *Poll limited to one question only, using the comments facility on the blog page enables capture of qualitative responses*			
Stepboard - online	N/A	Used to present three case studies, each with four questions and corresponding stimulus materials. *Learning:* ☐ *Able to present a large amount of information and*	N/A	N/A

		collect comments in a systematic and accessible way. ☐ *Generating a large volume of comment in response to the questions.* ☐ *Participants had retained much of the stimulus and were able to draw on and discuss it in the workshops.*		
Journals - online	Used as a diary function for participants to record reflections on topic. Originally intended to be only open to workshop participants during the intervening period between the workshops. However it was extended to the whole Panel. *Learning:* ☐ *Participants found activity confusing (even those who attended workshop) – more structured questions would have helped*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Workshop	2 workshops in each location (Belfast and London), run as two parts. In the first workshop	1 workshop each in Cardiff and Plymouth. Half-day session with an initial session exploring what a	N/A	N/A

participants asked a lot of questions about the need case for Urban Agriculture, even though many had seen the content posted on the blogs. Second workshop therefore had a 30-minute presentation from a specialist about why topic is important.

Learning:

- ☐ *Interaction with specialists had more impact at workshops than online as it felt more direct and the participants got answers to their questions more quickly.*
- ☐ *However there is potential for specialists to dominate/overly influence discussions and so they must be briefed on their role before and actively managed during the workshop*

- ☐ *Need case needs to be clearly explained at the beginning in a more direct way when new topics are launched - otherwise Panel*

healthy and sustainable food system might look like, and four case studies positing trade-offs in the food system when different actors try to act responsibility.

Learning:

- ☐ *Depth of discussion was significantly greater than the online activities, particularly where participants had already considered some of the issues.*

- ☐ *See UA learning point around specialist interaction and the need to brief and actively manage specialists before and during workshops to reduce negative impacts- this was also an issue during the Food Systems workshops (particularly in Cardiff where one specialist had particularly strong views)*

	can struggle to see why it is relevant to global food security			

5.3.   Response rates

NB: This section excludes participants recruited in November/December 2015 via top-up recruitment in Dundee (leaving a sample base of 623), therefore the totals will not match those of early chapters. These participants from the Dundee top-up recruitment have been excluded from analysis as they had only been members for a very short period and had joined after the Urban Agriculture and Food Systems topics had already started.

Out of the 623 members included in the analysis, **246 (39%) have actively participated in one or more activity** since the Panel launched. This is the active Panel base. Of these 246 Panellists:

- 236 have participated online.

- 88 have attended workshops .

- 10 of the workshop participants have not participated online, the remaining 77 have.

The graph below shows how many Panellists have participated across the different online methods vs. how many were invited to participate. It is important to note that the target response rate is not the same as the number of invitations. For example, the Stepboard activity run as part of the Food Systems project had a target of 150 responses (159 responses were achieved).

Figure 3 Number of Panel members participating across engagement methods (n=623 registered participants)
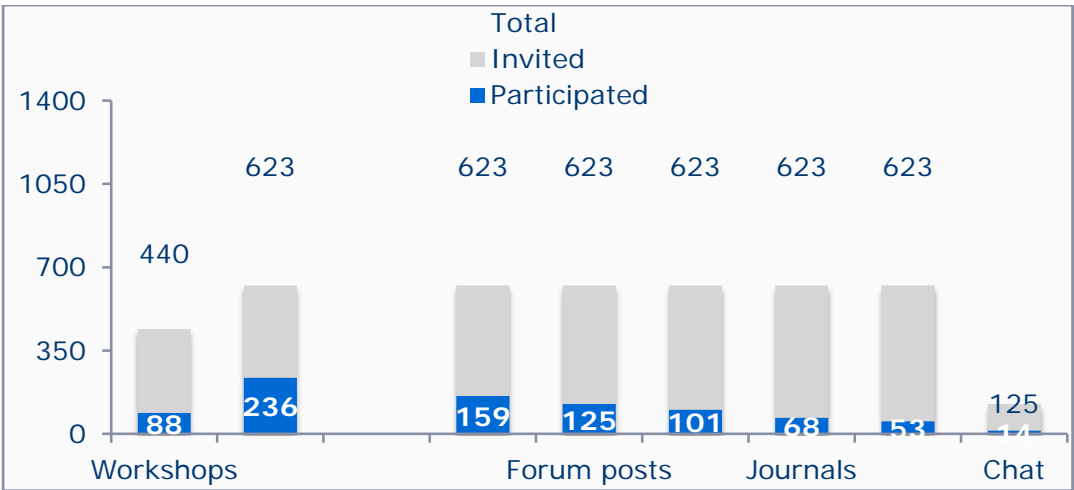
Looking now at response rates for individual activities, Table 8 below presents the results ordered by number of participants. It shows that the most participated in activity is the baseline survey (this is not surprising as it is the longest running activity and the first activity Panellists are asked to participate in when joining the Panel).

Benchmarking participation

It is widely acknowledged that the evidence on the effectiveness of online deliberation is mixed and often contradictory (Wales, Cotterill & Smith, 2010, Smith, John & Sturgis, 2012). One consistent conclusion of previous evaluations of online dialogue is that interaction is often limited to a small number of participants (Smith, John & Sturgis, 2012; Wales, Cotterill & Smith, 2010; Spencer, 2012). For example, Spencer (2012) finds the same pattern of 'a long tail of participation, with a few very active contributors and many occasional contributors' across all of the online public forums analysed (2012: 1).

A range of participation rates has been reported in the literature, listed below. However an important caveat is that the online panels from which these participation rates are derived vary, and cannot be used as baselines for the Food Futures Panel given the differing recruitment methods, panel size and duration.

- ☐ Wales, Cotterill & Smith (2010) report their sample of just over 1,000 panel members as having a log-on rate of 53-55% (i.e. 53-55% of members logged on at least once), with between 24-29% of members making at least one post over the three week duration of their panel

- ☐ Neilsen et al's review of literature found a wide range of panel response rates ranging from as high as 70% to 7%-40% in other studies.

- ☐ Pedersen and Nielsen report a typical response rate of 15-20% for the Danish online panel KompasKommunikation

The naming of topics appears to have an influence: the top forum and blogs are all titled with questions, which may encourage Panel members to participate as the topic is immediately obvious. In addition, the types of activity also appear influential. Small activities that do not take long (e.g. the poll) or that focus on the participant's personal life (e.g. the forum discussion 'Do you know where your dinner is from?') appear towards the top of the table.

Table 8 Response rates for individual activities (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)

Online activity	Topic	Response
Baseline survey	General Topic	522 participants
Stepboard: case studies (fried chicken, oily fish, sugar)	Food Systems	159 participants, 616 comments
Animal feed survey	General Topic	90 participants Survey was in July when there was only 168 recruited members

Forum: Do you know where your dinner comes from?	General Topic	83 participants, 100 comments
Poll: Urban agriculture case studies	Urban Agriculture	53 participants, 40 comments
Journal: Urban agriculture digital diaries	Urban Agriculture	50 participants, 213 comments
Forum: What type of food might we grow in urban settings?	Urban Agriculture	44 participants, 74 comments
Blog: Urban agriculture – what's it all about?	Urban Agriculture	39 participants, 48 comments
Forum: Part One	Food Systems	34 participants, 59 comments
Forum: Part 1 – What is urban agriculture?	Urban Agriculture	31 participants, 43 comments
Blog: This just in! Results from the insect feed survey	General Topic	24 participants, 46 comments
Forum: Part two	Food Systems	23 participants, 30 comments
Forum: Part 2: Types of urban agriculture	Urban Agriculture	19 participants, 44 comments
Chat: Panellist responses to expert interview	Food Systems	14 participants, 226 comments

5.3.1. Quality of engagement

While response rates provide one measure of assessing the success of the engagement methods, they tell us very little about the quality and depth of engagement. 3KQ's interim

evaluation report uses the Discourse Quality Index developed by Steenbergen et al (2003[7]) as a framework for their assessment of engagement quality. Ad hoc review of activities to date supports their conclusion that online tools used to date have resulted in lower quality discourse, as defined by this framework. However, as reflected elsewhere, the data generated has had other uses, such as providing a useful overview of *what* participants know about a particular topic before exploring why they hold these beliefs. It is beyond the scope of this report to carry out the kind of secondary analysis that would be required to conduct a discourse analysis and since this would duplicate the work of 3KQ, we refer readers to their report.

5.3.2. Incentive strategies

A number of incentive strategies have been tested in order to understand how to balance budget constraints with encouraging higher response rates. These strategies tested are:

1. **Restricted sample, larger incentive for all participants**: limiting the activity to a pre-selected sample of the Panel and paying every participant who completes the activity a larger incentive (e.g. £10). An example of this strategy is the Stepboard activity for Food Systems, until the initial low response rate meant that the activity was extended to the whole Panel).

2. **Whole Panel, small incentive for all participants**: opening the activity to the whole Panel but limiting size of the incentive. For example, the forum activity 'Do you know where your dinner comes from?' paid £2.50 to everyone who participated.

3. **Whole Panel, prize draw of a larger incentive**: opening the activity to the whole Panel and paying one randomly selected winner a large incentive (prize draw amounts have ranged between £20 to £50).

To help understand which incentive strategy may be most effective in increasing response rates, Table 9 shows the incentive strategy used for the top 7 activities (those with the highest numbers of participants, taken from Table 8 above). It is unlikely to be a coincidence that the first four activities have all used a strategy that offers an incentive to everyone who participates: the reward is guaranteed.

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[7] Steenbergen, M. R., Bächtiiger, A., Spörndli, M. & Steiner, J. (2003). Measuring Political Deliberation: A Discourse Quality Index, *Comparative European Politics*:1, 21–48.

Table 9 Incentive strategies used for the top activities (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)

Activity	Type	Topic	Participants	Incentive strategy	Total spent on incentives
Baseline survey	Survey	General	522	All completes x £5	£2,610
Food system case studies	Stepboard	Food System	159	All completes x £10	£1,400
Insect survey	Survey	General	90	All completes x £5	£450
Do you know where your dinner comes from?	Blog	General	83	All completes x £2.50	£207.50
Urban agriculture case studies	Poll	Urban agriculture	53	No incentives	£0
Digital diaries	Journal	Urban agriculture	50	Prize draw − 1 x £50	£50
What type of food might we grow in urban cities?	Forum	Urban agriculture	44	Prize draw − 1 x £20	£20

The learning interviews with Panel members support this. Prize draws are generally disliked, as they are not considered to be fair. Interviewees recognised that the size of the Panel meant that it would be impossible to pay large incentives to all participants. However smaller, guaranteed incentives are felt to be more motivating as they reward effort.

> "It doesn't feel fair when you've spent 30 minutes doing an activity and then the prize goes to someone who you can see only spent 5 minutes on their answer."
> (Yvonne, 41-55, Harrogate)

"Giving everyone who participates a bit of money, even if it's a smaller amount, is fairer than a prize draw as you feel more recognised for your contribution." (Richard, 26-40, London)

Table 10 Benefits and disadvantages of tested incentive strategies

Incentive strategy	Benefits	Disadvantages
Restricted sample, larger incentive for all participants	- Participants feel rewarded for their contribution - Representative samples achieved	Restricting the number of Panellists the activity is open to limits the response size due to the relatively small active member base of the Panel
Whole Panel, small incentive for all participants	- Participants feel rewarded for their contribution - Increases significantly the number of participants/responses	- Complexity/length of the activity may mean that rewarding a participant a small incentive for something they have spent an hour on is demotivating - Topic areas are generally quite complex - not conducive to small, 5 minute activities - Responses more likely to come from the most active participants – results are not representative
Whole Panel, prize draw of a larger incentive	Time efficient – higher number of responses achieved more quickly	- Participants do not feel rewarded - Participants feel frustrated if they feel they spent more time on activity/ made a greater contribution than the winner - Participants may feel suspicious as to whether anyone is actually receiving the incentive

The most active members of the Panel reported in the learning interviews sometimes feeling frustrated that members who put in greater levels of effort – both in terms of the frequency of their participation and the time spent on the activities – were being rewarded the same as those who only left one comment, or only wrote one short sentence as their contribution. The

visible and open nature of the Panel – particularly on the forums and blogs – means that Panellists compare their contributions to others.

A number of the more active members of the Panel interviewed suggested that other types of reward, **social rewards** as opposed to just monetary rewards such as a 'special status', could be useful in ensuring Panellists feel recognised for their efforts.

> "On some forums like Moneysavingexpert.com they have different member levels based on contributions. The Food Futures Panel could do something similar, those who post 100 comments get a badge – something to show their contribution"
> (Abby, 26-40 years, London)

The incentives offered participants for completing activities were given either in the form of reward points (which are then converted into cash, at the rate of 10 points = £1, once a threshold of 300 points has been reached) or in some instances such as the baseline survey as cash from the outset. The amount of incentive offered for different activities has not been standardised and differed according to the budgets allocated to incentives, the type of activity being incentivised (including expected time taken for completion) and the target sample size.

Table 11 details the allocation of project budget incentives to online activities vs. workshops. 3% of the incentive budget was spent on online activities for Urban Agriculture, whereas this was 39% for Food Systems.

Table 11 Incentive spend by project

	Urban Agriculture	Food Systems	Baseline survey	Insect survey	Buying British survey
Total Incentive spend	£4,270	£3,700	£2,610	£450	£610
Incentive spend - workshop	£4,160	£2,250	N/A	N/A	N/A
Incentive spend - online	£110	£1,450	N/A	N/A	N/A
% total incentive spend - online	3%	39%	100%	100%	100%
Number of online participants	158	179	522	90	122

Number of online comments	468	950	N/A	N/A	N/A
£ spend per participant (average across activities)	£0.70	£8.10	£5	£5	£5

5.4.   Integrating online and offline engagement

We have explored a number of different strategies to integrate the online and offline engagement methods:

1. **Exposure to topic online before workshop:** this strategy was used in Urban Agriculture. The blog and forum discussions were intended to inform the whole Panel and increase Panel members' understanding of the topic. It meant that workshop participants were more informed at the start of the workshop than they would otherwise have been. However although the majority of workshop participants had been active on line at least once, some had not seen the content online (10 of the 88 workshop participants across both Urban Agriculture and Food Systems had not been online). In addition, even if Panel members have been online, their engagement with the content varies. So whilst all workshop participants have had access to the same content, not all had explored the content. This resulted in participants having different levels of knowledge at the start of the workshop. These differences in levels of knowledge are typically the case with more standard dialogue projects. However, the number of those with very limited knowledge of the topic - particularly one as new as urban agriculture - is likely to be lower than for standard face-to-face dialogues.

   This strategy has benefits for participants. Interviewees noted that in addition to having time to familiarise themselves with a new topic before going to a workshop, exposure to other Panel members' views via the forum had been helpful as it gave them a sense of what to expect.

   "It helped, rather than going blind into a room of people, it helped having an idea of what kinds of things other people think, what they're interested in – it gave me an inkling that it was going to be an educating experience because there were some quite well informed people posting on the forums" (Paul, 41-55, London)

2. **Online activity completion before workshop:** this was the strategy used by Food Systems and goes one step further from just exposing Panel members to content and asking them to share their views before workshop attendance. Panel members who accepted the invitation to the Food Systems workshops were asked to complete a

Stepboard activity before the workshop (the Stepboard is an engagement method where participants are sequentially guided through the activity, having to complete one stage before they can move to the next).

There are several benefits to this strategy. First it helped boost response rates to the online activity. Second, the workshop participants had more interaction with the content – they were not asked just to read/watch it but to think about specific questions. Third, it meant that workshop participants were 'experts' on their case study (either fried chicken, oily fish or sugar) and could share their knowledge at the workshop with participants who had focused on a different case study.

3. **Online activity to keep people engaged between workshops:** this was tested in Urban Agriculture in the two week break between the two workshops held in each location. Workshop participants were asked to complete a 'digital diary' (using the Journal function on the online platform) to record their thoughts about the topic and any discussions with family/friends following the workshop relevant to the topic. The actual exercise was found to be quite confusing, as the questions asked were not as specific as they could have been. However it did serve a useful purpose of encouraging Panel members attending the workshops to participate online.

5.5.   Summary of key learning

Key learning around engagement methods

- Online and face-to-face engagement methods have distinct benefits and challenges associated with the channel of engagement.

  - Online methods are quick to set-up once approach and content have been agreed and data is more immediately accessible for analysis. However while the asynchronous nature of the online platform (in particular the forums) enables participants to take part at their own convenience, online discussions can quickly dry up if participation is limited to only a few active users. Making it more explicit in activity instructions that participants are expected to interact with each other could help overcome this. Participation in the more 'open' activities such as forum discussions is likely to be skewed to the most active participants and not representative of the broader panel; staged recruitment to activities helps mitigate this (i.e. launching the activity first to pre-selected participants using quotas, and then opening it up to the whole panel).

