



*Welcome to the Interactive Course on*

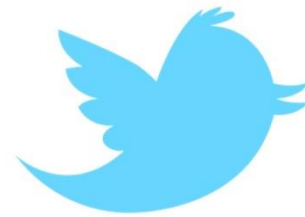
# **Securing EU Funding by Communicating and Demonstrating Societal Impact**

**22-24 January 2025**

**AESIS**

NETWORK FOR  
ADVANCING & EVALUATING THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF SCIENCE

# DAY 1



#EUF25  
@AESISNET

## OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

The 2.5-day international course on:

Access to EU research funding  
by stimulating and demonstrating  
societal impact

AESIS

NETWORK FOR  
ADVANCING & EVALUATING THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF SCIENCE

In collaboration with



### Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> of January

Introductions by AESIS and LINO – **Anika Duut van Goor and Tadas Tumėnas**

Introduction to Societal Impact – **Anika Duut van Goor**

Maximizing Impact in EU Programs – **Andrea di Anselmo**

Dissemination and Exploitation – **Andrea di Anselmo**

*Introduction to the Course Assignment*

### Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> of January

Beyond Academia: Maximizing Societal Impact – **Rebecca Thompson**

Demonstrating Impact – **Rebecca Thompson**

Collaboration and Communication – **Ritchie Head**

Visit to the European Parliament & Course Dinner

### Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> of January

Grant Writing - **Ritchie Head**

Participant Presentations

# Tadas Tumėnas

*Head of the Lithuanian RDI Liaison office (LINO)*

# Anika Duut van Goor

*Director of AESIS, Netherlands*

# OVERVIEW OF DAY 1 PROGRAMME

The 2.5-day international course on:

Access to EU research funding  
by stimulating and demonstrating  
societal impact

AESIS

THE NETWORK FOR  
ADVANCING & ENGAGING THE SOCIETAL IMPACT OF SCIENCE

In collaboration with



Introductions

Introduction to Societal Impact – **Anika Duut van Goor**

Maximizing Impact in EU Programs – **Andrea di Anselmo**

Dissemination and Exploitation – **Andrea di Anselmo**

Introduction to the Course Assignment

# Getting to know each other...

- Where do you sit in the ecosystem of research activity?
- Why are you here and what do you wish to take away?

## OVERVIEW OF AESIS

The AESIS network was founded in 2015 with the aim of creating an international, open community for various types of professionals working on stimulating and demonstrating the impact of science on economy, culture and well-being.

Demonstrating and Stimulating  
Impact of Science on Society

Sharing expertise and best-practices  
internationally

Finding common ground between  
stakeholders and catalyse change



## The international organisation for Advancing and Evaluating Societal Impact of Science

*Founded in 2015 at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Impact of Science conference, Amsterdam*

### ➤ Goals:

- Knowledge exchange
- Capacity Building
- Impact support

### ➤ Open community of experts and stakeholders

- cross-disciplinary (expertise from government, business and academia)
- cross-cultural (geographically)



# THE TEAM

**Anika Duut van Goor** – Director

**Lucila Del Buono** – Lead Project Manager

**Paul Hebler** – Office & Conference Manager

**Andrea Guidi** – Project Manager

**Alisdair Bousquet** – Project Manager

➤ Facilitating knowledge exchange, capacity building and harmonisation through:

### Meetings

Conferences  
Seminars  
Courses

### Sharing news

Webinars  
Newsletter  
Online Platform

### Advice

Inhouse training  
Data-analysis  
Consultancy

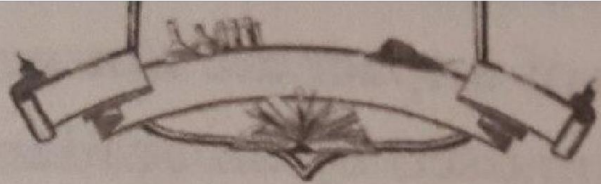
# Break

*We will be back at 11.15*

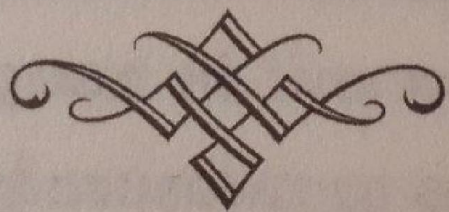
## Demystifying Societal Impact



- 1) What is societal impact?
- 2) Why should you pursue it?
- 3) Why is it difficult?
- 4) Stakeholders throughout the pathways
- 5) Grimpact and sphere of control
- 6) Monitoring success



# IMPACT & OUTREACH



**Impact in academia is like sex:** everyone is talking about it, but few are having it. Or at least not as regularly and as intensely as they'd like. We all want more of it, and many of us are obsessively measuring and analysing it.\*

Demystifying Societal Impact - part 1

What ~~is~~ Societal Impact?

