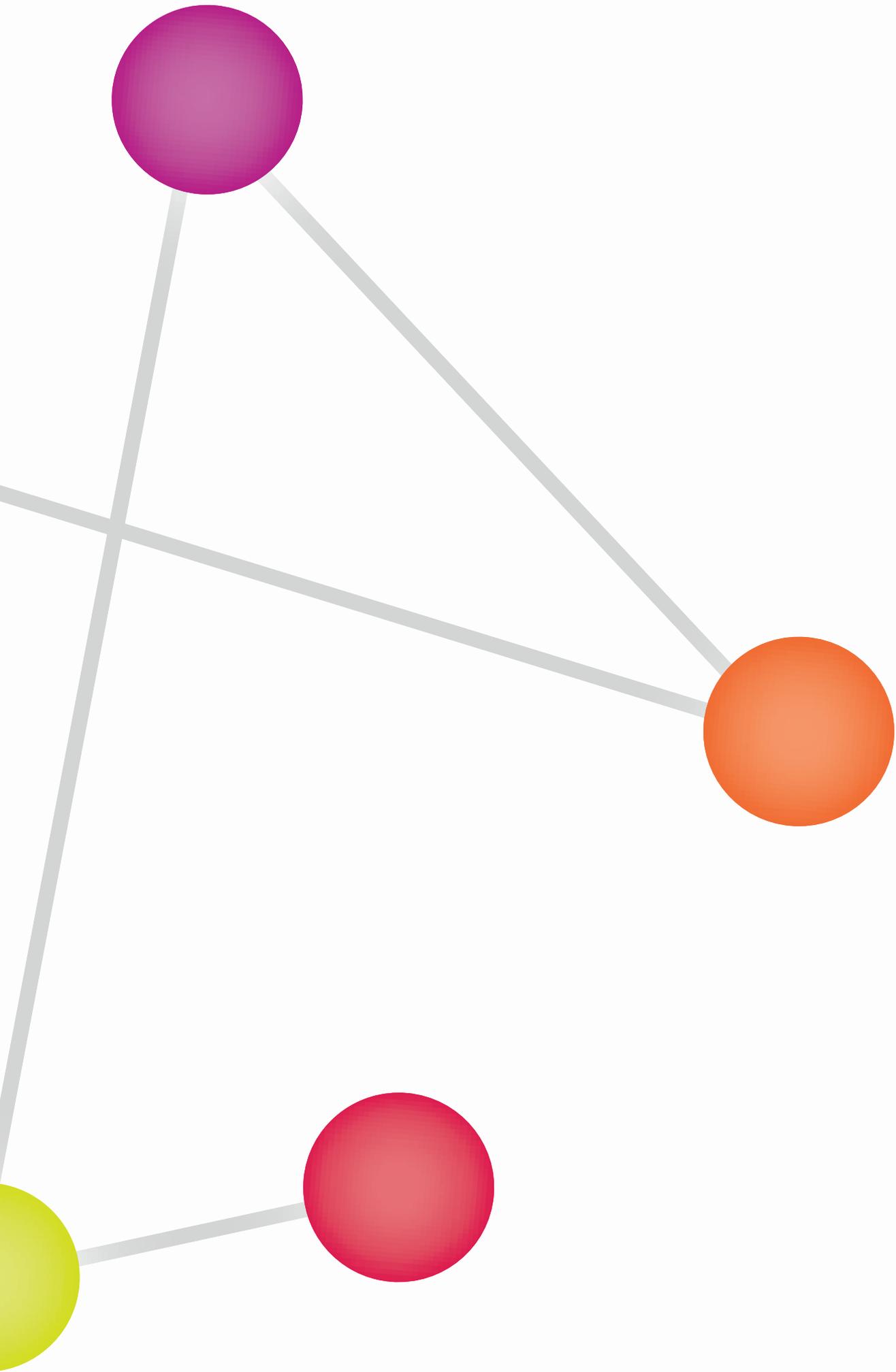


NEON Programme

2016–17



What is NEON?