  - Face to face methods such as workshops face the traditional challenges to dialogue of time and geography, and are more expensive. However the interaction with specialists feels more immediate and the dialogue between participants more interactive. This may also be the case for the specialists involved, however we have not asked for feedback from the specialists involved in the online and face-to-face

workshops as to how interactive they felt their participation was – this may be useful to consider for the final learning report.

- Mixing online and face-to-face engagement methods has enabled the panel to overcome some of the challenges associated with each channel (e.g. online methods have enabled larger numbers of participants to be involved in projects, while face to face workshops have enabled issues emerging online to be explored in greater depth with greater levels of interaction between participants)

- The online engagement methods available are influenced by the functionality available on the online platform. The real-time functionality (e.g. the online chat) has been used as a method to increase the interaction between participants and facilitators (particularly in terms of participants responding to specific questions asked by the facilitators) and future projects would benefit from its greater use.

5.6.   Recommendations

- Continue using visual media (e.g. videos) to introduce and summarise new topics on the online platform. Track panel members' engagement with this content through Bitly links in newsletters

- Make online activities feel more interactive through introducing different types of interaction: interaction with family members, interaction with experts, interaction with other panel members and interaction with content. Consider ways of ensuring interaction with experts and feedback from them feels more immediate – members can forget what questions they have asked and why they asked in a relatively short period of time

- Investigate changes to platform architecture to make online discussions feel more interactive and less confusing, e.g. using indentation on forum discussions to help participants follow a line of argument more clearly through several comments

- Set clearer expectations for how long tasks take and factor reading time into this – and use more structured questions so that the purpose of each activity is immediately obvious to participants

- Make greater use of real time engagement methods online e.g. online chats that have bounded start/finish times

Chapter 6:   Panel Participation

This chapter focuses on the observed differences in the inclusivity of Panel members' participation and seeks to understand these differences through the construction of a simple 'typology' of participant types. The intention of this typology is to identify the barriers and facilitators to participation and provide a framework for enabling more targeted strategies for increasing participation. Case studies of Panel members are interspersed throughout this chapter where relevant.

> This chapter reports on the panel composition at the 9-month point of the panel programme, for analysis of the panel composition at the close of the project see section 8.5

6.1.   Demographic differences in participation

Analysis of differences between demographic groups' engagement with the platform (page views) and activity levels (number of activities completed) show that the following characteristics are likely to influence participation:

- Age – the youngest age group (18-25) are least likely to take part in activities
- Education level – higher education levels more likely to take part in activities[8]
- Location – participation is highest in London and Harrogate

These three characteristics are statistically significant at p=0.05[9]. Gender, ethnicity and family status have not been found to influence on participation levels (i.e. they did not test as statistically significant).

These differences in participation replicate similar patterns to participation rates reported for other online panels (e.g. Wales, Cotterill and Smith, 2010). However there is one key difference with other panels – this is that gender is not significant in the Food Futures Panel. Wales, Cotterill and Smith found higher levels of women contributing, which they attributed to the asynchronous nature of their platform enabling women to engage in their own time. This, they note, is particularly important for women who are more likely to competing time pressures from work and family commitments. It is unclear why the Food Futures Panel did not replicate this, when all other demographic differences were consistent (and continued to be so through to the close of the project, as discussed in section 8.5).

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[8] While we also compiled socio-economic grade where participants were recruited face-to-face the variety of recruitment methods used means this data is not available for all participants and so it was excluded from this analysis.

[9] The chi square statistical test has been used.

Table 12 summarises the demographic differences with regards to two variables – page views and activity completed. The page views of observers and CMNTY managers have been excluded from all analysis.

Table 12 Demographic differences in participation (%) (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)

Demographic group	Variable	At least 1 page view	At least 1 activity completed
Gender	Male	91%	38%
	Female	92%	38%
Age* *Significance: [activity: p=0.05] [page views: p=0.01]*	18 – 25	**93%**	**25%**
	26 – 40	**94%**	**40%**
	41 - 55	**89%**	**41%**
	56 - 65	**89%**	**30%**
	66+	**89%**	**56%**
Education level* *Significance: [activity: p=0.05] [page views: p=0.00]*	BTEC Higher / Level 4+, HND, Degree, Masters, PhD or similar / higher	**96%**	**44%**
	AS/A Levels, BTEC National / Level 3 or similar	**90%**	**34%**
	GCSEs Grade A*-C, BTEC Level 2	**92%**	**39%**
	GCSEs Grade D-G or similar, BTEC Level 1	**72%**	**16%**
	None	**83%**	**21%**
	Other qualifications including apprenticeships	**87%**	**37%**
Family status	Married/cohabiting (no dependent children)	90%	41%
	Married/cohabiting (with dependent children)	92%	39%
	Single/Divorced/Widowed (no dependent children)	93%	35%
	Single/Divorced/Widowed (with dependent children)	87%	35%
Ethnicity	White British	91%	37%
	BME	90%	46%
Location* *Significance: [activity: p=0.00] [page views: p=0.00]*	Belfast	**98%**	**42%**
	Cardiff	**89%**	**34%**
	Dundee	**66%**	**20%**
	London	**100%**	**45%**
	Plymouth	**99%**	**33%**

	Harrogate	96%	**51%**

6.2. Participation typology

As noted by Smith, John and Sturgis (2012), engaging in deliberation is not just about talking, but also listening and reflecting: 'playing a spectator role, while others make contributions (which may well reflect your own position), can also lead to internal deliberations' (Smith, John & Sturgis, 2012: 11). In light of this, we have created a simple typology based on user activity data from the online platform to enable a more nuanced understanding of how different Panel members are participating.
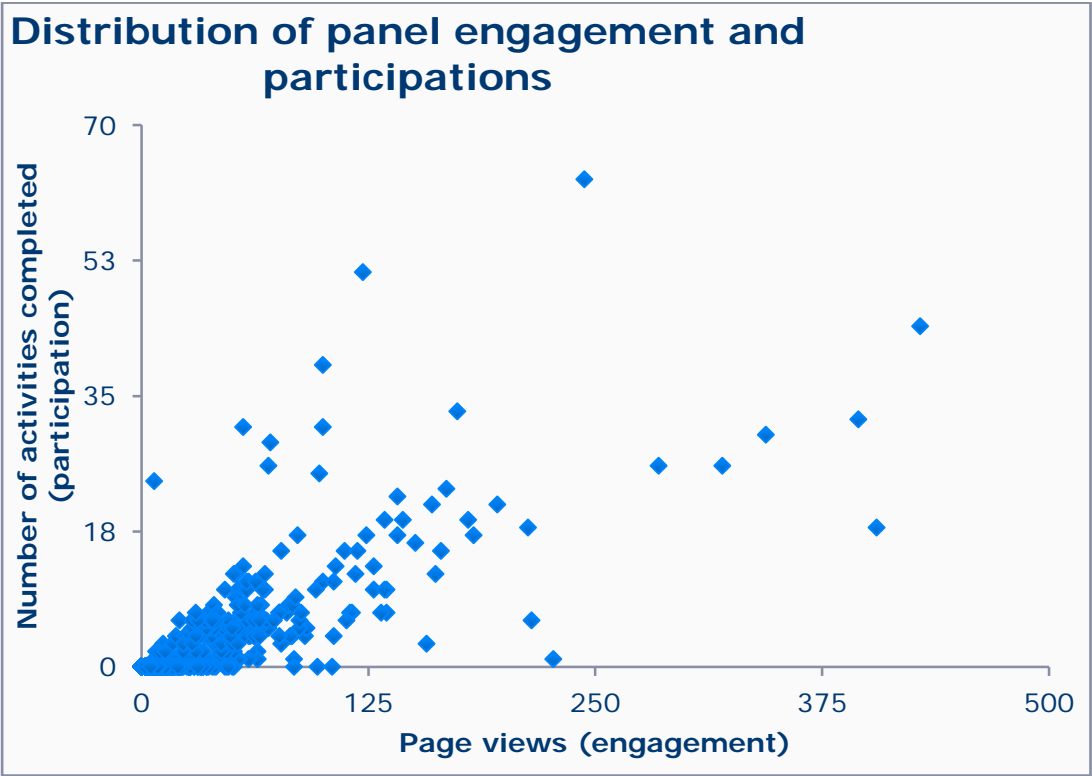
Two variables have been used to construct the typology:

1. **Engagement with the online platform** – page views are used as a proxy measure of engagement with the platform, a more accurate measure of actual engagement than frequency of log-ins (login data can be flawed in that it does not actually measure the number of times a Panellist visits the platform if the browser they use 'remembers' their password). This variable is designed to capture Panel members' passive engagement with the Panel (viewing content, reading forum threads etc.)

2. **Participation levels** – the participation levels of members is used to measure their active contribution to the Panel. Participation in this context includes all contributions made by the member on the online platform (e.g. number of comments posted in forum/blog discussions as well participation in more structured activities (e.g. taking part in a Journal or Stepboard exercise). A member's participation level is the sum of all their contributions, and includes contributions across both topic and engagement activities.

It is worth highlighting that these two variables reflect Wales, Cotterill and Smith's (2010) elements of inclusiveness: Presence and Voice. Presence refers to both the sample of the Panel base (i.e. its representativeness of the broader population) and the passive engagement of Panel members, in the sense of logging-on to the platform – this corresponds to our variable of engagement with the online platform. Voice refers to the active contributions of Panel members (i.e. the posts and comments they make online) – this corresponds to our variable of participation level.

Figure 4 shows the distribution of Panel members against these two variables. As we can see, the majority of members have fewer than 100 page views (92% of members) and made fewer than 10 contributions (91% of members) – these members form the dense cluster at the bottom left of Figure 4. We can also see there are a number of 'outliers'; Panel members with a significantly higher than average number of page views and/or participation levels (top right). To give a sense of the range, the highest number of page views made by a Panel member is 429 page views and the highest number of contributions is 63.

Figure 4 Distribution of Panel by engagement and participation levels (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)

To create the typology, Panel members were segmented according to their performance against these two variables and allocated to groups based on the ranges given in Table 13 below.

Table 13 Variables and data ranges used to construct the typology

Variable	Data indicator used	Range
Engagement with the online platform	Number of page views	0 page views
		1 or more page views
Activity completion	Number of activities completed online	0 activities
		1 or more activities

Once sorted according to their engagement with the platform and activity level, four distinct participation groups emerge as visualized in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5 Participation typology (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)
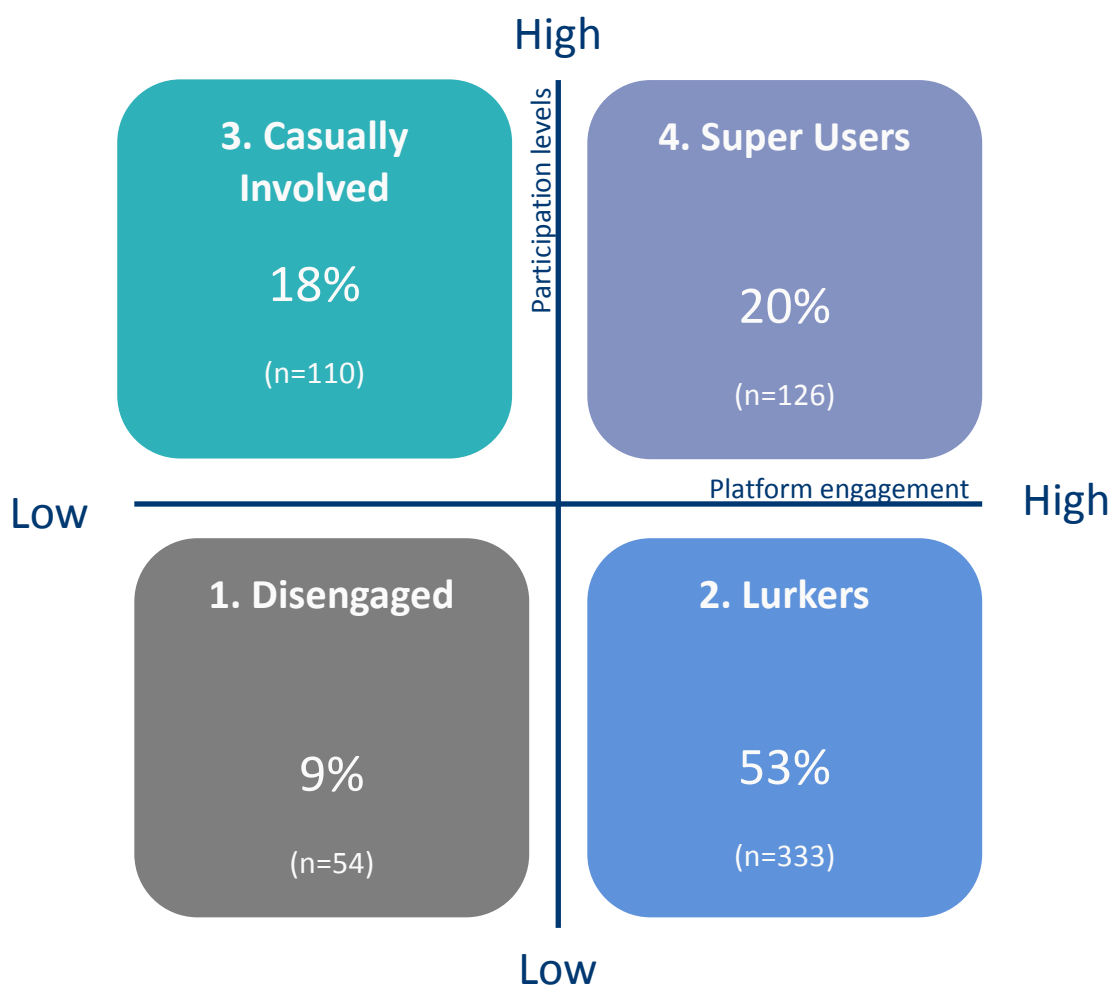
The largest group is "Lurkers", constituting just over half (53%) of the Panel, followed by "Super Users" (20%) and "Casually Involved" (18%). The smallest group is Segment 1 "Disengaged", those who have never engaged with the platform (9%).

Taking the two demographic variables found to be statistically significant in influencing page views and activity levels, age and education level, we can see how the segments vary by these characteristics.

- Older age groups are more likely to be both engaged with and be active on the online Panel. Over one-third (38%) of Panellists aged 66+ are "Super Users", compared to 10% of those aged 18 to 25. This youngest age group are conversely over-represented in the "Lurker" segment (67%).

Age groups by segment
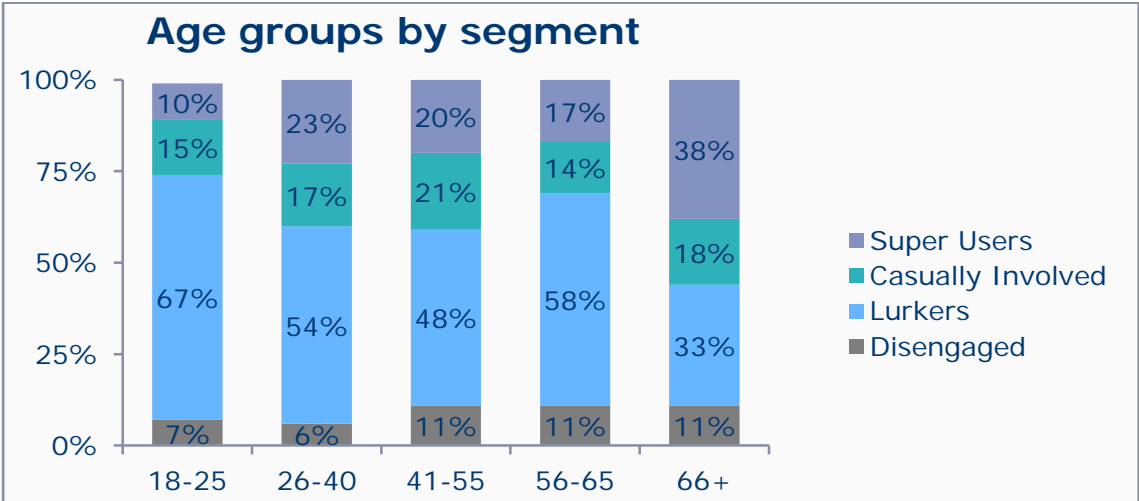
(total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)

- Panel members with lower levels of education are less likely to be engaged and active on the Panel. Those with attainment at GCSEs D-G grades and those with no qualifications are over-represented in the "Disengaged" segment, and under-represented in both the active segments "Casually Involved" and "Super Users".