can be

isn't

## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 1

# Societal Impact isn't



**impact that stays within  
academia**

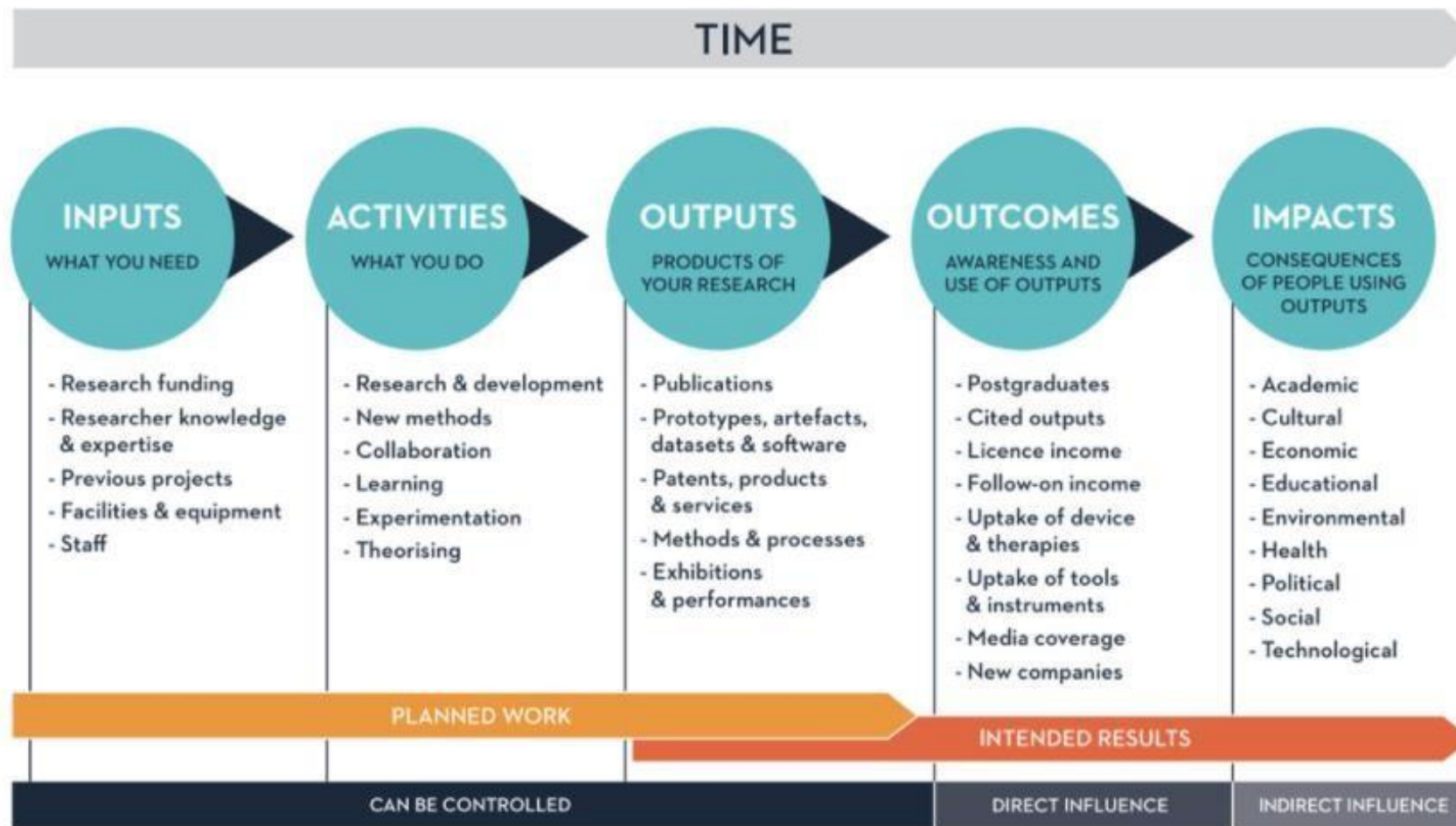


**the same as output or  
outcome**





## Impact process



## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 1

# Societal Impact can be



on any aspect of society



on any scale

## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 1



## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 1

# Societal Impact isn't



**necessarily positive (for everyone/everything)**



**always visible or demonstrable**

An effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society,  
culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or  
quality of life, beyond academia

*REF*

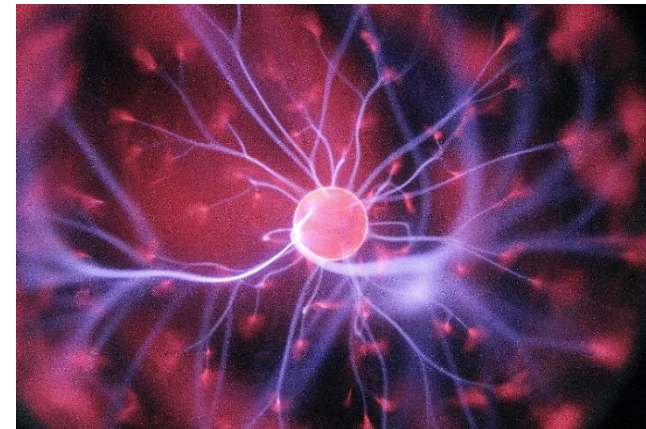
Research impact is the contribution that research makes to the  
economy, society, environment or culture, beyond the contribution  
to academic research

## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 1

# Societal Impact can be



**intentional or unintentional**



**From any research, direct or indirect, short-term or long-term**



## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 2

**Why ~~should~~ you pursue  
Societal Impact?  
could**

*“...the real and legitimate goal of the sciences is the endowment of human life with new inventions and riches.” Francis Bacon, Novum Organum, 1620*

*“Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity, and is the torch which illuminates the world.” Louis Pasteur, French biologist & bacteriologist (1822 - 1895)*

*“Nothing in science has any value to society if it is not communicated, and scientists are beginning to learn their social obligations.” Anne Roe, the Making of a Scientist, 1953*

*“...science and technology is the warp drive that accelerates that kind of change [raise the fortunes of people] for everybody.” Barack Obama, Wired, 2016*



# Why Societal Impact could be pursued

**Expectations**

**Making a difference**

**Performance assessment**

**Responsibility**

## Why is it important to engage with the public?

### relevance

- Research & teaching are better tuned to society's needs
- Innovation flourishes as new ideas & insights flow into HEIs
- Research outputs are easily accessible and widely used
- Young people see research careers as relevant and attractive

### accountability

- Universities are seen to be accountable and responsive to society
- The purposes and impact of research are understood and valued by wider society

### social responsibility

- Universities are seen to act in socially responsible ways, minimising their environmental footprint and supporting social mobility

### trust

- University staff and students are trusted to act ethically and responsibly
- New, controversial areas of research are debated and public attitudes taken account of