The National Education Opportunities Network (NEON) was founded in early 2012 as the professional organisation to support those involved in widening access to higher education (HE) and social mobility. At the heart of NEON is a cross-sector approach bringing together HE institutions (HEIs), schools, colleges, the voluntary sector, professional bodies and employers.

NEON is hosted by London Higher, the representative organisation for universities in London and is an independent non-state funded organisation. NEON grew from the need for a strong, coherent community of professionals that could support learners from under-represented backgrounds to enter HE. NEON is shaped and led by its members.

Objectives

- To increase the professionalisation of widening access work through the development and accreditation of practice.
- To be a research and advocacy resource for those working in access at the local, regional and national level.
- To develop and enhance practice and quality in widening access work.
- To offer input and support to policy-makers and government from the widening access community.

Aim

- To empower and enable those with a commitment to widening access to HE to affect change in their institutions and communities.

Vision

- Access to and success in HE should not be related to social background but based on ability and willingness to participate.

Work with us

NEON is committed to working in partnership with other organisations who share its values. Most of what NEON does is forged in collaboration with like-minded partners. If you would like to work with NEON please email us: NEON@londonhigher.ac.uk



@NEONHE



National Education Opportunities Network

educationopportunities.co.uk

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In just five short years NEON has become the major voice for widening access professionals in England. We are rightly proud of the steps the organisation has taken, particularly bearing in mind that NEON is an independent, self-sustaining membership network which does not benefit from any state support. Our success is due to the continued support of our members and the hard work of the NEON Executive Committee. 2015-16 was another exciting year for NEON.

Dr Graeme Atherton
Director, NEON

Status Report

Outcomes 2015–16

- Over 80 HEIs, voluntary organisations and individuals have joined NEON from a range of sectors.
- There were over 20 NEON events in 2015-16 across the country covering a range of topics and areas.
- Over 700 people attended NEON events in 2015-16.
- Over 170 people attended our fourth NEON Summer Symposium '*Rethinking Widening Access - How do we improve outcomes across the student life-cycle?*' at the University of Leicester.
- We held our third annual NEON Awards ceremony at the Palace of Westminster.
- We held 9 NEON Access Academy events, offering training in evaluating outreach work, working with parents, postgraduate access, IAG, using data and NCO sustainability.
- NEON held a special one-day NEON Summit on young white males from disadvantaged backgrounds, attracting over 70 delegates.

Goals for 2016–17

- NEON will lead in research and advocacy on access to HE nationally, influencing government policy.
- NEON will enhance the professionalisation of widening access work by offering at least 9 different activities through our Access Academy Training programme, delivered in partnership with industry experts.
- In 2017, NEON will host its fourth annual NEON Awards and its fifth annual Summer Symposium.
- NEON will host 5 special one-day NEON Summits to supplement its Access Academy Training programme with larger groups of practitioners.

Calendar of Events

November 2016

- 2** NEON Summit – Improving student finance IAG
- 15** Access Academy Training – Supporting school attainment
- 7/11** Access and Outreach for Disabled Learners (Northern/Southern) Working Group
- 25** NEON Summit – Supporting mature learners

December

- 9** Access Academy Training – How to widen access to postgraduate study

January 2017

- 19** Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 1: Framing the question and setting the strategy
- 24** Primary Working Group
- 26** Access Academy Training – Key skills for widening access: Theory

February

- 8** Establishing Evidence and Measuring Impact Working Group
- 9** Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 2: Collecting the data
- 15/17** Access and Outreach for Disabled Learners (Northern/Southern) Working Group
- tbc** Access Academy Training – Working with student ambassadors

March

- 1** Against All Odds: How NCOPs can support their schools to improve the number of pupils wanting to apply to HE
- tbc** NEON Summit – Improving outcomes for BME learners
- 21** Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 3: Analysing the data

April

- 20** Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 4: Dissemination and impact
- 27** Access Academy Training – Key skills for widening access: Practice

May

- tbc** NEON Awards
- 16** NEON Summit – Widening access for disabled students
- 18** Establishing Evidence and Measuring Impact Working Group

June

- 14/16** Access and Outreach for Disabled Learners (Northern/Southern) Working Group
- 8-9** NEON Summer Symposium: Widening Access in Higher Education – Are we there yet?