Education levels by segment
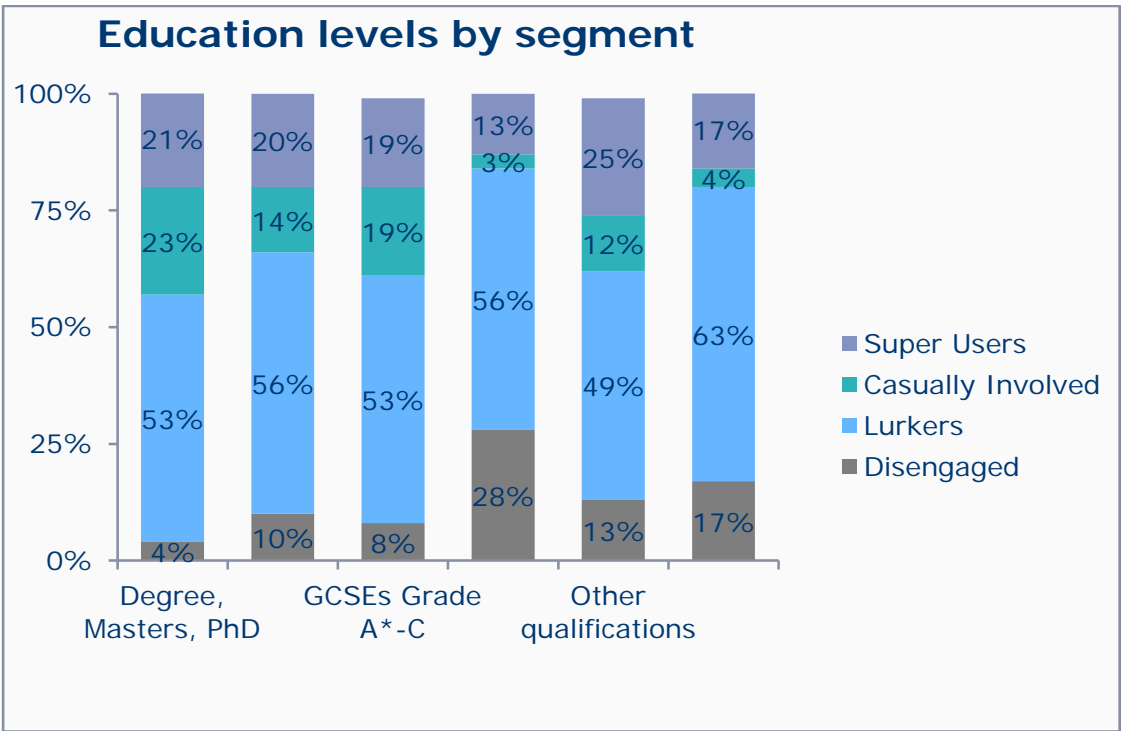
(total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)

- Existing social media behaviours (frequency of posting to social media) does not appear to be a predictor of what segment membership; Panel members who post regularly on social media are no more likely to be active participants on the Panel than those who post less frequently or not at all on social media.

6.3.   Facilitators and barriers to participation

Extrinsic and intrinsic motivations

Psychological literature (for example Ryan & Deco, 2000) distinguishes between extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. Extrinsic motivators involve external factors such as rewards, incentives or pressure. Intrinsic motivators involve internal drivers such as doing things for the fun of it, or a desire to self-improve and learn something new. In the learning interviews, interviewees identified as 'Super Users' were most likely to reference the desire to learn about new topics as their motivation to take part in activities.

> "The money is nice, I'll admit that, but for me the Panel is something I want to participate in because it's something worthwhile to be posting about, the topics are real – it's not talking about Coronation Street on Facebook" (Paul, 41-55 years, London)

> "I just thought the topic [Food Systems] sounded really important, we take food for granted and expect it to be there in the shops" (Richard, 41-55 years, Harrogate)

However, interviewees identified as Casually Involved were less likely to describe themselves as being interested in food issues and more likely to voluntarily express opinions about the incentives during the interview. This observation however should be treated with caution given the low number of interviews, but is something that would be useful to investigate further.

> "I have opinions about the food I eat, but I've been less interested in the wider issues to do with food – I don't have that much time to think about these things." (Andy, 18-25, Harrogate)

Casually Involved case study – Andy, early 20s, Harrogate

27 page views, 4 activities

Andy joined the Panel in mid-September. He works in digital services at a school and participates fairly frequently in market research and cannot remember what motivated him to join the Panel. The wider issues around food are not an area he has thought about much. *"I don't have time to think about that kind of thing, but being part of Panel has got me a bit more into thinking about sustainability and waste"*

Andy took part in the Food Systems Stepboard activity, and was motivated to participate because of the £5 incentive – "that's a pint or a cinema ticket". He had a quick browse of the forums when he first joined but is not particularly interested in contributing, as he perceives it to be easy to get 'sucked into discussions that have no end'.

The Casually Involved are also less likely to take part in forum discussions compared to Super Users. This reluctance to engage in forum or blog discussions may be influenced by a preference for more task-based, time-limited activities.

Time pressures

One of the most frequent barriers to participating mentioned by the Panellists interviewed is competing time pressures. Juggling the demands of work and family life means that participating in the Panel is not always a priority.

> "To be honest I probably just need to make more of an effort – sometimes when I get home from work, and it's dark, I don't want to read through a lot of information, it ends up feeling like work" (Yvonne, 41-55, Harrogate)

However, the Super Users interviewed generally stressed that they thought it was important to make time to contribute to the Panel.

> "I had a good idea that it wouldn't be a 2 minute thing when I signed up because the topic is different, global food security is a big issue. If it's going to be useful to anyone then it can't just be a sentence that you write" (Richard, 56-65, Harrogate)

Super User case study – Paul, 41-55, London

344 page views, 30 activities

Paul joined the Panel at the end of August. He works as a facility manager at a bank in the City. He is vegan and interested in nutrition and sustainability. When he joined, he saw it as a 'duty' to actively post in the forums as he recognised that this would encourage others to participate. *"These things [panels] only get going when people get commenting."*

He is mainly active on the forum. He started both the digital diary and stepboard activities but did not complete them as he is more interested in taking part in forum discussions, even when they are not incentivised. *"I'm learning all the time. A lot of things are changing, the human population is growing, the climate is changing, I'm only on the periphery so I'm trying to learn and interested in hearing other people's opinions"*

Expectations

Many of the Panellists interviewed have taken part in market research, which appears to have shaped their expectations of what the Food Futures Panel would involve when they joined. These expectations can also act as a barrier to participation.

> "I thought there would be more surveys to do when I signed up to the Panel."
> (Agatha, 41-55, Harrogate)

This appears to be a particular barrier for Lurkers and Disengaged, as the Panel has not always turned out to be what they expected.

Disengaged case study - Jasmin, 26-40, Cardiff

0 page views, 0 activities

Jasmin joined the panel in mid-August. She works in admin at Cardiff University. She is interested in food issues and this motivated her to join, but she did not hear anything for a long time. She eventually got the link to the baseline survey but she did not want to be just filling in forms as '*surveys are very tedious'*. She also disliked the points system, as it felt '*too virtual'*.

She has never been on the platform, and was surprised to learn about the different activities – she had assumed from her first encounter with the Panel that it was '*just going to be surveys'*.

Lurker case study - Agatha, 41-55, Harrogate

20 page views, 0 activities

Agatha joined the Panel in late August. She is a single mother who works at a temping agency, often on zero hour contracts. She regularly participates in market research and decided to join the Panel because 'it seemed a bit different'. She gets the emails alerting her to new activities and occasionally goes onto the platform to see what is new.

However she does not have much desire to participate in the activities, as they're not what she is familiar with. She likes doing surveys as she knows how long they'll take and that they are anonymous. Agatha completed the baseline survey but was surprised how long the incentive took to reach her – she is used to receiving codes instantly that she can redeem online. The wait meant she became a little suspicious of the Panel and she was not 100% sure whether she would get paid.

Targeting strategies to increase participation

The purpose of the typology is to provide a framework for considering how strategies to increase participation can become more targeted to overcome the various barriers experienced by different segments. Table 13 summarises the segments and provides recommendations for how to increase participation, based on the feedback from the learning interviews.

Table 14 Overview of segments and potential strategies (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)

	Segment 1	Segment 2	Segment 3	Segment 4
Name	**Disengaged**	**Lurkers**	**Casually Involved**	**Super Users**
Size	n = 54 9%	n = 333 53%	n = 110 18%	n = 126 20%
Criteria	0 page views 0 activities	1< page views 0 activities	50> page views 1< activities	50< page views 1< activities
Description	Never visited the platform or participated	Have visited the platform at least once, but have yet to participate in an activity	Visit the platform intermittently, tend to only participate in incentivized activities	Visit the platform frequently, actively participating in a range of activities
Barriers	Perception that Panel is not what they were expecting it to be Lack of activity when they joined the Panel, lost motivation/ interest as a result Time pressures	Lack of familiarity with engagement methods Hesitant about taking part in online discussions Can be hard to navigate platform as they are less familiar with it	Time pressures Reluctance to become involved with unstructured activities such as forum discussions Put off by lack of virtual points system/lack of immediacy	Discouraged when effort is not rewarded Feeling obliged to participate

Recommendations for targeted strategies to increase participation	Clarity around Panel activities and the full spectrum on engagement methods Reducing lag between registration and activity alerts (may be too late for current disengaged)	Explanations of what the different engagement methods involved Greater use of the general topic forum to encourage participation Localised activities (either face to face or online)	Greater use of structured activities that have a set end point (e.g. online chats) More instant rewards	Introduction of social rewards (e.g. badges on their profiles) Greater recognition of their effort

6.4.   Summary of key learning

Learning around panel participation

- The participation rates of panel members replicates similar biases reported by other panels – particularly around the lower levels of participation among younger age groups and members with lower education levels. Gender, ethnicity and family status have not been found to influence participation levels.

- Participation involves passive and active behaviours: passive behaviours include number of page views and time spent online (i.e. passive engagement with the online platform), while active behaviours relate to members' active contributions (i.e. activities completed which includes both comments/posts made and completion of structured activities).

- The simple typology that has been created using the two variables of page views (as the proxy for passive engagement) and activity completions (the proxy for active contributions) shows that the most common type of participation on the panel is lurking – where members engage with the platform at least once but do not actively contribute. This type of participation accounts for just over half (53%) of panel activity. This group is likely to consist of members who are actively lurking (i.e. those viewing the site repeatedly but not taking part in activities) as well as those who log on out of curiosity but who do not come back.

- There appear to be differences in the motivations for joining the panel across the types of participation – for example in the learning interviews, interviewees identified as 'super users' on the basis of their engagement and activity levels were most likely to

reference the desire to learn about new topics as their primary motivation to join the panel. However as this finding is based on only a small number of interviews it is an issue that would benefit from further exploration. Understanding the reasons why different members have joined will enable greater targeting of communications to specific groups.

6.5.   Recommendations

- Members in younger age groups and with lower levels of education need greater targeting as their participation is lower compared to other demographic groups. In particular, younger age groups need to be encouraged to actively contribute when they are on the site (they are more likely to lurk) while members with lower levels of education need to be encouraged to take a first step in viewing the site (they are more likely to be disengaged).

- When designing project processes, ensure that there is a mix of engagement methods that appeal to different segments (e.g. more time bound online chats for the more casually involved members).

- Many members have been involved in market research previously and are most familiar with surveys as engagement methods – they are often less familiar with other engagement methods and may find this off-putting. For example, use 'warm up' exercises for members who have never taken part in a forum discussion before.

- Recruit to policy specific activities using quotas based on the segmentation and target invitations to these different segments to appeal to their different motivations/barriers to participation.

Chapter 7:   User Journeys

This chapter looks at the user journeys of Food Futures Panel members from the point of registration to December, with a focus on how their behaviours have changed over time. The learning described in this chapter is around how to sustain the participation of Panel members, a challenge that is important to the continued health of the Panel given the potential to continue it over several years.

7.1.   Timeline of aggregated user activity

Figure 6 below plots the aggregated activity of the whole Panel on the Food Futures online platform, showing spikes in activity levels. This data excludes surveys as these were hosted by another software platform (SNAP) and are therefore not collected in the online platform's activity data.

The black line represents new members registering onto the platform and the orange line shows the Panel members' activity (activities completed across all online engagement methods, excluding surveys). The thin grey line shows the number of visits made to platform (as this data is derived from Google Analytics it has not been possible to exclude the visits of community managers and observers. Google only makes this data available for the previous three months – data was not collected for the preceding months).

Figure 6 Platform activity (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)
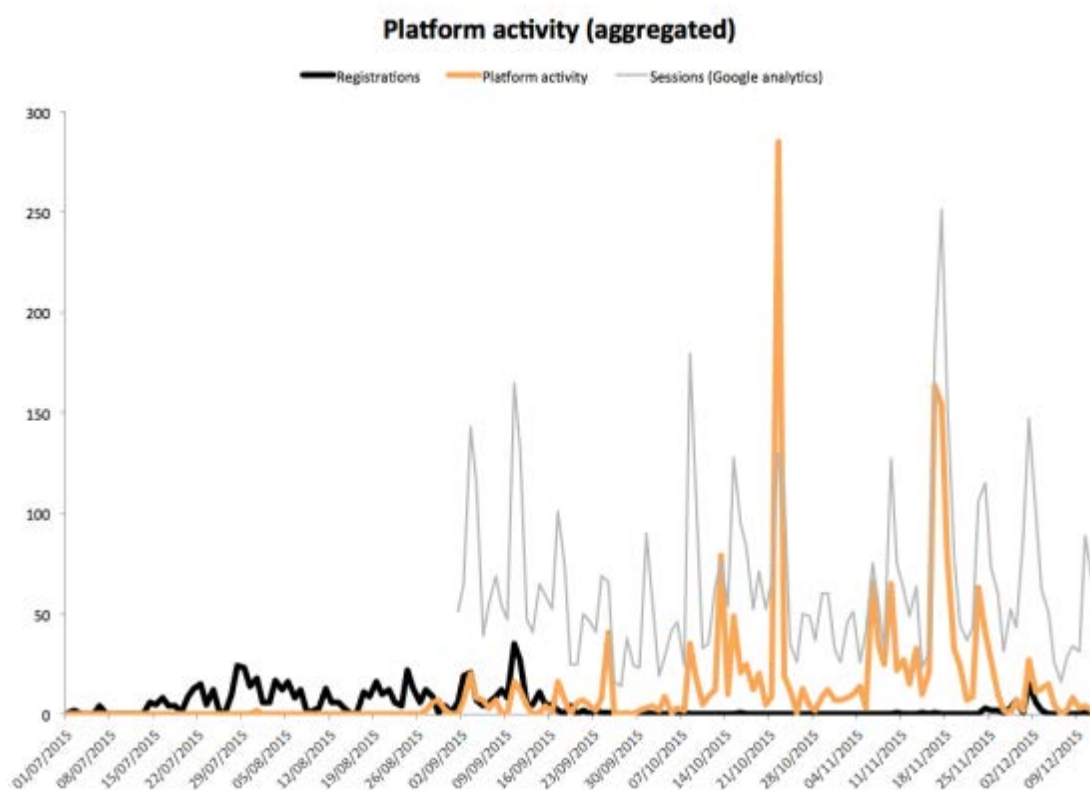
A number of observations can be drawn from the aggregated data:

Lag between registrations and activity

There is a substantial lag between the registrations and Panel members' activity in the period of July and August. While this is in part due to tendency of new joiners to 'lurk' before participating for the first time, the lag is more indicative of a misalignment between new registrations and the beginning of Panel activities resulting from a period of internal project management challenges and complaint resolution.

The first (small) spike in activity occurs on the same day – the 27th August - that the first topic blog was posted (a blog reporting findings from the insect survey launched in July). However by this point 388 members had already joined the Panel, with some joining in July. This means that for up to six weeks some Panel members had not been engaged. This was the period where the Food Futures Panel was put on standstill as a result of escalating dissatisfaction of the Project Management Team with respect to the delivery of the project.

This timing was unfortunate because as the next section on individual user journeys explores, the point of registration and the period following immediately afterwards is important in establishing Panel members' participation.

> "I joined the Panel as it's about a topic I know I have opinions about. But when I signed up in mid-August I didn't hear anything for a long time. When I started getting emails I wasn't as interested anymore, I'd moved on by that point.'
> (Jasmin, 26-40 years, Cardiff)

Engagement is highest when activities are first launched

The spikes in activity on the platform correspond almost perfectly to the launch dates of the different activities, as can be seen on the Figure 7 below. This means that most activity can be expected to occur in the few days immediately following the launch date, suggesting that online activities could be run over shorter, more intense time periods.