Demystifying Societal Impact - part 3

Why is ~~it~~ difficult?

can it be

## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 3

# Why can it be difficult?



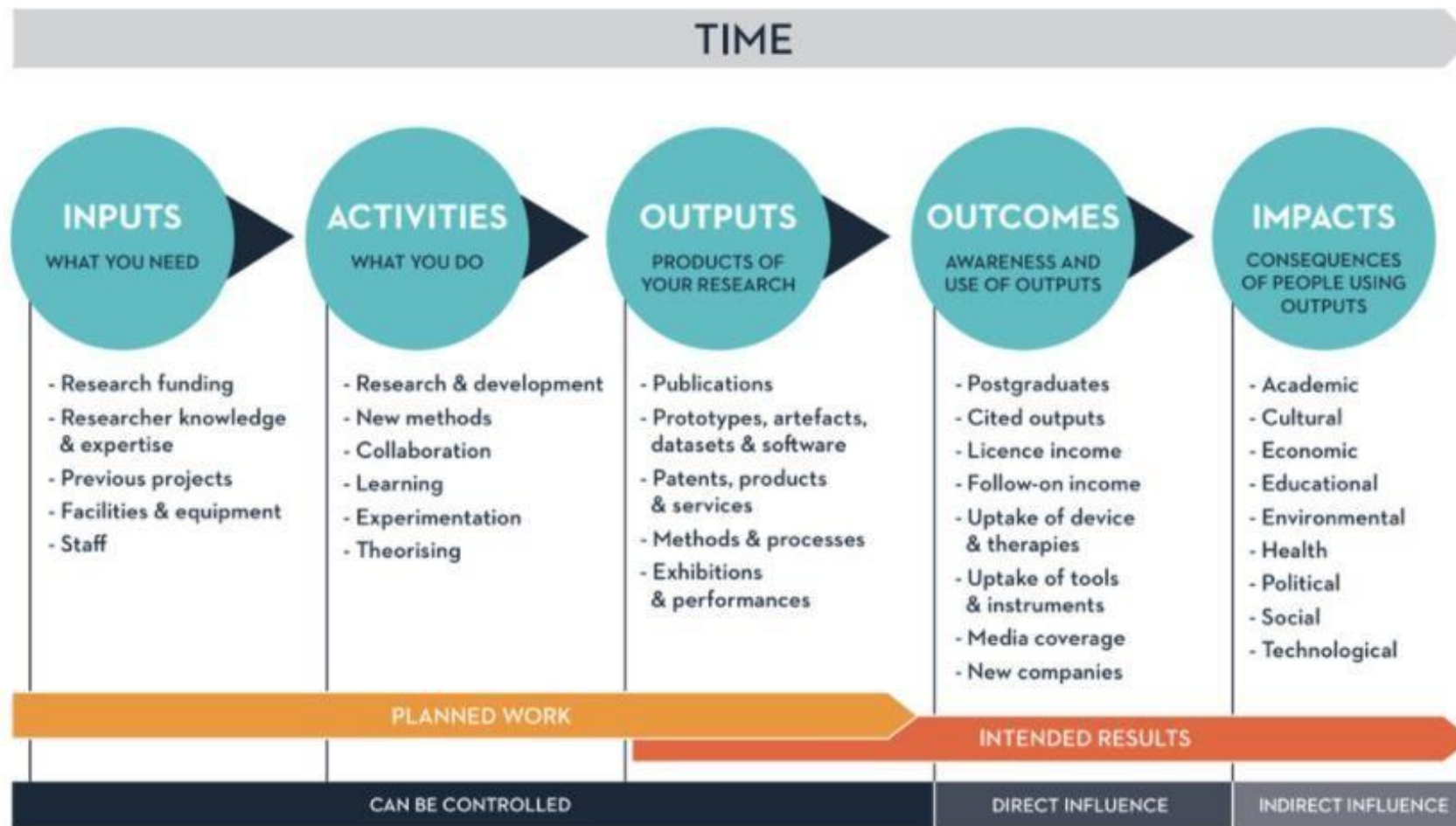
Wellbeing is multi-dimensional, subjective and not always tangible