July

- 24** Establishing Evidence and Measuring Impact Working Group
- tbc** NEON Summit – Primary school engagement

Keep up to date

Visit the NEON website for the up-to-date calendar of events at educationopportunities.co.uk or contact Michael Naughton on Michael.Naughton@londonhigher.ac.uk

Executive Committee

NEON is driven forward by the commitment of its executive committee. The committee includes those from HE, the voluntary sector and the school/college sectors. It was elected for its first two-year term in 2013. The committee has an advisory function supporting the executive team based at London Higher in delivering the work of NEON.

The NEON Executive Committee convenes several times throughout the year:

Steve Kendall

Chair of the Executive Committee

Julie Askew

Outreach and Widening Participation Manager
University of Sheffield

Chris Bayes

Collaborative Network Manager
Merseyside NCO

David E. Berry

Partnership Co-ordinator
Higher Education Progression Partnership

Dave Brockington

Strategic Advisor
ASDAN

Emma Church

Widening Participation Research
& Evaluation Co-ordinator
East Midlands Widening Participation Research
and Evaluation Partnership

Zoe Cox

Director of Operations
IntoUniversity

Sally Cushing

Head of UK Recruitment and Widening
Participation
Oxford Brookes University

Felicity Dunworth

Partnership Director
Kent & Medway Progression Federation

Sarah Hill

Senior Education Outreach Officer
University of Leeds

Inder Hunjan

Head of Access & Widening Participation
Leeds Beckett University

Nazira Karodia

Professor of Science Education
University of Wolverhampton

Stephanie Lee

Head of Widening Participation & Outreach
University of Manchester

Suzanne Maskrey

Deputy Chief Executive
Brightside

Carole Wilkinson

Joint Head of Widening Participation
University of Sussex

Mark O'Brien

Senior Research Fellow
University of Liverpool

Peter Riley

Head of Widening Participation and Student
Financial Support
Manchester Metropolitan University

Jacqueline Stevenson

Head of Research
Sheffield Institute of Education

More information, email: Michael.Naughton@londonhigher.ac.uk

NEON Awards 2017

May 2017, Palace of Westminster

The NEON Awards are a key part of the work of the organisation. The transformative power that HE can have on the lives of learners is best captured by individual stories and it is these the NEON Awards aim to share. There are also awards to recognise the work of organisations and individuals in the professional widening access community.

In May 2016, 70 individuals from across the sector gathered at The Palace of Westminster to celebrate outstanding students, practitioners, schools/colleges, institutions and access initiatives.

Gordon Marsden MP (Shadow Minister for Higher Education, Further Education & Skills) presented the NEON Awards to dedicated practitioners and talented students, reminding us that the access community is populated by some truly outstanding individuals. The 2017 NEON Awards will celebrate and recognise both the breadth and quality of access work amongst its members. We hope to see you there as well.

The categories for this year's NEON Awards are:

- NEON Students of the Year
- NEON Widening Access Initiative (Outreach)
- NEON Widening Access Initiative (Retention and Success)
- NEON Outstanding School or College
- NEON Outstanding Contribution to Widening Access Work
- NEON Higher Education Institution of the Year



NEON Research Projects

NEON will build on its position as the premier organisation in the UK producing thought leading research on access to HE in 2016-17. Joining NEON gives organisations the opportunity to be part of this process of building the access to HE knowledge base.

In 2016-17 we will produce:

Does Cost Matter 3?

Our annual survey developed with our members looking at how the cost of HE shapes the decision making of prospective students. We will also continue to work with UCU, Hefce, OFFA, the Student Loans Company and the Department for Education to take forward the recommendations from last year's report.

Access to Higher Education: State of the Nation

The first of a new series of annual reports introducing the NEON National Access Scorecard, which brings together all the data produced each year on access to HE in one place.

Widening Access Throughout the Student Lifecycle

In 2017 we will produce our first book of selected papers from the 2016 NEON Summer Symposium. It will include contributions from 13 of our member organisations.

Against All Odds: How schools widen access to HE

This report based on our research with over 2000 pupils and teachers will outline the work that schools are undertaking to widen access to HE and the challenges faced in engaging schools in this agenda.