Figure 7 platform activity and launch of activities (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)
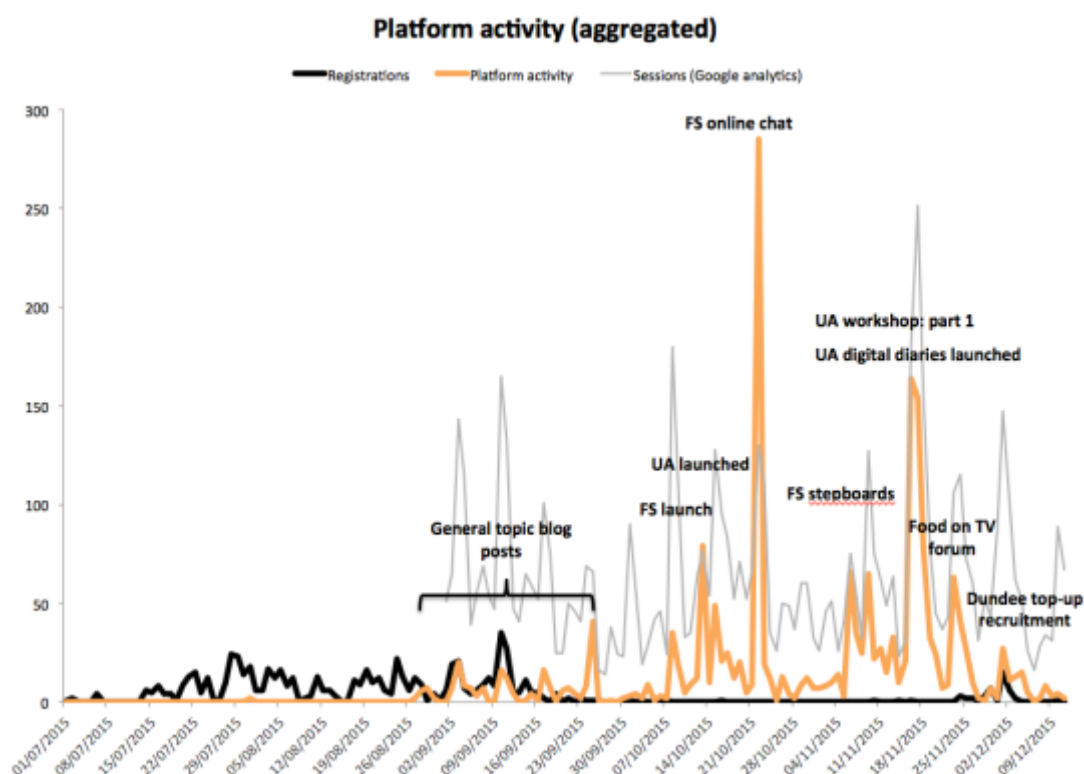
> "The forum can feel a bit dead, like you're looking at a piece of finished history rather than something on-going." (Paul, 41-55 years, London)

There seems to be little correlation between the spikes in platform activity and external events such as TV shows or media stories relevant to the topic matter. While Panellists do occasionally make reference to external events in the online discussions (for example TV shows such as Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall's War on Waste which launched in the beginning of November), there is no discernible relationship between these events and the frequency of Panel activity.

It is likely that these external events have more of an influence on the decision to join the Panel in the first place and the opinions expressed by Panellists during discussions, than on the levels of their activity. However, given the tendency of participants during workshops to reference these types of external events it is also possible that increasing the scope for discussion of current events on the panel site would reveal a relationship.

Workshop attendance can increase online engagement

The two biggest spikes in activity seen in the aggregated Panel activity chart from the section above coincide with the online chat (where 14 participants were on the platform at the same time writing a high volume of responses) and with the first round of Urban Agriculture workshops.

This suggests that workshops can increase engagement online. To interrogate this relationship further, the chart in Figure 8 below splits the Panel members into two groups: those who have attended a workshop (n=86, represented by solid lines) and those who have not (n=538, represented by dotted lines) and the total page views and participation levels of these two groups. The dark circles plot when workshops took place (November and December).

Looking in the months when the workshops took place we see that the number of page views and number of contributions made online by workshop participants overtakes that of the non-workshop participants, which is particularly striking given that there are only 86 members in the workshop group.

Figure 8 Impact of workshop attendance on participation online (total n=623 registered participants at December 2015)
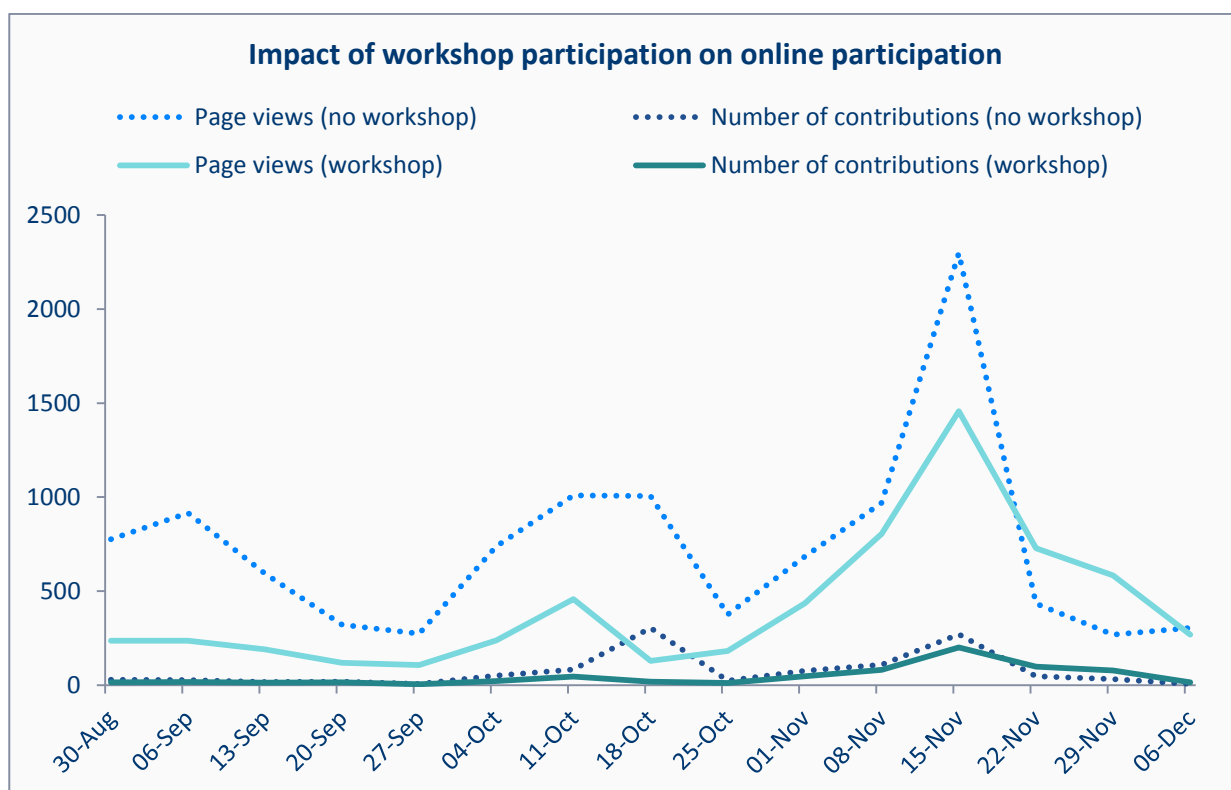
7.2.   Individual user journeys

To understand patterns in member behaviour over time, the user activity data of four individuals who participated in the learning interviews has been analysed at a more granular level. The following case studies of these individual user journeys highlight particular points on the journey where there is an opportunity/threat to their on-going engagement with the Panel.

Case study 1 – Catherine, 41-55, Belfast (segment 3)

Catherine is an example of how workshop participation can increase online engagement among Panel members who have previously been disengaged. Her

timeline of online activity below shows her joining the Panel in early September. In the two weeks after joining she had a very brief look around on the site, but she never participated and disengaged from the Panel for the next couple of months.

"I had a vague look around online when I joined but I found the site quite confusing, as I didn't know what was going on."

Her first activity came in mid-November when she went to the first Urban Agriculture workshop in Belfast, having been motivated to attend because of the incentive. She found the workshop interesting and relevant to her personal and professional interests, and this inspired her to want to become more involved in the Panel. The day after the workshop she went back online to look around in more depth and completed the digital diary activity – her first activity online. She did not however come back online after the second workshop, but was sufficiently engaged now to take part in the Urban Agriculture poll when that launched the following week.

Figure 9 Catherine's user journey
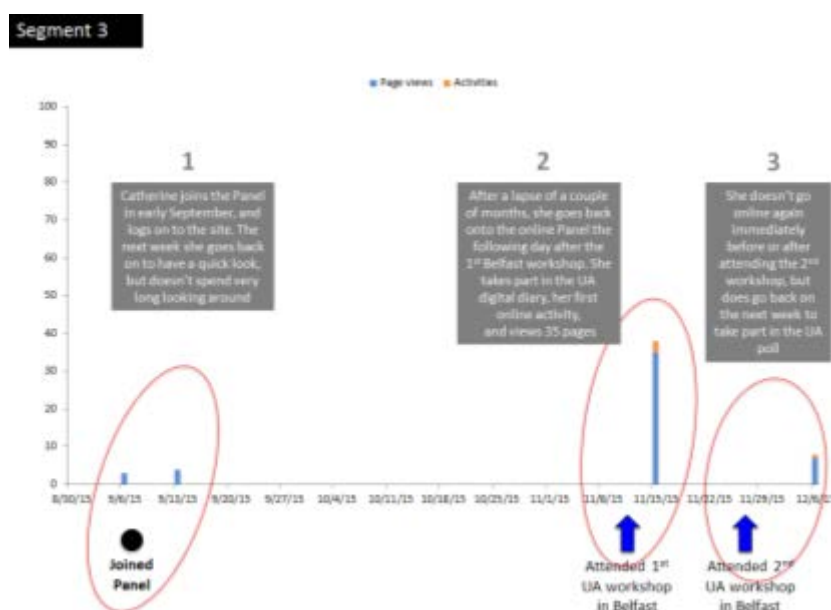
Catherine's experience shows how Panel members who have previously been disengaged can become active online following their workshop attendance. This suggests that workshops could be used as an opportunity to:

- Increase online engagement among Panellists who have been disengaged from the platform
- Shift motivations to participate in the Panel from 'reward hunting' and receiving incentives to interest and engagement with the topic.

Case study 2 – Abby, London (segment 4)

As one of the Panel's 'super users', Abby's journey is an example of how early participation in the month after joining can establish longer-term engagement.

Abby's timeline shows her joining the Panel in the beginning of September. For the first two weeks after joining, she visits the platform but does not participate – she is at this point a 'lurker'. Her first activity comes the following week, three weeks after joining, when she writes three comments on different general topic blogs.

"If you join something like this you have to be active otherwise it's easy to get lost if you dip in and out"

Every time she visits the platform from that point on she makes an active contribution. Her engagement peaks in early November when the Urban Agriculture topic launched.

"I pick and choose what I do, depending on what I'm interested in…if you're not already interested in the topic it could be quite intense."

Figure 10 Abby's user journey
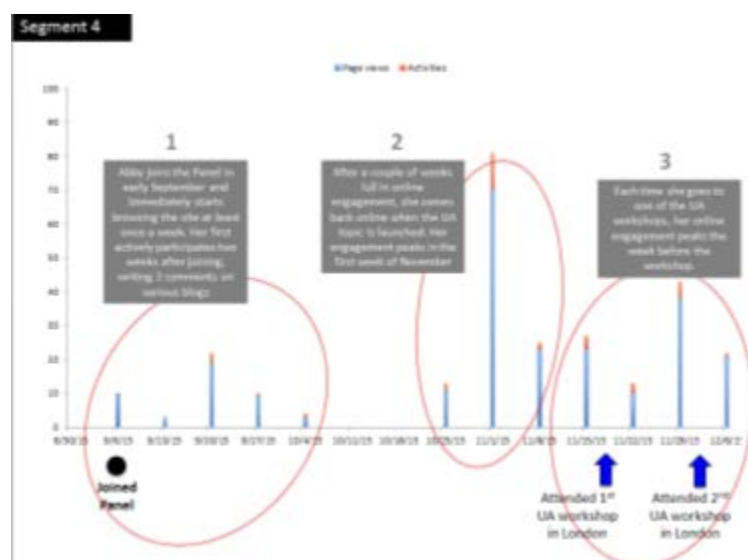
Abby's experience shows how encouraging participation in the first few weeks can increase the likelihood of sustained engagement over time.

Case study 3 – Gary, London (segment 2)

Gary is an example of how certain Panel members who are invisible on the Panel due to their inactivity offer an opportunity for conversion to a more active segment. These Panel members can be identified by the fact that they are quietly visiting the platform intermittently out of interest/curiosity.

Gary joined the Panel in late August and had a very cursory visit to the platform in the week he joined. He came back a few months later when Food Systems and Urban Agriculture launched, but did not participate in either, or click on the emails updating him about new activities happening in these topics.

"I get a lot of emails [spam] and so it is easy to miss your emails. When I do see the Food Futures emails I generally leave the unopened, thinking that I'll come back to them when I have a moment."

On the occasions when he has read an email and clicked on a link that takes him to the site, he reports feeling 'lost' and confused due to his lack of familiarity with the platform, which puts him off from coming back again.

Figure 11 Gary's user journey
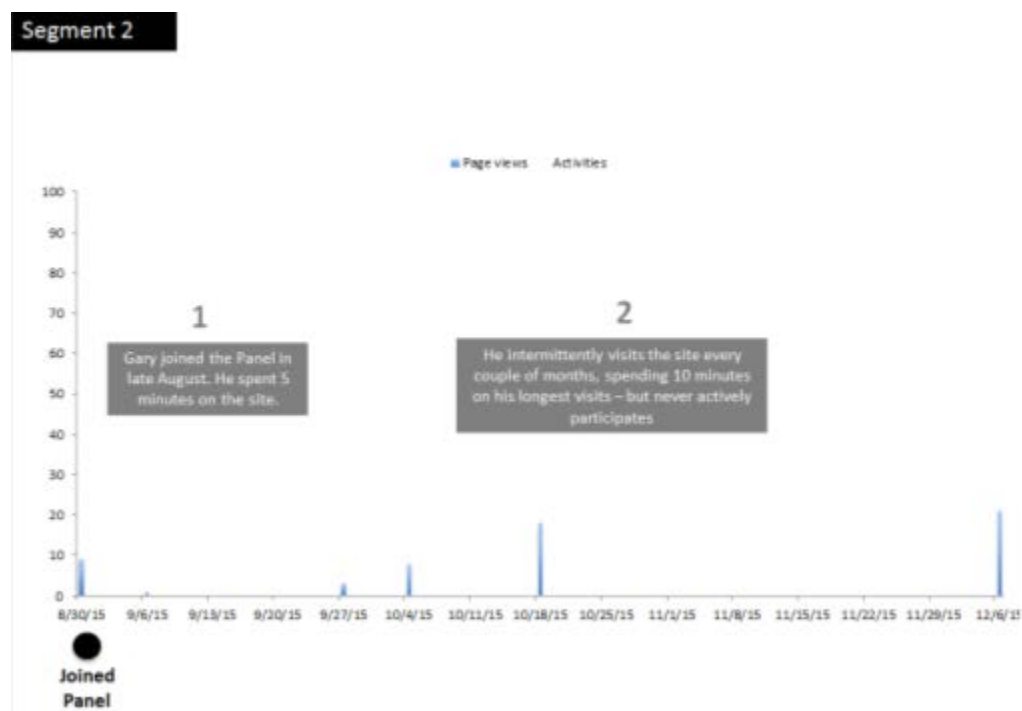
Gary's experience suggests that making the site easier to navigate for those who have not yet invested much time in familiarising themselves with it may help encourage activity – for example having a landing page that explains different platform features or has a timeline of what has happened/due to happen.

7.2.1. Attrition

To date there have only been five requests to leave the Panel. A learning interview with one of these Panel members found that this particular user wanted to leave because time pressures meant that she felt she was never going to be able to participate, and that as a consequence the Food Futures emails had become spam.

"I forgot I had joined up to the Panel and when I started receiving emails, I didn't open them. I'm busy at the moment with work and these emails feel like they are yet another thing to do that I don't have time for." (Jasmin, 26-40, Belfast)

While only a relatively small number of Panel members have requested to leave, a bigger threat is declining engagement – particularly among Panel members who feel that they are 'obliged' to participate, as is the case with the final case study.

Case study 4 – Sally, Harrogate (segment 4)

By many accounts, Sally is one of the most engaged Panel members. She overcame her early difficulties with the platform and is among the top 10% of the Panel in terms of her activity and engagement levels. However, in the learning

interview with her, Sally expressed frustration that the activities demand more time from her than she was expecting.