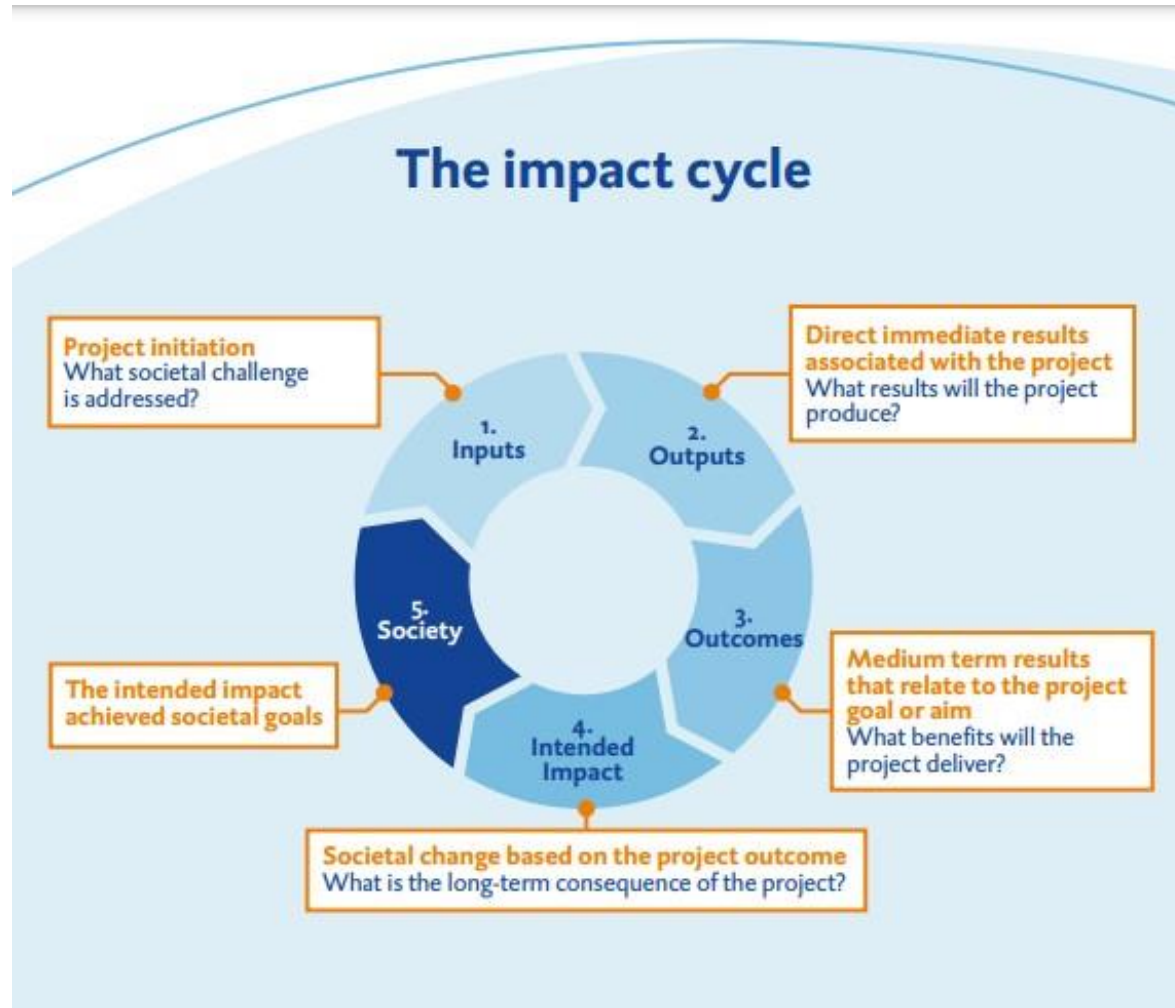
Actual impact reaches beyond sphere of control