Surveying our members

We will continue to utilise our strong lead asset in taking our knowledge of access to HE work forward in 2017, which is our members, with member consultations on:

Supporting Access to HE for Mature and Part-Time Learners

What is the HE sector working on to support the success of mature and part-time learners?

About a Boy 2

What progress are we making widening access for white disadvantaged males?

From Entry to Employment

How are members offering joined-up support for widening access learners across the student lifecycle?

Access Academy Training

At the centre of professionalising widening access work is ensuring that, as well as opportunities to exchange knowledge via events and discussion, there are more focussed training events on offer. This has resulted in a comprehensive training programme that we believe accurately reflects the needs of our members.

Supporting school attainment

Facilitated by Jan Parnell (Senior Education Consultant & Former Director Post 16, Phoenix High School, London)

How to widen access to postgraduate study

Facilitated by Dr Paul Wakeling (University of York)

Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 1: Framing the question and setting the strategy

Facilitated by Professor Jacqueline Stevenson (Sheffield Institute of Education)

Key skills for widening access (part I) – Theory

Facilitated by Martin Webster (NEON) and Steve Kendall (Educationalist & Former Associate Dean of Partnerships and Director of Widening Participation, University of Bedfordshire)

Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 2: Collecting the data

Facilitated by Professor Jacqueline Stevenson (Sheffield Institute of Education)

Working with student ambassadors

Facilitated by NEON

Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 3: Analysing the data

Facilitated by Professor Jacqueline Stevenson (Sheffield Institute of Education)

Evaluating Outreach Work – Session 4: Dissemination and impact

Facilitated by Dr Colin McCaig (Sheffield Institute of Education)

Key skills for widening access (part II) – Practice

Facilitated by Martin Webster (NEON) and Steve Kendall (Educationalist & Former Associate Dean of Partnerships and Director of Widening Participation, University of Bedfordshire)

More information, visit: educationopportunities.co.uk

NEON Summer Symposium

NEON's annual Summer Symposium has become one of the major events in the widening participation calendar. The 2016 Summer Symposium attracted over 170 delegates and keynote speakers from politics and HE.

Widening Access in Higher Education – Are we there yet?

8th & 9th June 2017

Widening access to HE has been an imperative for policymakers and HE providers since the late 1990s. As we approach twenty years of concerted efforts to widen access to HE in England, the 2017 NEON Summer Symposium will look at what progress means and whether it is being made? What have we learnt in the last two decades and crucially, what should the goals for the next decade and beyond look like in the area of access and equity in HE participation?

In 2017 we are holding our fifth NEON Summer Symposium which will highlight both current research and practice in the world of widening access. This is the chance for members to come together and reflect on the future direction of access work by sharing best practice and

discussing the challenges that face us. A variety of sessions will be on offer across the two day period.

The aim of the NEON Summer Symposium is to be an interactive space where attendees can work together to improve their own practice and also shape the direction of NEON over the next year.

In assembling the programme for the NEON Summer Symposium, we endeavour to advance the traditional conference format and offer a more dynamic experience for those who attend. We want everyone to be active participants in the NEON Summer Symposium.

More information

If you would like to find out more about the NEON Summer Symposium or if you are interested in getting involved with the event, please contact Martin Webster on Martin.Webster@londonhigher.ac.uk



NEON Summits

NEON Summits are special one day events attended by over 50 delegates from the widening access community. NEON Summits are designed to survey examples of best practice case studies and research while giving delegates the opportunity to learn from their colleagues.

We have five NEON Summits currently planned for the 2016-17 academic year. Each NEON Summit benefits from several speakers who are prominent in the subject area in addition to an engaging student panel for our delegates to interact with.

Improving Student Finance IAG (2 November 2016)

NEON is partnering with UCU to offer a one day NEON Summit focusing on improving student finance IAG. Delegates will benefit from hearing from a range of experts, engaging in interactive workshops and listening to a student panel discussion.