"Being on the Panel feels like being back at school because you have to do your homework. Having said I would do it I felt that it was expected of me… when you're younger you can dip in and out but the older you get the more stressful it is"

Although she has found aspects of the Panel interesting, her involvement risks becoming a burden to her and her enjoyment has waned. This is compounded by her lack of knowledge as to how long the Panel would be going on for. When she signed up she did not realise it would be running for so many months, having assumed it would be like other market research tasks that are over within a couple of weeks. *"It seems like there is no end in sight."*

As a result, while Sally is still participating every week on the Panel, her engagement has been waning since the beginning of November.

Figure 12 Sally's user journey
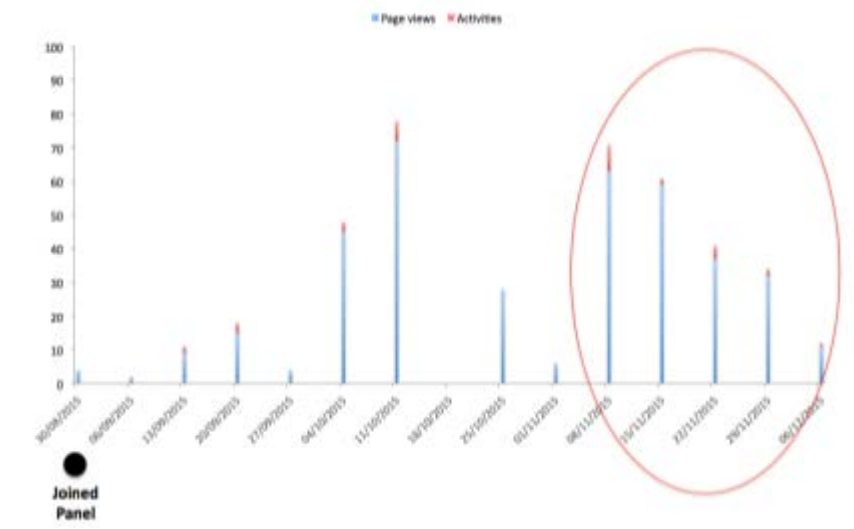
Sally's experience highlights that while information about the terms of participation may be explained to Panel members when they are recruited this may not be enough to reassure them. While it is doubtful whether there are many others like Sally on the Panel, being clear about time expectations and being more explicit about how long topics will be running for may help those at risk of 'burning out' – particularly among the most active segments. One recommendation would be to create a rules of engagement or terms of reference for the panel which can be displayed prominently on the site.

7.3.   User journey stages

These case studies point towards a number of stages in the user journey common to many Panel members regardless of their segment membership. Looking at user journeys in granular detail suggests that there are opportunities across all stages of the journey to sustain longer-term engagement with the Panel.

The table below summaries these stages and sets out the 'pain points' at each stage where there is a risk of disengagement.

Table 15 User journeys

Journey stage	Pain points	Recommendations for sustaining engagement
1. Registration	• The first visit to the platform can be confusing and put newly registered Panellists off from returning	Offer user guides or platform 'walk throughs' with new members to help them navigate the platform Conduct usability testing to see how members navigate the site Introduce progress bars on the site so members can see what activities they have completed and what are still open to them.
2. Post-registration	• If the user does not start participating within the first few weeks after joining, it can be difficult for them to start	Enable Panellists to have a bio page that they can fill in that is visible to others, or encourage them to change their avatar to an image of their choosing - small activities that may help them feel more connected to the platform Run quick activities that new members already likely to be familiar with (e.g. polls) to increase confidence in the site that still give valuable information/can be used in analysis
3. Lurking	• New members typically lurk for a while before they start participating • Panellists visiting the platform after activities have already started or midway through a topic can feel lost	If new Panellists have not participated within the first few weeks after joining, encourage them to participate in a specific task Post links to external websites to make it easy for Panellists to know what else they can read if they become interested in a topic
4. Activity completion	• Panellists can feel that the wait for reward and/or acknowledge of submission is too long • Workshop participants likely	Make rewards (social and monetary) feel more instant Ensure that the purpose of the activity/topic is clear from the outset and give updates on

	to have increased motivation to stay involved but may be unclear what they can do next	findings once activity has closed Use workshops as an opportunity to increase online engagement by giving them a task to do online immediately after the workshop
5. Disengagement	• Even active Panellists tend to go through periods where they stop engaging with the Panel temporarily	Send regular (weekly) update emails on what has been happening on the Panel and what's happening next
6. Drop-out	• The risk of dropping out increases when Panellists feel disconnected from the Panel or if they feel burdened by their involvement	Monitor levels of engagement and identify participants who have become less active Ensure clarity around activity timescales Reassure that it is okay to 'dip in and out' of the Panel

7.4.   Summary of key learning

Learning around user journeys

- The first stages of the user journey, the point of registration and the time post-registration are likely the most important in sustaining long-term engagement. This is because new panel members are more likely to become active contributors if they participate within the first 2-3 weeks following registration. Lag between new registrations and the launch of panel activities has a negative impact as new members risk becoming quickly disengaged, as can feeling lost/confused when visiting the site for the first time.

- The launch of new activities is another important moment in the user journey. Most activity occurs within days immediately following the launch date, suggesting that online activities could be run over shorter, more intense time periods. However because the online architecture of the platform is asynchronous – participants can log in and complete activities at a time convenient to them – it means that the site can feel confusing for participants logging on mid-way through an activity, particularly if they are less active and less familiar with the site as a result. Making the timetable of activities (i.e. which activities are currently running, and for how long) more visible may help to decrease confusion.

- Face to face workshops create opportunities for increasing online engagement, as some workshop participants report feeling more motivated for further involvement following the workshop.

- Feedback loops are important in sustaining engagement; more immediate acknowledgements of contribution and more immediate delivery of rewards help create this feedback loop. At the moment the time taken for rewards to be paid can make rewards feel less tangible, breaking the feedback loop.

- There appears to be a small minority of members who feel obliged to participate. While this is beneficial in the short term for response rates, over the longer term these participants could be at risk of burn out and disengagement.

7.5.   Recommendations

- Reduce the risk of disengagement by reducing lag between new registrations to the panel and launch of activities. Encourage new members to undertake small activities at the point of registration that make them feel more connected/invested in the panel (e.g. personalising their profile picture or leaving a comment in the general topics forum)

- Offer support navigating the site for new members to help them become familiar with it e.g. create a landing page or a video that explains the different parts of the site. Monitor the engagement and activity levels of new members and target communications at those at risk of becoming disengaged

- Use workshops as an opportunity to increase online engagement amongst participants who have been less active online, e.g. by giving them a small task to do online immediately after the workshop.

- Regular communication with the panel helps keep members up to date and reminds them of the project. Weekly updates via newsletters, even when there are no new activities being launched, could help sustain engagement.

- Continue giving the panel updates on findings once an activity has closed so they know their participation has been worthwhile and for them to compare their responses to the rest of the panel

- Reassure users that it is okay to dip in and out of panel activities – particularly those who have been identified as feeling obliged to participate

Chapter 8:   Summary of learning from the final three months of panel activities: January – March 2016

8.1.   About this chapter

In this chapter, we provide a summary of the three projects carried out during the final three months of the public panel: this is the period from January 2016 to March 2016, when the public panel closed.

We look at the objectives and methods used in the projects and the levels and distribution of participation as well as what we learned about preferences for different methods of engagement or the effectiveness of different configurations of on- and offline activities. We have focused on factors that add to what we learned in the first nine months of the Food Futures panel, and on those things that confirm some of the recommendations drawn from this period.

We analyse and discuss the impact on participation levels of using social rewards and gamification, including measures that might increase the effectiveness of these tools in any future projects.

Finally, we discuss how learning from the first half of the project was applied during the final three months of the public panel.

8.2.   Food Futures projects: January – March 2016

We ran three projects during this period:

- Trade-offs in future food systems – consumer perspectives

    o   Referred to as Sustainable intensification, this was a mixed method project

- Understanding consumer priorities for food innovation

    o   Referred to as Food Innovation, this was also a mixed method project

- Endline survey

    o   This project used a single method, an online survey

Both Sustainable intensification and Food Innovation involved online and face-to-face activities and both used functions on the CMNTY platform that had not been used in previous projects. Both of these projects involved design elements that enabled us to test some of the recommendations made in the nine-month review. Both also generated content accessible to the whole panel regularly and so there were no empty weeks in which to run weekly engagement activities (e.g., general blog posts), with the exception of a blog providing

feedback on the results of the Buying British survey, with an accompanying poll early in January.

8.2.1. Sustainable intensification

In this project, 108 members of the panel explored the topic of sustainable intensification. Sustainable intensification is an approach to addressing global food security that focuses on increasing production; it was defined in the project as:

Sustainably increasing the production of food, combined with improved resource use efficiency and better environmental outcomes.

The project involved three phases, shown in figure 13 below.

Figure 13 Sustainable Intensification Project Phases
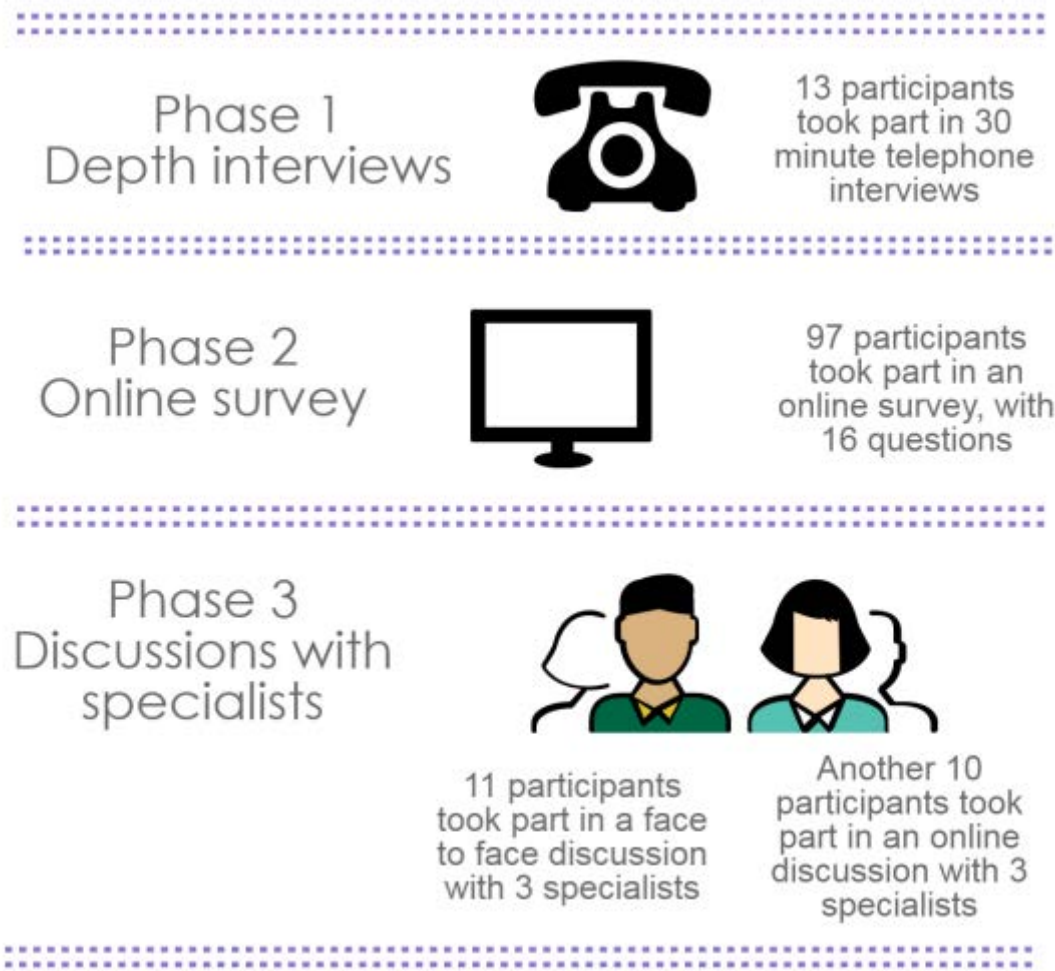
Table 16 below shows the four main research questions addressed in the Sustainable Intensification project and the shading shows how each was reflected in the three project phases.

Table 16 Sustainable Intensification: research questions mapped against process

Objectives Phases	Panellists' views on SI as an approach to agriculture	Panellists' views on trade-offs associated with SI	Panellists' understanding of SI food supply chain, actors and their influence	Panellists' views of consumer choice as driver of change, reflection of their preferences
Depth interviews				
Online survey				
Discussions with specialists				

You can see the report of the sustainable intensification project on the GFS website at:

http://foodsecurity.ac.uk/programme/activities/public-panel.html

8.2.2. Food Innovation

In this project over 113 members of the panel explored the topic of innovation. The aim of the activity was to explore with members of the public panel where they would like to see innovations across the food chain, from both a consumer and citizen perspective. Throughout the activity, participants explored their priorities for innovation, as well as the factors which influence their priorities and who they think benefits from innovation.

The project involved several phases, and different methodologies, shown in figure 14 below.

Figure 14 Innovation Project phases
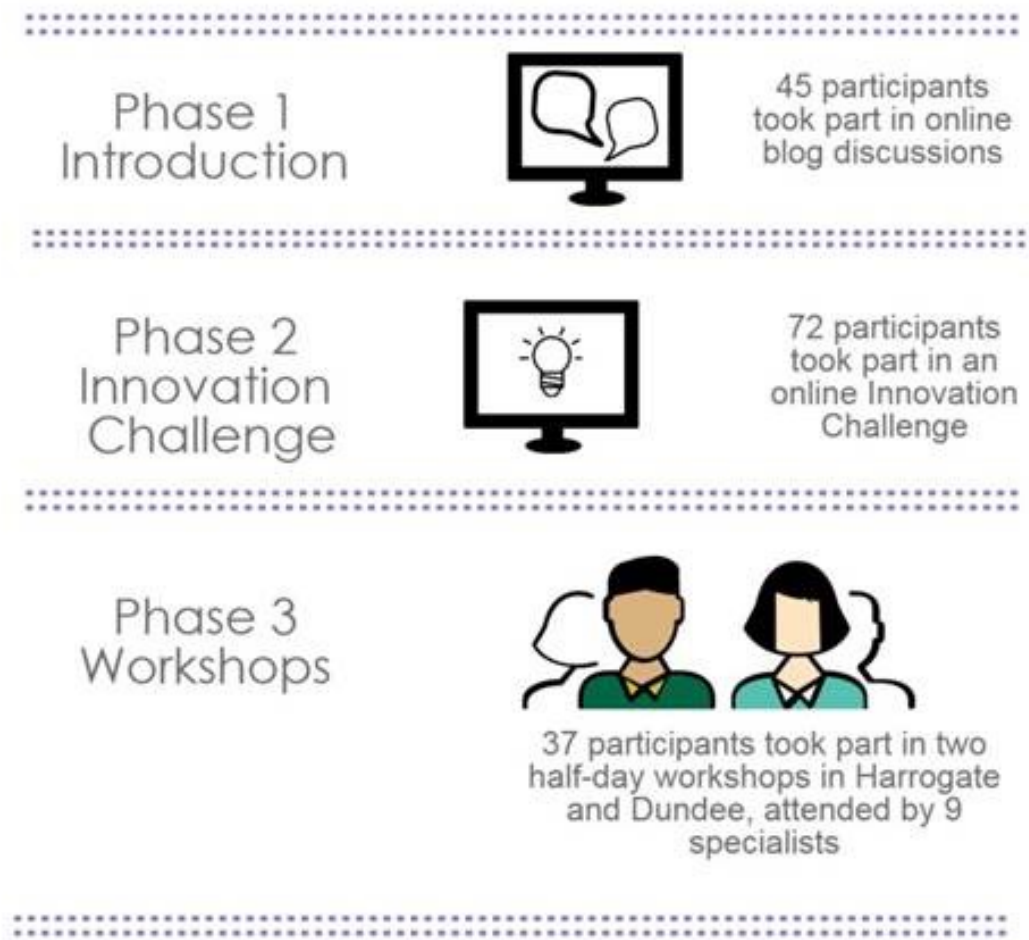
Table 17 below shows the four main research questions addressed in the Food Innovation project and the shading shows how each was reflected in the three project phases.

Table 17 Food Innovation: research questions mapped against process

Objectives Phases	Consumer perceptions of innovation	Attitudes towards different types of innovation	Innovation priorities for global food security	Influences on innovation priorities
Introduction				
The Innovation Challenge				
Workshops				

8.2.3. Endline survey

The final project for the panel was a survey, similar to the baseline survey, to understand participants views at the end of the panel. The survey asked about:

- Understanding and perceived importance of global food security

- Views on the factors affecting global food security

- Behaviours and attitudes towards food and the food system

- Topics covered by the panel: one or more questions on each of the six major topics covered in other panel activities.