# Securing EU Funding by Communicating and Demonstrating Societal Impact

22 – 24 January 2025



# Impact process, many alternative models



## Demystifying Societal Impact - part 3

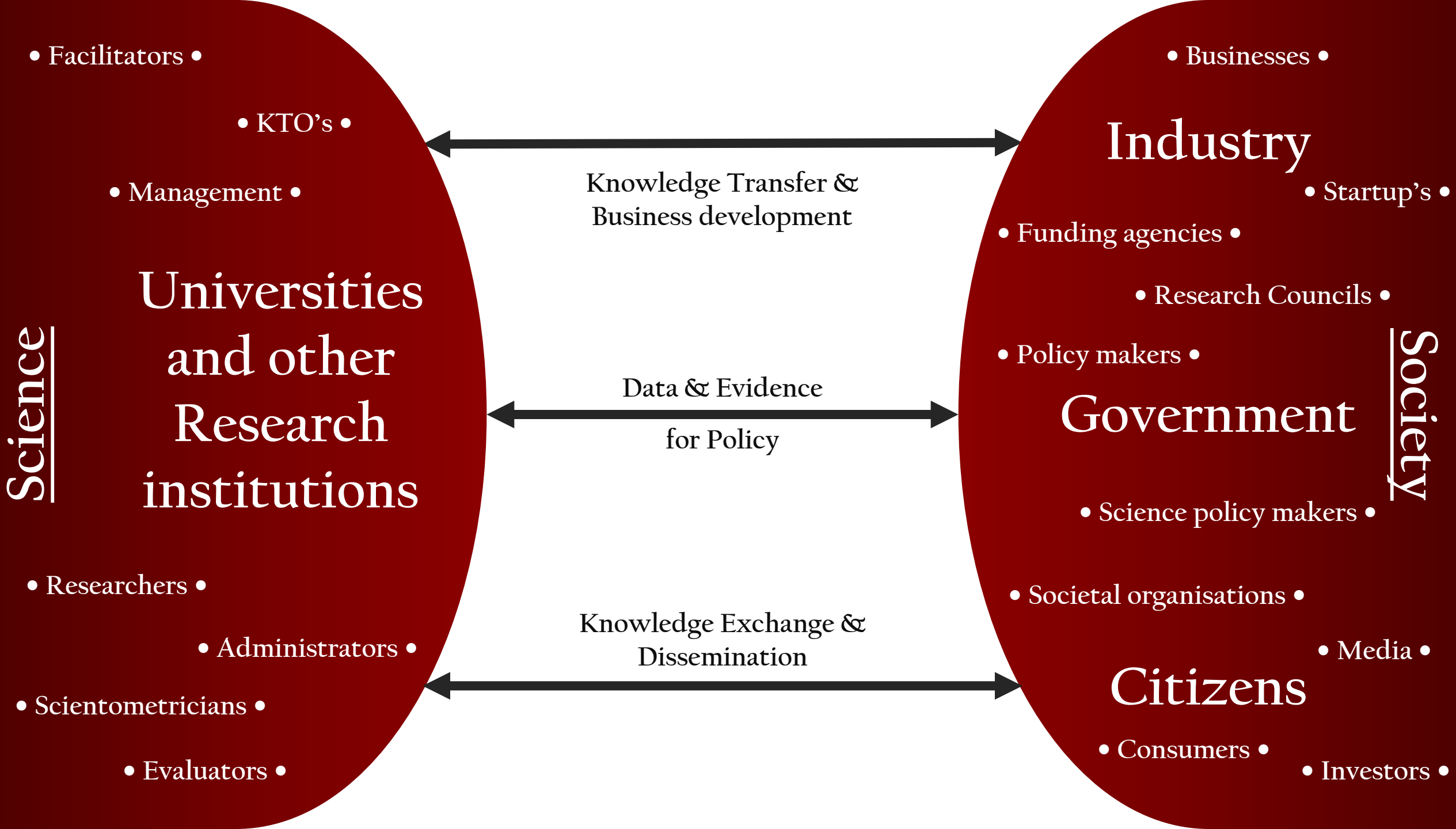
# Why can it be difficult?