Widening Access for Mature Learners (25 November 2016)

This NEON Summit will examine how to widen access for mature learners. We will be joined by experts in the field, explore specific case studies, hear from a panel of mature students, look at the results from new NEON research and launch a new NEON Working Group focusing specifically on mature learners.

Improving Outcomes for BME Students (tbc March 2017)

This NEON Summit will explore best practice in regards to improving outcomes for BME students. The day will be divided into a morning session examining the current landscape of BME students in HE, followed by an afternoon session with case studies/best practice and a student panel.

Widening Participation and Support for Disabled Learners (16 May 2017)

This NEON Summit will look at the various approaches to outreach and supporting disabled learners. We will be joined by several practitioners who work with disabled learners and we will discuss successful initiatives in their field. We will finish the day with a panel discussion with disabled students.

Primary School Engagement (TBC July 2017)

This NEON Summit will offer a variety of speakers and workshops in response to the renewed focus on outreach for primary aged children.

NEON Resource Room

NEON continually looks to improve the way it supports its members. We are improving the support we offer through the password-protected, online NEON 'Resource Room'.

The NEON Resource Room, contains a suite of widening access materials including presentations from the NEON Summer Symposium and examples of best practice. Your NEON membership gives you exclusive access to a wealth of widening access materials.

Examples of Best Practice

Both the NEON Awards and our Summer Symposiums have allowed us to develop a bank of best practice in widening access. The Resource Room allows you to access these projects and discover how other members are developing their work.

Presentations

The Resource Room includes keynote PowerPoint presentations from NEON's Summer Symposium and various other NEON events.

Working Group Materials

Our working groups cover a number of key areas and meet regularly. They look to develop materials that can be used by members across the NEON community. The Resource Room provides a central hub for these materials.

More information

For information or if you would like to upload your work for publication, please contact Michael Naughton michael.naughton@londonhigher.ac.uk



NEON Working Groups

NEON Working Groups are led by members and focus on bringing individuals or organisations together to establish and take forward an agenda in different areas of access practice.

These groups share best practice and shape the national agenda across the widening access landscape. NEON Working Groups differ from Access Academy Training events in that NEON Working Groups are more often discussion-based seminars.

Attendance at NEON Working Groups is FREE to all NEON members.

Primary Working Group

This NEON Working Group promotes the importance of working with primary age children and schools as part of the widening access agenda and provides a network for practitioners to meet and discuss issues of common concern, share best practice, develop joint initiatives and partnerships.

Establishing Evidence and Measuring Impact

An on-going forum focusing on best practice in regards to the evaluation of widening access activities.

Mentoring to Widen Access

Establishes how mentoring can most effectively be used to widen access, what are the pitfalls and top-tips for running mentoring projects, and how to use student ambassadors to best effect.

Access and Outreach for Disabled Learners

This group brings together practitioners from outreach teams as well as those from student support to discuss their current practice and experiences of supporting disabled learners into and through HE.

Widening Access for Mature Learners (New in 2016-17)

This NEON Working Group is a new addition for NEON. It will explore how we can both attract more mature learners and how we can support them through their learning journey.

The NEON Further Programme Group (New in 2016-17)

This NEON Working Group will allow FE colleagues to meet regularly and share best practice as well as discuss the challenges and opportunities that FE colleges face in making their key contribution to the widening access agenda.

Join NEON

As a member you will receive:

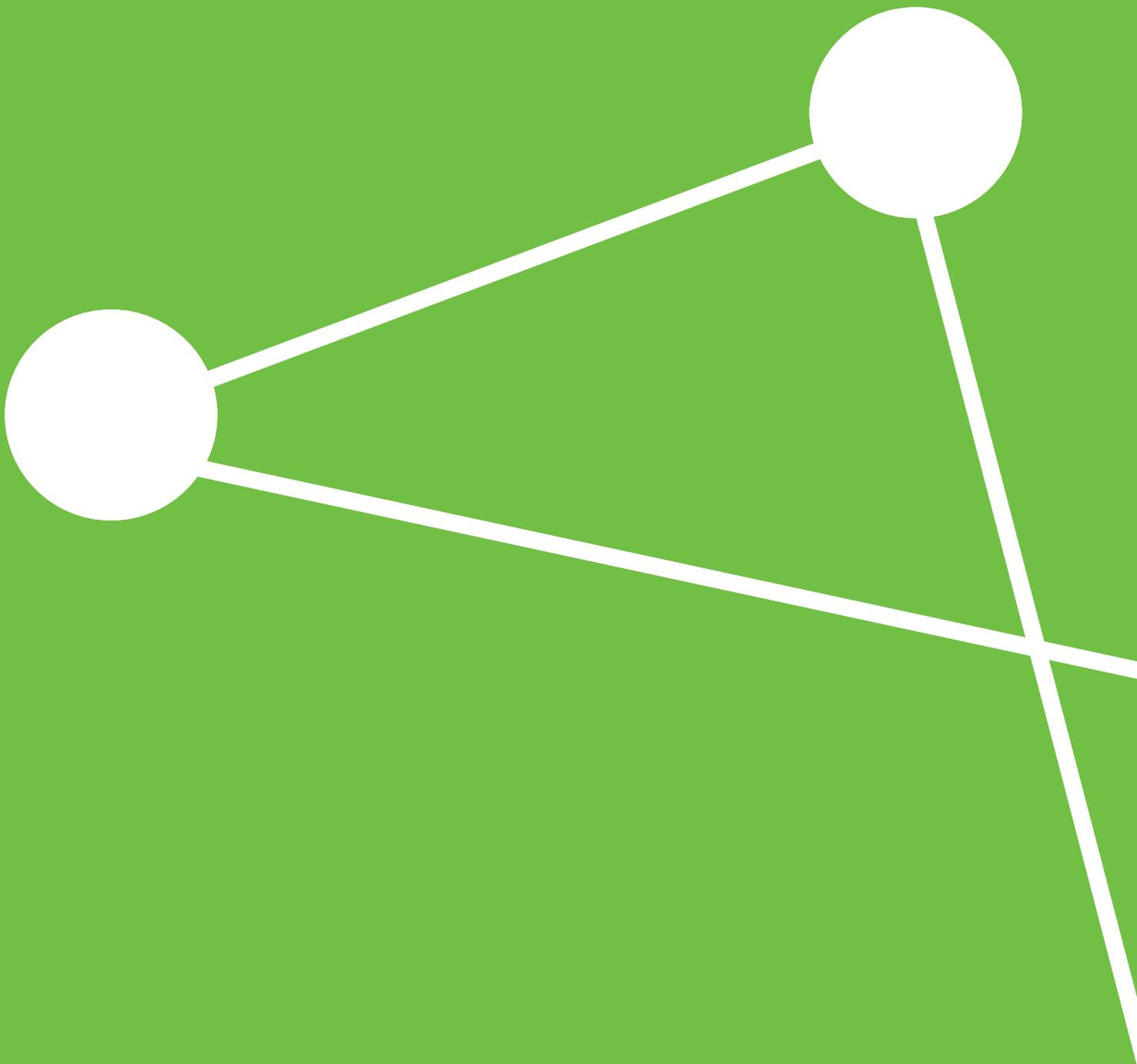
- Free attendance at NEON Working Groups
- The ability to add as many members of your team as you want to your institutional membership at no additional charge
- 25% off all NEON events including Access Academy Training sessions
- Exclusive invitation to the 2017 NEON Awards
- Access to NEON's online Resource Room
- Discounted rates at NEON affiliated events
- Receive weekly updates on the widening access landscape via NEON News

Choose your annual membership type

Membership	2017 Cost
Higher education institution	£490
Higher education institution – Premium Membership 12 month membership plus 3 NEON events credits (worth £149 each).	£800
Further education college	£390
School / sixth form college	Free
Registered charity / voluntary sector organisation / local authority	£330
Students' unions	Free
Private sector organisation	£660

To join NEON, visit educationopportunities.co.uk





Keep updated

This brochure outlines the NEON programme for the 2016-17 academic year. However, since NEON is constantly growing and offering a greater variety of events, training opportunities, practitioner resources and networks, please continue to check our website for regular updates regarding widening participation, access, outreach and evaluation work.

educationopportunities.co.uk

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