The endline survey was a simple online survey, with all panel members invited to take part. We received 158 responses during the two-week survey period.

8.3.   Learning from methods

We used several new methods during the final three months of the public panel: learning from these methods is captured in an updated engagement methods matrix in table 18 below.

Table 18 Engagement methods matrix

	Food Innovation	Sustainable Intensification
Survey – online	N/A	Online survey used to provide quantifiable data on public attitudes towards topic, and explore demographic differences in opinion. **Learning**: no additional learning identified.
Scoping interviews - specialists	Involvement of specialists from a wide range of backgrounds ensured that the topic covered a range of perspectives from an industry and wider food system point of view. **Learning:** Steering Group involvement was instrumental in gaining access to these specialists, particularly those from industry.	Involvement of specialists from wide range of backgrounds with a complex and contested topic, with the aim of ensuring effective scoping and agreeing a straightforward definition of Sustainable Intensification. This was partially successful: the absence of consensus on the topic meant the project did not cover all the aspects the varied interests would have like to see. **Learning**: Steering Group involvement was instrumental in gaining access to specialists, particularly those from industry, whose involvement was vital to providing balance to the topic.
Scoping interviews - participants		Scoping interviews with participants at outset of project used to identify panel's initial reactions towards a complex topic in order to prioritise specific areas to explore in more depth during the group discussions. **Learning**: Useful to identify participant's initial understanding of complex topic and identify issues/hypotheses to be tested in quantified survey.

	Food Innovation	Sustainable Intensification
Blog featuring videos - online	Blogs used to introduce topic and share content. **Learning**: Longer video (6 mins) well received by panel members, useful to include visual content as can be easier to consume/more engaging. Blog posts ended with 3-4 specific questions for participants to answer, which helped keep discussions more focused. Facilitators added blog comments summarising previous discussions to make it easier for participants to get a sense of what had been discussed previously, rather than having to scroll through earlier blog comments.	N/A
Challenge - online	CMNTY's Challenge function used to run the online Innovation Challenge. First stage of the Challenge asked participants to submit food-related problems: second stage asked participants to submit ideas for new innovation to address problems: third stage asked participants to vote and comment on ideas pitched in workshops (prioritized by specialists). Gamification module purchased from CMNTY (use of badges as a social reward and leaderboards to show participants with most badges). **Learning**: Large volume of responses received over a two week period, but from a relatively low number of participants. Volume of responses meant that analysis to summarise	N/A

	Food Innovation	Sustainable Intensification
	themes had to happen quickly between stages. However many more ideas were generated than would have been possible in a workshop. Use of gamification and social rewards did not have a significant impact on interaction between participants, specifically voting for ideas – we ended up having to create a third stage to the Challenge that used monetary incentives to encourage participants to vote for ideas submitted by other participants	
Group discussion – online (online chat) NB: An online chat is a typed conversation between a group of users	N/A	1.5 hour group discussion run online using CMNTY's online chat function, with involvement from three specialists who also attended the face to face group discussion (see below). Session designed to understand how participants' views might develop as they debated issues with other participants and specialists. **Learning**: Participants required to complete online survey in advance, increasing the scope what could be explored in the online chat due to participants increased familiarity with the topic. Longer lasting online chat enabled deeper exploration of issues (previous online chat used in Food Systems project had only lasted 30 minutes) – see section 8.4.1 below for more on the comparability of the online and offline discussions.

	Food Innovation	Sustainable Intensification
		Compared to face to face discussion group (see below), online discussion was less focused and more difficult to moderate due to the different speeds at which participants typed, with a wider range of views expressed We found that using the two methods in combination provided a good mix of data, using one in isolation would have been less effective.
Group discussion – face-to-face NB: We use group discussion here to refer to a short session similar to a focus group	N/A	Same process plan used to run the face to face discussion as the online discussion, attended by same three specialists, lasting for 1.5 hours. **Learning**: Ability to run smaller group discussions in parallel is useful as it allows for more close moderation and follow-up, compared to online discussion that have to be run as a whole group discussion. This contributes to the shallower (although more varied) outputs of the online session.
Workshop NB: We use workshop to denote an extended (half or full day) deliberative face to face activity.	One half-day workshop in two locations (Harrogate and Dundee). Design carried through outputs of online Challenge activity, to enable linear integration and development of content (e.g. ideas from the online challenge were tested and developed in the workshop). **Learning**: Volume of responses in the online Challenge meant that responses had to be summarised before taking into	

	Food Innovation	Sustainable Intensification
	workshops Some workshop participants had taken part in online Challenge, others had not (we chose not to disinvite participants who had not participated online to ensure that we did not exclude groups who may be less engaged online e.g. lower education levels) so workshop process had to be designed to ensure all participants were made familiar with online challenge outputs – however whether or not participants had engaged with topic online did not appear to impact on participants' ability to contribute during the workshops. Mix of specialists from diverse range of backgrounds played an important role in helping ensure participants considered topic from a range of perspectives. Industry specialists particularly helpful in advising participants on likelihood of ideas and how food innovation works in practice.	

8.4.   Involvement of specialists and stakeholders

These two projects confirmed what we had learned from projects run in the first nine months of the Food Futures panel. First, that Steering Group involvement in recruiting specialists is invaluable: in both the Sustainable Intensification and Innovation projects, recommendations and personal introductions to specialists ensured that we were able to involve a wide range of different expertise in a variety of ways. Involvement of industry specialists had been particularly challenging. Thanks to suggestions from members of the Steering Group and support from Defra, who facilitated an introduction to the Food Innovation Network, its Chair, Ian Noble and to Dave Hughes from Syngenta, specialists were involved in scoping interviews, online discussions and face-to-face events, and in recorded interviews used in face-to-face events. This was particularly important given the aim of the projects, which in both cases sought to provide a consumer/citizen perspective on areas in which innovation is at least partly driven by industry.

One notable aspect of involving specialists from large commercial organisations (such as those involved in the Food Innovation project) is that sign-off on their participation and on any materials generated can involve multiple people – possibly in multiple countries: protecting brand and corporate reputation will be at the forefront of their minds and they will want to be assured that engagement and dialogue materials do not detract from this. This can take some time, adding weight to the recommendation that discussions with specialists start as early as possible in a project, and that the internal sign-off protocols are fully understood. If dialogue activities – in the nature of this panel or otherwise – seek to involve industry specialists more regularly in the future, it might be worth developing a single checklist of questions to ask of them at the start of a project, to help avoid any delays or last-minute amendments to a process if the requisite approvals are not received in time. The involvement of industry could also raise questions about intellectual property and the publication of project materials: different companies might bring different views to this, particularly if their involvement includes recorded materials. Again, discussions about these issues should happen at an early stage of a project.

One possible consequence of involving many specialists is that multiple voices add complexity and blur the boundaries of a topic, rather than helping to focus and define it: we were particularly alert to this possibility in the Sustainable Intensification project where our scoping work had identified that even basic definitions were strongly contested. By using semi-structured discussion guides to shape the scoping interviews with specialists, and engaging specialists from a wide-range of backgrounds, we were able to develop a working definition of Sustainable Intensification and set out some of the main trade-offs without compromising the different perspectives involved. Despite this, it is likely that the project will not cover all the aspects considered important by all stakeholders. Thinking ahead about the extent to which involving greater numbers of specialists is likely to add to or resolve the complexity of a topic is

useful: reaching a shared view of the content of a project dealing with hotly debated topics may require additional time.

Table 19 shows how specialists were involved in the Sustainable Intensification and Food Innovation projects[10].

Table 19 Specialist involvement: Sustainable Intensification and Food Innovation projects

Online involvement	Face-to-face involvement
FOOD INNOVATION	
Specialists and stakeholders were involved in the early stages of development of materials used both on and offline (namely the development of the 'problem space' framework and identification of example innovations), primarily through telephone interviews.	
Specialists at Dundee workshop were shown ideas submitted online from the Innovation Challenge and asked to select the ideas that they felt had most potential to make a positive impact on global food security. The ideas they selected were used to identify winners at the end of online Innovation Challenge	Interviews (45 minutes-hour) to inform development of problem space framework and materials for workshops (video interview with industry specialist to explain how innovation works in practice)
	Attending workshops to participate in discussions and provide specialist input (e.g., through presentations, question and answer sessions, challenging assumptions etc.)
SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION	
Specialists and stakeholders were involved in the early stages of the project, to help develop the briefing note sent to participants and identify topics for inclusion in the survey	

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[10] Riaz Bhunnoo, a member of the GFS team/ Steering Group was also involved in setting the questions for the endline survey.

Three specialists present in the online discussion. Specialists asked to give a 2-3 minute introduction to their perspective on SI followed by a moderated discussion between specialists and participants.

Three specialists present in the face to face workshops (same three specialists as online). Same process plan for online discussion.

8.4.1. Parallel processes: running online and face-to-face discussion groups

The majority of the projects run on the Food Futures panel have involved a mix of online and face to face engagement methods - see Chapter 5 on Engagement Methods for a full overview. The integration of online and face to face engagement methods has generally been designed so that one follows on from the other e.g. workshops exploring in more depth questions raised in online discussions. For the Sustainable Intensification project we designed a process that included discussion groups with specialists run both online and face-to-face. This allowed us to test whether there were any differences in the type and quality of outputs between the two engagement methods.

These discussion groups were held in the final stage of the project (see Figure 13 in section 8.2.1 above for the Sustainable Intensification engagement process). We used the same process plan for both online and face-to-face groups, with only two minor tweaks to the process plan for the online discussion group to allow for the format:

- The online participants watched a video, whereas the face to face discussion group heard a presentation from the lead facilitator – the content was the same in both the video and presentation.

- The online discussion was held as one group throughout, whereas the face to face discussion involved two smaller table discussions (it was not possible to run two smaller group discussions in parallel online) – the prompt questions were the same in both online and face to face groups.

- We found that the outputs from the online and face to face groups were equally useful in terms of evidence, for example the final Sustainable Intensification report made use of both discussion groups equally, as a proxy measure we note that our reporting team used a similar number of quotations from the two transcriptions.

- We did find nuanced differences in the type of evidence produced. The face to face discussion tended to be more 'on topic' as it was easier for the facilitators to direct the discussion face to face and to ensure it stayed on topic. This was harder to do online, for example because some participants input more slowly to the discussion and the resulting flow of discussion was sometimes less sequential (i.e. some participants were still discussing an earlier question while other participants had moved on to the next question).

- We did notice some difference in the range of views expressed online, when compared to face-to-face. In particular, online participants tended to express more extreme

views: this was particularly noticeable during the online discussion about reducing the choice for consumers. This may be because online participants feel less social pressure than participants in face to face workshops, and are hence less concerned about the social desirability of the views they express. However, this is speculative only, as different people were involved in the online and face-to-face discussions, and in other activities (such as the Sustainable Intensification online survey we have found evidence of potential social desirability being greater online where there is no moderator to probe initial views). It could be simply that the views of the online group would have been similarly diverse if the same people had taken part in a face-to-face discussions. However, this difference between the range and extremity of views expressed online, when compared to face-to-face, is consistent with our observations in previous projects such as Food Systems (see report, available on the GFS website http://foodsecurity.ac.uk/programme/activities/public-panel.html

- While it is not possible to be definitive on the basis of this evidence, we suggest that while outputs from online discussions might be less focused than outputs from face to face discussions, they might prove more useful in identifying what participants think is relevant to the topic. This seems a clear area where more research would be beneficial.

8.4.2. Social rewards

For more on incentive strategies see section 5.3.2.

Following feedback from panel members gathered during the learning interviews carried out for the nine-month learning review, we tested the use of social rewards in the Food Innovation project, specifically during the online Innovation Challenge. In the learning interviews, some panel members had told us that other research panels they had been involved with made use of a variety of social rewards such as badges, in addition to monetary incentives, and that these social rewards could help the most active participants to feel rewarded for their effort.

The social rewards we could access via the CMNTY platform were badges, purchased through an add-on gamification module. Six badges were created to reward different types of behaviour during the online Innovation Challenge:

- **Badges to reward participation:** a badge for every participant who submitted a problem or idea during the Challenge, a separate badge for those who submitted within 24 hours of the Challenge launch, and a badge for participants who had submitted four or more problems/ideas

- **Badges to reward interaction**: a badge for every participant who commented or 'liked' another participants' submission

- **Badges to reward achievement**: two 'winner' badges – one for the participant whose idea received the most 'likes' from the panel and how were they chosen? For what?

- Award of the first two types of badge were 'triggered' so that participants meeting the relevant criteria received the badge automatically and were informed of this in an

automated email sent via the platform. The achievement badges were awarded manually. To avoid participants being overwhelmed with email notifications, only one badge of each category could be earned (i.e. once a participant had earned the 'comment badge' by commenting on someone else's submission, they would not earn another badge when they wrote a second comment). Participants were able to see what badges they were able to earn via their profile pages, as well as via newsletters sent to the panel notifying them that the Innovation Challenge had launched.

- Because members' profile pages were configured to be private (see Section 4.1.2. of this report for further details on why profile pages were made private), members' badges were only visible to others via the badge leaderboard positioned on the front page of the Innovation Challenge. The leaderboard showed the top ten participants with the most badges and was kept automatically updated by the platform.

- The badges did not have a significant impact on participation in the online Innovation Challenge. The demographic profile of participants in the Challenge was similar to that of other online activities, suggesting that the badges were not effective in encouraging participation from less engaged panel members. In addition, participants in the Challenge did not make as much use of the 'like' functionality as we were expecting (the Challenge includes a feature for participants to use a 'like' button to vote for or like someone else's submission), despite the social reward on offer. To raise participation levels, we added a third stage to the online Challenge which offered a small monetary incentive for voting on ideas.

- Our experience using social rewards suggests that there are pre-conditions for its success. Perhaps the most significant is a prior sense of community among panel members; as discussed in more depth in Section 4.4.1. of this report, this was lacking in the Food Futures panel. In the absence of this, it is unlikely that social rewards will provide an effective incentive for participants as the 'social' side of the reward is missing.

8.5. Panel participation

Achieved panel sample

In chapter 4 of this report, we reflected on the discrepancy between the original sample quotas for the panel and the achieved sample as recruited. The recruited sample was not as representative of the general population as we had hoped.

Having reached the close of the project we looked again at the demographics of the panel. Over the lifetime of the panel a core group of engaged participants has emerged. While there are 616 members registered, we have found that most activities involve our most frequent users (as per the typology discussed in the section below). To test whether the sample

completing activities was more or less representative than the total registered users we compared the baseline and endline survey respondents. We chose to compare these two activities as they used the same methodology (an online survey) and did not cover a specific topic: this should remove some of the potential for comparison of participation levels between the two to be affected by respondent preferences for method, or interest in the subject matter.

Table 20 below shows the proportion of respondents to each of the two surveys by the main demographic groups, and the proportion of respondents the original recruitment quota specified for that demographic group (as reported in appendix B). These are shown as percentages, to allow for easier comparison. Where the proportion has changed by more than 5% the number is coloured (red for increase, blue for decrease) and the last column gives our reflections on this change.

Table 20 Demographics

Measure/question		Quota	Baseline (n=489)	Endline (n=158)	Reflections
Gender	Male	50%	45%	**36%**	We have found that women are somewhat more likely to take part in all activities through the panel, it seems clear that despite efforts to engage equal numbers of men and women more men have disengaged. However we have also found that men and women are present in the same proportions among our most active users, suggesting that the level of engagement is similar once participants are engaged.
	Female	50%	55%	**64%**	
Age	18-25	17%	16%	**9%**	The youngest age-group (18-35) has been the most difficult to engage throughout and the endline shows a lower proportion than the baseline, suggesting greater drop-out in this group. However the proportion of older people has
	26-40	25%	37%	40%	
	41-55	25%	29%	29%	
	56-65	17%	11%	12%	

	66+	17%	6%	9%	stayed steady, suggesting that while more difficult to recruit, once engaged the 66+ group have been consistent.
Education level	No qualifications	10%	3%	3%	The endline generally saw slightly lower participation in all categories except the highest education level: again this is consistent with our experience throughout. However the shift of just 5% suggests this impact has been mitigated somewhat.
	Other qualifications e.g. apprenticeship	7%	8%	11%	
	Level 1 qualifications (e.g. GCSEs Grade D-G)	13%	4%	2%	
	Level 2 qualifications (e.g. GCSEs Grade A*-D, BTEC First/General Diploma)	17%	18%	14%	
	Level 3 qualifications (e.g. AS/A levels, BTEC National)	18%	21%	20%	
	Level 4 qualifications and above (Degree and above, BTEC Higher level)	37%	46%	**51%**	
Ethnicity	BME	11%	11%	9%	We have found that the location-based sampling approach used throughout has ensured that overall participation has been consistently in line with quotas for ethnicity.
	White	89%	89%	91%	

Demographic differences in participation

In chapter 6, reflecting on participation at the 9-month review of the public panel we reported that three main factors affected levels of participation:

- **Age** – the youngest age group (18-25) were least likely to take part in activities

  - This is still the case, with both page views and contributions lower for this age group. This age group is typically under-engaged in public dialogue, and it seems that the online methodology (often assumed to be more accessible to this age group) has not overcome this tendency.