**Vast number of stakeholders  
within differing perspectives,  
needs and languages**



**It requires skills, facilities,  
incentives, supportive policies,  
infrastructures and more**





## Science ↔ Society

### Shift to societal impact focus meant

- Society at large, even directly
- It's about people & quality of life
- By all scientific disciplines
- Multiple stakeholders
- Vast number of impact-pathways
- Mismatch between impact-ambitions and evaluation systems



## Science ↔ Society

### So more emphasis on...

- reviewing merit & promotion criteria
- developments of digital tools and metrics monitor uptake of research beyond academia
- supporting (infra)structures for scientific impact
- Training and skills for researchers

# Societal Impact – The current/upcoming debates

- Incentivising for Impact & Fundamental (curiosity-driven) research vs societal impact
- Understanding societal (and political!) needs from science in different parts of the world
- Connecting Stakeholders in one impact strategy
- Where to harmonise (all inclusive), where to diversify per discipline
- Qualitative and Quantitative indicators & Output, outcome, impact discussion
- Ex-ante, post ante, co-creation
- Also: Credibility of Science, evidence-informed policy, public engagement, big data and AI, SDG's...

## Defining Societal Impact

What about your organisation?

## Accepting Impact

- Varied: in disciplines and topics
- Can be direct and/or indirect
- Difficult to monitor/demonstrate
- Lags in time

*Questions, thoughts or remarks?*

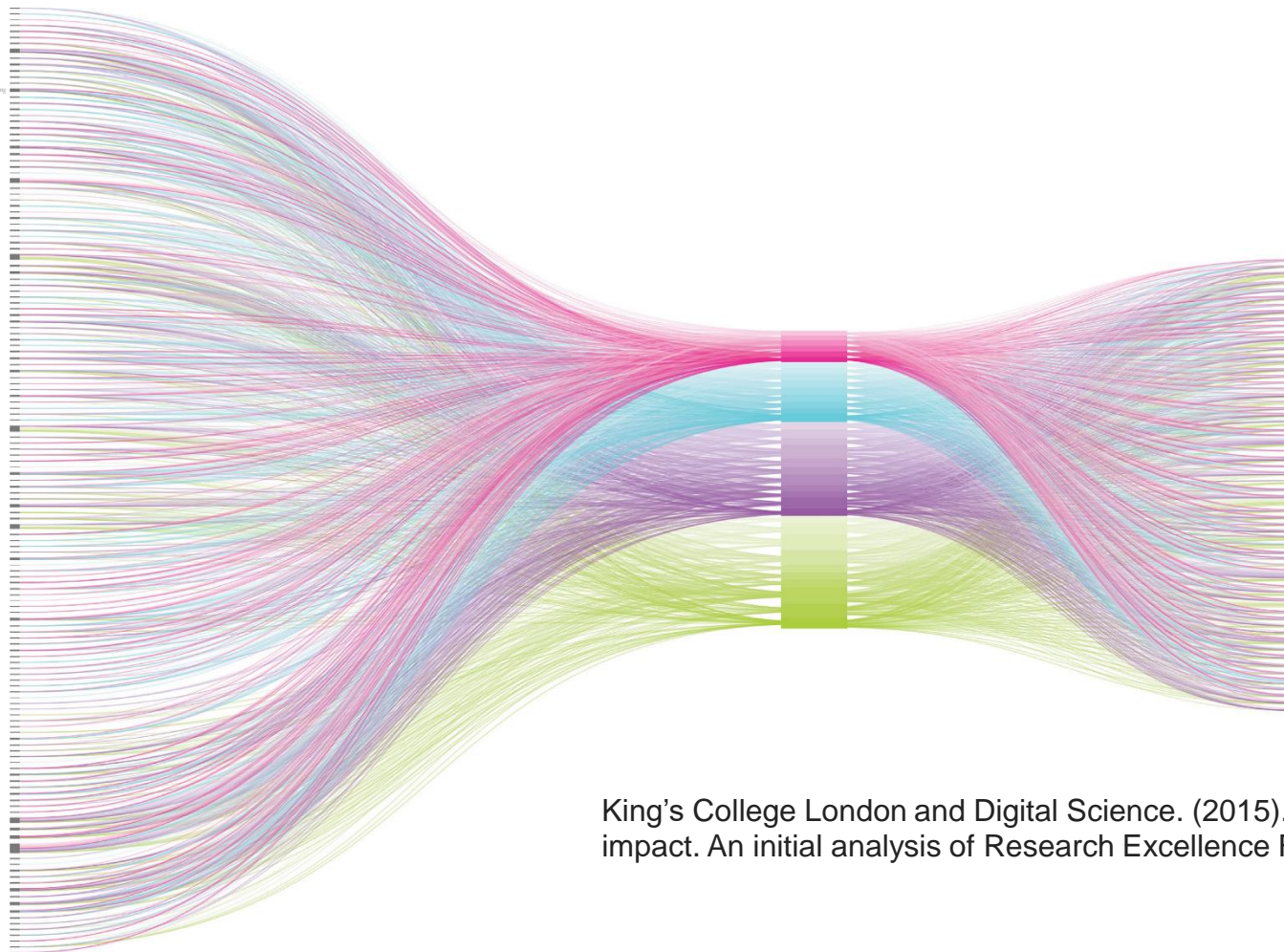
## Integral part: mapping, demonstrating and assessing impact