  - The 66+ age-group are some of the most prolific participants, suggesting that early concerns about the ability of the panel to engage this group have not been borne out: this age group may not have the number of registered participants but those who are registered are particularly active.

- **Education level** – those with higher levels of education were more likely to take part

  - This is still the case, particularly when we look at the highest level of education, which is over-represented in page views and contributions. The effect does not extend to the next education level (level 3). Those who reported that they had no education or other qualifications such as apprenticeships are least likely to contribute.

- **Location** – participation was highest in London and Harrogate

  - This has continued, with the highest levels of participation in Harrogate and London, lowest levels in Dundee and the other three locations (Belfast, Cardiff and Plymouth) settling at an intermediate level. This emphasises the importance of ensuring consistent recruitment across locations, given that recruitment in Dundee was also the most challenging.

As with the data analysed in December 2015 and reported in chapter 6 of this report we have identified no correlations between engagement or contributions with ethnicity or gender, beyond the fact that fewer men were recruited to and have remained members of the panel: those who are members do not participate less often.

Typologies of participation

For the nine-month review of the public panel we created a typology of user activity to describe the ways in which members were participating in the panel. Our typology is based on two variables:

- **Engagement**: how much of the content of the project were participants seeing. We used page views as a proxy measure for this.

- **Participation:** how many of the activities are participants actively engaging with. We used number of contributions to the panel via surveys, forums and other online methods for this.
    - It is important to note that this measure is a proxy, and the values given can be misleading because of the range of activity types and how they are counted: for example a 15 minute survey counts as one 'contribution', but so does a single poll vote, or forum comment.

At the time of the 9-month report our highest level of page views by a single participant was 429: at the time of writing it is 1,720. The highest number of contributions by a single participant at the time of the 9-month report was 63 and the new record is 133. To reflect the fact that more activity has taken place on the panel we revised the data ranges for the typology, as per the table below.

Table 21 Updated participation typology ranges (total n=616 registered users at March 2016)

			Activity completion		
			Number of activities completed online		
			0 activities	1 to 9 activities	10 or more activities
Engagement with the online platform	Number of page views	0 page views	**Disengaged**: n=21, 3%	n/a	n/a
		1 to 99 page views	**Lurkers**: n=248, 40%	**Casual users:** n=281, 46%	
		100 or more page views			**Super users**: n= 66, 11%

Figure 15 below gives a graphical representation of the segment sizes for the whole Food Futures panel.

Figure 15 Updated participation typology (total n=616 registered users at March 2016)
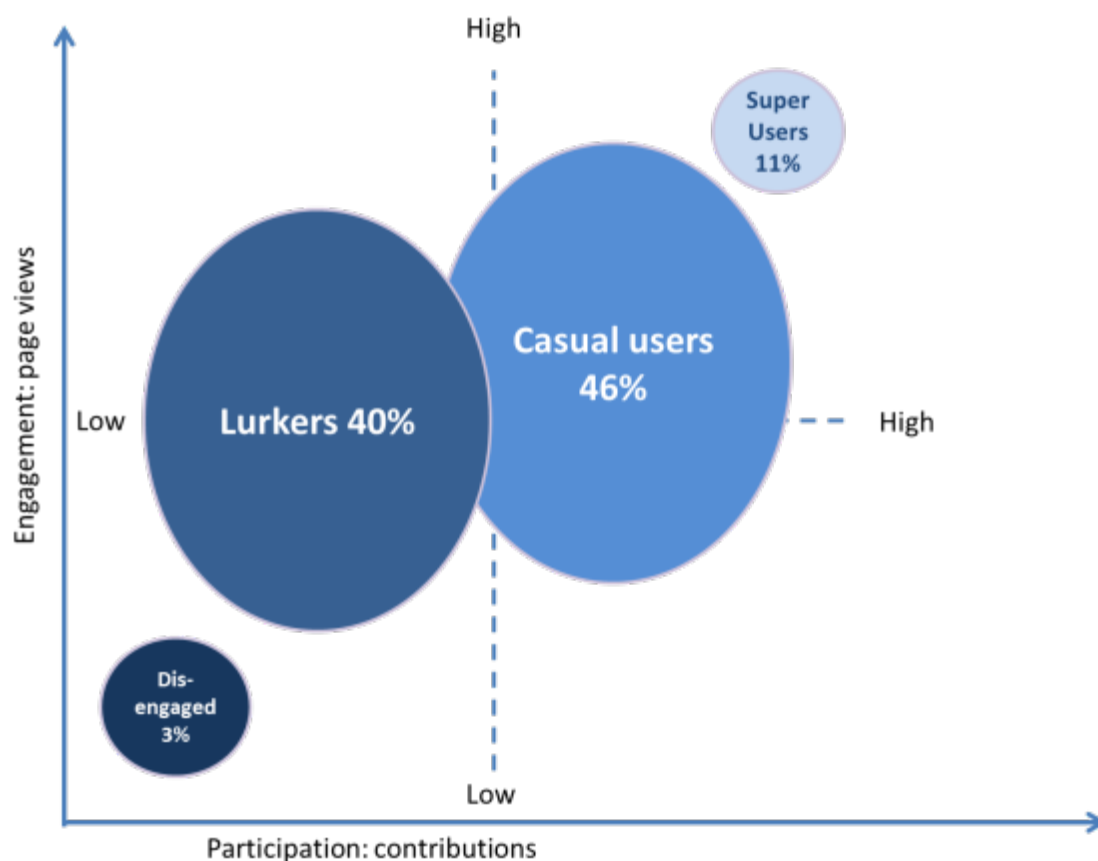
Demographics of typologies

In addition to the analysis of participation by demographics in the 'Achieved panel sample' section above, we analysed the demographic make-up of the typologies. As we might expect, the make-up of the most highly engaged segments match those of the most engaged demographic sections of the panel. Super users are most likely to be in the older age groups, to have higher levels of education, and to be based in Harrogate or London. The same pattern applies to Lurkers and the Disengaged, who are most likely to be in the younger age groups, have lower or no educational qualifications, and to be based in Dundee or Cardiff.

Participation typologies by age

Panel members in the youngest age group (18-25s) are more likely to be Lurkers, followed by participants in the 56-65 age group. Those in the oldest group (66+) are more likely to be Super users. There are few differences in participation type among the groups aged 26-40 and 41-55.

Figure 16 Participation type by age (total n=616 registered users at March 2016)

Participation type by age

Age	Super	Casual	Lurker	Disengaged
66+	11	18	13	3
56-65	9	30	33	4
41-55	23	90	73	6
26-40	20	101	83	4
18-25	3	42	46	4

■ Super ■ Casual ■ Lurker ■ Disengaged
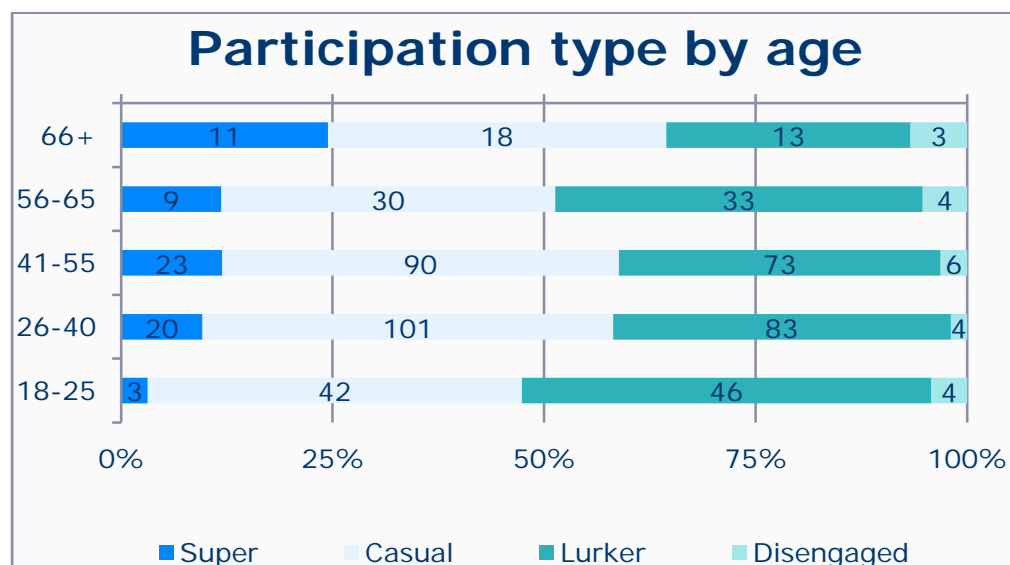
Participation typologies by education

The highest educated groups are more likely to be Super or Casual users, while those with low or no educational qualification are more likely to be Lurkers or Disengaged.

Figure 17 Participation type by education level (total n=616 registered users at March 2016)

Participation type by education level

Education level	Super	Casual	Lurker	Disengaged
BTEC Higher / Level 4+, HND, Degree, Masters,…	30	137	100	3
AS/A Levels, BTEC National / Level 3 or similar	17	52	49	4
GCSEs Grade A*-C, BTEC Level 2	8	50	41	4
GCSEs Grade D-G or similar, BTEC Level 1	1	9	14	1
Other qualifications including apprenticeships	9	26	27	6
None	1	7	17	3

■ Super ■ Casual ■ Lurker ■ Disengaged
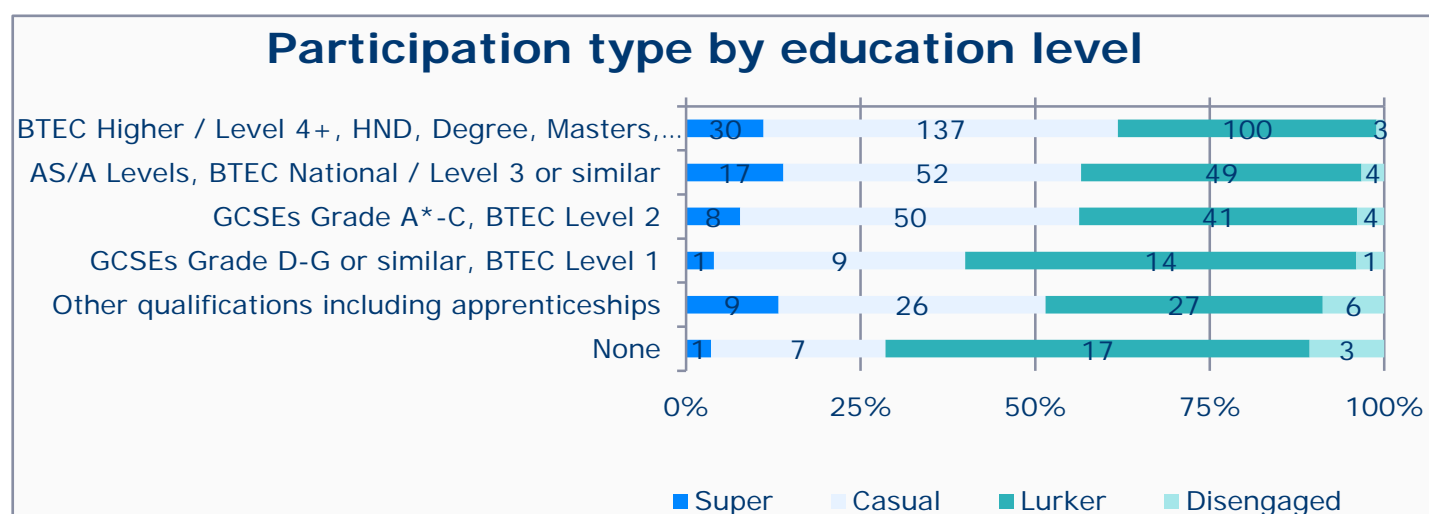
Participation typologies by location

Participants in London and Harrogate are more likely to be Super users, while participants in Dundee are most likely to be Disengaged or Lurkers (participants in Cardiff are also more likely to be Lurkers). This effect is consistent across demographic groups and appears to be a cumulative effect rather than summative.

Figure 18 Participation type by location (total n=616 registered users at March 2016)

Participation type by location

Location	Super	Casual	Lurker	Disengaged
Plymouth	5	49	41	1
London	20	47	43	0
Harrogate	18	52	32	2
Dundee	5	38	48	17
Cardiff	12	46	47	1
Belfast	6	49	37	0

■ Super ■ Casual ■ Lurker ■ Disengaged

Participation types by projects

As well as looking at participation type by demographics, we have looked at them by projects completed since the 9 month learning report. The graph below shows that the Innovation project in particular was skewed towards Super users. This is likely to be a result of the open recruitment progress that did not target specific participant groupings. It also shows that just under one tenth of participants in the Endline survey were Lurkers, suggesting that surveys are an engagement method that can be used to encourage involvement from this participation type. It was less clear from the data currently available whether the subject matter of a particular project also had an impact.
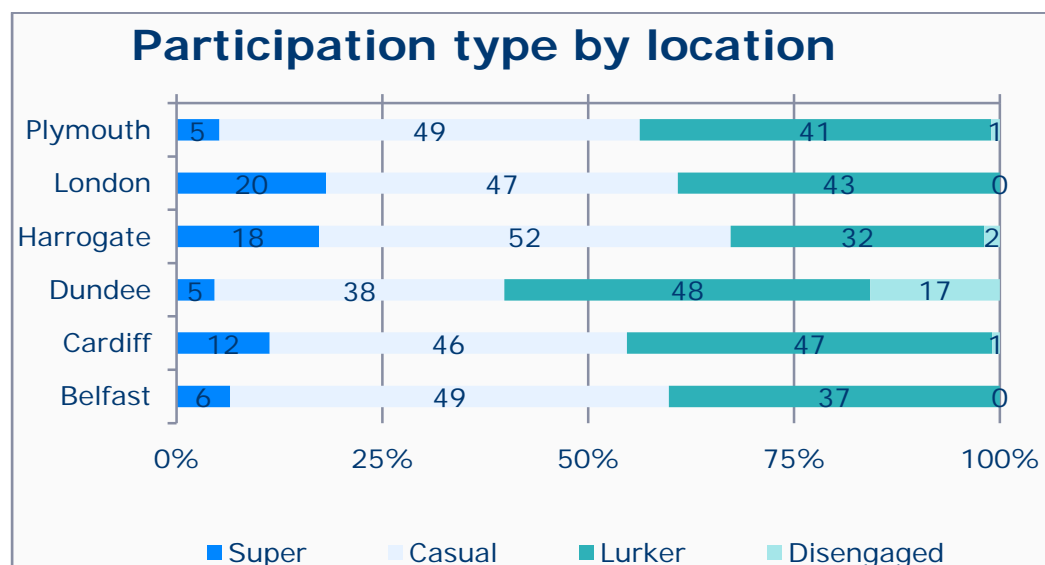
Figure 19 Participation type by project (total n=616 registered users at March 2016)

Participation type by project

Project	Super	Casual	Lurker
Endline survey	54	92	12
SI	40	57	0
Innovation	56	49	0

■ Super ■ Casual ■ Lurker
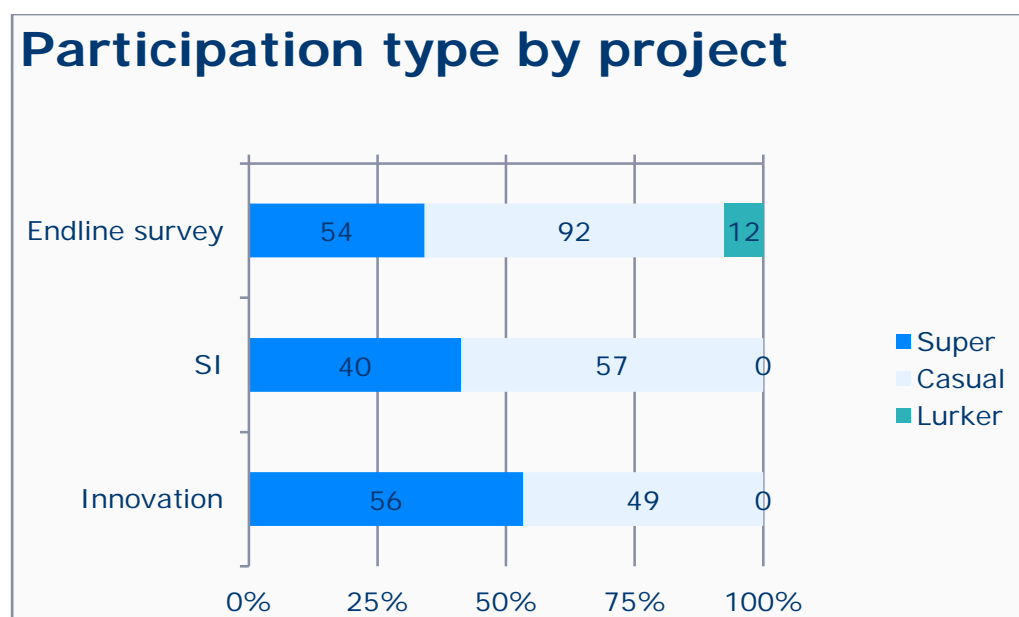
8.6.   Learning applied

During the final three months of the public panel (January to March 2016) we continued to reflect on how the panel was working, and implemented some of the recommendations we made in the 9-month report. These recommendations are presented here, alongside our reflections on how they worked.

Table 22 Learning from implementation in final 3 months of recommendations made in 9 month report

Securing Steering Group and industry involvement	
At 9-months, we recommended:	**In the final three months of the project we found that:**
Involving academic and third sector specialists in the policy specific projects has been easier than industry representatives. Recruiting industry stakeholders earlier in the process and asking the Steering Group and secretariat to assist more actively in approaching industry bodies may help secure greater industry involvement.	Steering Group support (e.g., identification of individuals, personal introductions) has proved very valuable as a means of encouraging and accelerating the process of industry involvement in activities.
Recruiting to ad hoc and project activities	
When recruiting to activities, increase likelihood of participation from less engaged members by inviting them to participate first – and then widen invitation to whole panel	Targeting invitations to less engaged members appears not to impact on their level of participation, which is more influenced by methodology: for example, surveys and face-to-face activities seem more likely to encourage participation.
Increasing participation in online engagement methods	
Continue using visual media (e.g. videos) to introduce and summarise new topics on the online platform. Track panel members' engagement with this content through trackable links in newsletters to provide evidence for how their opinions are being formulated.	Use of video in online and face-to-face activities continues to provide a valuable way of introducing and/or explaining complex topics in a succinct and engaging manner. Panel members' engagement with this content remains relatively high (for example of the 150 participants who clicked on the Bitly link to access the first Food Innovation blog, 80 participants watched the video on the blog).
Make online activities feel more interactive through introducing different types of interaction: interaction with family members, interaction with specialists, interaction with other panel members and interaction with content.	Functions on the CMNTY panel not previously used enabled us to test interaction between panel members and between panel members and experts, including a discussion group (Sustainable Intensification project) and 'like' function (Innovation project). Panellists interacted effectively with each other and with specialists during the discussion group. The 'like' function appears to have been less successful.

When encouraging greater interactivity between panel members in online discussions, investigate the possibility of using indentation on forum to help participants follow a line of argument more clearly through several comments. Make more explicit the expectation that participants should respond to contributions made by other panel members.	No forum discussions have been run since January 2016 so this recommendation has not been tested. Panellists were encouraged to respond to others' comments (e.g., explicit invitation in blog, use of 'social reward' badges in the Challenge activity run as part of the Innovation project). The use of badges did not appear to be effective in encouraging participants to interact with each other through the 'like' function; however a high number of comments were received during the Challenge activity which is likely due to the design of the platform which made it easier to comment on other participant's submissions than in the forums.

Increasing participation among less engaged members

Consider ways to encourage the youngest age group to actively contribute on the online platform – they are currently most likely to 'lurk'.	Means to encourage greater activity from youngest age group (i.e., gamification and interactivity of online Challenge) were not effective. Focusing on this group at the start of a panel and using engagement methods (e.g., surveys) that seem to be preferred by this group may help to address this.
Consider ways to encourage members with lower education levels to view the site (or to come back onto it if they have logged on previously) – they are currently most likely to be disengaged	As with young people's participation, we have not seen any change in participation levels of least educated groups. Again it may be more effective to encourage participation early after recruitment through surveys.
Set clearer expectations for how long activities take online and factor reading time into this – and use more structured questions so that the purpose of each activity is immediately obvious to participants	We made it clearer via the newsletters sent to participants on the launch of a new activity how long the activity was likely to take (including a note of how long materials would take to watch/read as a way of managing expectations). We have been unable to tell from the data available whether this made an impact.

Integrating online and face-to-face engagement methods

Workshop attendance seems to generate increased interest in further participation in the panel, use this as an opportunity to increase online participation by giving small tasks for workshop participants to do online.	We were not able to test this recommendation, as the process design for projects run during the final three months of the panel did not provide the opportunity. Linking content of face-to-face engagement with outputs of online engagement (e.g., development of problems and ideas in Innovation project) did suggest that further thought to the most fruitful approaches to integrating content across different channels would be valuable.

Sustaining user journeys

Most activity occurs within days immediately following the launch date – run online activities over shorter, more intense time periods.	The Challenge activity (Innovation project) ran for a two week period, during which a high volume of responses (800+ submissions and comments) were received suggesting that a large amount of evidence can be collected in shorter time periods. However the short timescales meant that targeted recruitment could not be undertaken and so we ended up with higher participation from Super users.
Communicate with panel members who have completed an activity thanking them for their participation and letting them know what else they can do.	Given short time period between end of live activities and end of the Food Futures panel as a whole, feedback has been rolled into general communications about the panel closure and future opportunities to engage with GFS (via GFS website).
Continue giving the panel updates on findings once an activity has closed so they know their participation has been worthwhile and for them to compare their responses to the rest of the panel	Feedback on the results of the Buying British survey were discussed in a blog post and interaction with this encouraged through a poll, which received 27 responses. Feedback will continue through the panel closure communications and, for those who opt-in to this, ongoing communication from GFS.
Reassure users that it is okay to dip in and out of panel activities – particularly those who have been identified as feeling obliged to participate.	Newsletter introducing the Innovation project provided this reassurance: we have no data on if or how this has impacted on panellists feeling obligated to participate.

Chapter 9:   Recommendations for future panels

This chapter translates the learning captured from the lifetime of the Food Futures public panel into recommendations for future practice: these are likely to be of relevance to policy makers looking to commission this type of engagement and to practitioners using online panels for dialogue in the future.

We made a number of recommendations in the nine-month review of the public panel, which we implemented during the final three months: you can read about these in section 8.6.

Securing Steering Group and industry involvement

1. Increase level of time commitments from Steering Group to help facilitate their help in agreeing topic proposals, developing topics and approaching industry bodies and specialists.

2. Give Steering Group access to any future panel site, allowing them to receive the same communications as participants and thus keep up to date with the Panel activities.

Budget allocations

3. Allocate a significant proportion of any project budget to panel and programme management. While in this project 2% of total budget was allocated to panel management, 1% to project management the actual requirement in terms of staff time was very much higher, and this cost is not currently accounted for.

4. Invest a significant proportion of any budget in the online platform being used to host the panel during the set-up phase and/or increase the proportion of total budget spent the panel software. We recommend prioritising spend on additional functionality that automates routine administrative tasks (such as updating reward points) and increases access to user data.

Reducing the challenges of panel set-up and recruitment

5. If selecting particular geogrpahic locations to recruit in, invest more time in ascertaining recruiter quality and availability in each location and use this intelligence when selecting recruitment locations.

6. When recruiting to any future panel, frame the topic of global food security in a more direct way, to enable potential participants to see how it is of relevance to the UK and to their lives.

7. When recruiting to the panel, provide greater clarity around the mix of panel activities and the full spectrum of engagement methods (i.e. be clear that it is not just surveys).

8. Think carefully about how design choices will affect the operation of the panel, for example will data policies restrict access, are decisions about upfront costs going to result in increased admin? The length of the public panel programme means impacts are long lasting.

Recruiting to ad-hoc and project activities

9. Panel members interviewed suggest that they were most likely to have been involved with similar projects via market research and are most familiar with surveys as engagement methods – they are often less familiar with other engagement methods and may find this off-putting. We recommend using a mix of more and less familiar methods, for example, use 'warm up' exercises for members who have never taken part in a forum discussion before.

10. Recruit to policy specific activities using quotas based on a segmentation of participant types and target invitations to these different segments to appeal to their different motivations/barriers to participation.

Planning and launching new topics

11. Reduce the length of time taken between proposal of policy-specific topics and implementation in a live project for panel members to engage with, by agreeing topic with the Steering Group first, and then handing over to the contractor and topic lead to develop a plan in an iterative way.

12. Maintain panel engagement between topic-based projects. These 'down' times could be used more productively by developing a set of research questions with the Steering Group that can be addressed on an ad-hoc basis as smaller engagement opportunities. Allocate a specific portion of the budget to this, which would be justified by the focus on topics of interest to the Steering Group.

Increasing participation in online engagement methods

13. Make greater use of real time engagement methods online e.g. online chats that have bounded start/finish times.

14. Consider ways of ensuring online interaction with specialists feels more immediate – members can forget what questions they have asked and why they asked in a relatively short period of time.

15. Consider shortening the duration of forum threads to make them feel more dynamic and appealing to members who do not want to get 'sucked' into lengthy discussions.

Increasing participation among less engaged members

16. Provide a mix of engagement methods that appeal to different participants, using segmentation to identify groups of participants who may be particularly receptive to some methods (e.g. time bound online chats for the more casually involved members).

Fostering an online community

17. Foster a greater sense of community among panel members by enabling members to write a short bio about themselves and view other people's profile pages.

18. Encourage a greater sense of community online by running an activity that encourages members to personalise their profile pictures.

19. Make greater use of the 'general' forum as a space for members to engage with each other informally.

Sustaining user journeys

20. When new members join the Panel, offer them guided 'walk throughs' of the online platform by phone to help increase conversion rates (i.e. registrations on the site) and reduce the risk of new members becoming quickly disengaged because they cannot work out how to navigate the site.

21. Reduce the risk of disengagement by reducing lag between new registrations to the panel and launch of activities - try to encourage new members to complete an activity within two/three weeks after they have registered on the platform.

22. Encourage new members to undertake small activities that make them feel more connected/invested in the panel (e.g. personalising their profile picture or leaving a comment in the general topics forum).

23. Pay greater consideration to incentive management and consider using codes as rewards that can be redeemed in online shops, not only to reduce administrative burden but also to make rewards feel more instantaneous for members. Consider incentivisation strategies that make greater use of social rewards to reward most active members.

24. Monitor the engagement and activity levels of new members and target communications at those at risk of becoming disengaged.

A. Methodology

This learning report covers lifetime of the panel, although the report was compiled in two parts, reflecting data collected at different points in the public panel programme. This methodology applies across the whole report, and all stages of the public panel.

A number of evidence sources have fed into this report:

☐ **Interviews with Panel members**: 30 minute telephone interviews were conducted with 13 pre-selected members. Panel members were selected to take part in interviews on the basis of their engagement and activity levels to ensure a spread of perspectives were included. Interviews covered motivations to join the Panel, barriers and facilitators to participation, experience of different activities and suggestions for improvements.

The following interviews were achieved:

   o   2 x interviews with disengaged Panel members who have never viewed the platform or taken part in an activity

   o   2 x interviews with Panel members who have viewed the platform at least once but never taken part in an activity

   o   4 x interviews with Panel members who have lower levels of engagement with the platform (have under 50 page views) and who have taken part in at least one activity

   o   5 x interviews with Panel members who have higher levels of engagement with the platform (50 or more page views) and who have taken part in at least one activity

Table 23 Interview demographics

Gender	Female	8
	Male	5
Age	18 – 25	2
	26 – 40	3
	41 – 55	4
	56 – 65	2
	66+	2
Ethnicity	White British	11
	BME	2

Education	Degree or higher	5
	AS/A-levels	4
	GCSEs A-C grade	2
	GCSEs D-G grade	1
	Other	1
	None	0
Location	London	4
	Plymouth	1
	Harrogate	5
	Cardiff	1
	Belfast	2
	Dundee	0

In addition to the Panel interviews, this learning report makes use of statistical data derived from the following sources:

- **User activity data exported from the online platform**: statistical data on user activity (page views, time spent online and completion of activities). Data was exported on the 8th December.

- **Google Analytics data**: statistical data on unique site sessions and page views of the different platform webpages

The evidence from Panel interviews and user activity data is supplemented with qualitative insight from project team, particularly in terms of our experiences and learning from delivering the policy-specific projects. This learning report does not include the perspective of the Steering Group (this perspective is covered in the external evaluator report).

B.   Achieved panel sample

Demographic measures – achieved sample vs. quota

Shaded boxes show where the sample deviates from the quota (because the achieved sample of 658 is higher than the original quota of 600, deviation has been calculated through comparison to quota % split).

(total n=658 registered users at December 2016)

Measure/question		Quota (+/- 10)	Quota Split	Sample	Notes
Gender	Male	300	50%	289	Gender quota was set at +/- 5% – this was not met. Tendency for women to take part mirrors our experience in other dialogue projects.
	Female	300	50%	369	
Age	18-25	100	17%	106	
	26-40	150	25%	219	These groups were over-recruited as a consequence of the difficulty recruiting the older age groups.
	41-55	150	25%	205	
	56-65	100	17%	80	As above, we found it extremely

Measure/question		Quota (+/- 10)	Quota Split	Sample	Notes
	66+	100	17%	48	difficult to recruit these age groups due to the number of potential participants excluded by the need to have internet access at home. Latest ONS figures show 84% of households have internet access, but only 41% of households with a single adult aged 65+ have access, and 80% households with at least 1 adult over 65. While the figures indicate that this criterion was likely to be an obstacle, recruiters also report that lack of confidence with digital technology amongst these age groups is likely to have exacerbated the difficulty of recruiting participants who met the requirement.
Social grade	A/Bs	130	22%	149	
	C1	185	31%	228	
	C2	130	22%	97	
	DE	155	26%	95	
Education level	No qualifications	60	10%	30	We have found it particularly challenging to recruit participants

Measure/question		Quota (+/- 10)	Quota Split	Sample	Notes
	Other qualifications e.g. apprenticeship	40	7%	72	with no qualifications; however our experience does suggest that a proportion of participants will self-report as holding 'other qualifications' where it is an option, rather than 'no qualifications'.
	Level 1 qualifications (e.g. GCSEs Grade D-G)	75	13%	34	Feedback from recruiters is that the topic matter was considered of less interest to participants at these quota levels, and that the uncertain incentive level and long term commitment meant that where incentivisation might typically compensate for this, it was less effective in this case.
	Level 2 qualifications (e.g. GCSEs Grade A*-D, BTEC First/General Diploma)	100	17%	112	
	Level 3 qualifications (e.g. AS/A levels, BTEC National)	105	18%	133	The over-recruitment in these categories reflects the converse of the lower education level categories. Higher level of interest and less reliance on incentivisation

Measure/question		Quota (+/- 10)	Quota Split	Sample	Notes
	Level 4 qualifications and above (Degree and above, BTEC Higher level)	220	37%	277	to encourage participation made these groups easier to recruit.
Family status	Married/cohabiting (no dependent children)	205		229	
	Married/co-habiting (with dependent children)	125		177	Anecdotal evidence from recruiters suggests that those with children were more likely to be concerned with food from health and affordability perspective, and so easier to engage on the topic.
	Single/ Divorced/ Widowed (no dependent children)	225		193	
	Single/ Divorced/ Widowed (with dependent children)	45		59	
Ethnicity	Asian/Asian British / Asian Scottish	35		26	
	White	528		588	

Measure/question		Quota (+/- 10)	Quota Split	Sample	Notes
	Mixed/ multiple ethnic group	0		18	
	Other ethnic group (inc. Arab)	10.5		8	
	Black/African /Caribbean/ Black British	9.5		17	
	Prefer not to say	-		1	

Behavioural measures – achieved sample vs. quota

A number of behavioural measures around social media usage, diet and food consumption/shopping behaviours were also included in the sample design. As discussed previously these behaviours were included in the sample design to help mitigate the risk of low participation.

Measure/question	Quota	Sample	Notes
When was the last time you posted on social media? a) In the last week; b) In the last month; c) In the last year; d) I have never posted on social media.	30% of sample answer a or b	83% answered a or b	This measure is likely to be higher as a result of the exclusion of anyone without internet access at home.
Are you currently employed in any food-related industry?	<20% of sample answer yes	7% of sample answered yes	

Are you vegetarian?	<10% of sample answer yes	6% of sample answered yes	Of 38 vegetarians recruited 84% are women (relative to 56% across the panel as a whole), and 18% identify as Asian or other ethnic group, compared to 6% of the panel as a whole.
I often read food labels to: a) Find out more about ingredients b) Understand the calories c) Know whether the food came from d) All of the above I have watched a programme about food in the last month: Yes/No I have cooked a meal from raw ingredients in the last week: Yes/No	>50% of sample answer yes to at least one of these	99% of sample answered yes to at least one of these	

C.   References

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