- Analysis To understand why, how and whether research is effective, and how it can be better supported.
- Advocacy ‘makes the case’ for research funding among policymakers and the public
- Accountability Evidence efficient use of resources to taxpayer, donors, partners, etc...
- Allocation How to distribute funding (institution, field, people ...)
- Acclaim Compare and recognise value of HE institutions
- Adaptation Steer change in structures, cultures, activities and priorities

Source: Parks, Sarah, Daniela Rodriguez-Rincon, Sarah Parkinson, and Catriona Manville, The changing research landscape and reflections on national research assessment in the future. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR3200.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3200.html).

**#EUF25**

## Why assessing is difficult



149 research fields

36 Units of Assessment

60 impacted areas

.....

3709 pathways

King's College London and Digital Science. (2015). The nature, scale and beneficiaries of research impact. An initial analysis of Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 impact case studies. *HEFCE*.

#EUF25





## Possible impacts

- Stronger economy
- New companies
- Exports
- Jobs
- Stronger society
- Better Health
- Better Education
- Inequalities
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Social care burden
- Crime/violence/terrorism
- Pollution
- Climate change

## Demonstrating impact

### Quantifiable indicators (REF/SEP/etc)

- The citations of science in the parliament
- The scientific advisory functions in government
- The citations of science in main newspapers/daily news
- Contract research
- Policy reports
- Articles in professional journals for non-academic readers
- Public prizes
- Other outputs (instruments, infrastructure, datasets, software tools or designs that the unit has developed) for societal target groups

## Quantitative methods

- Reach (numbers of people at events or books sold)
  - Surveys (before and after)
  - Likes of blogs, newspaper clippings
- The citations of science in parliament or main newspapers/daily news
  - Articles in professional journals for non-academic readers
- Other outputs the project has developed for societal target groups

*Standardised, more easily collectable, presentable, concrete and verifiable*

## Other examples quantitative



**News mentions** – how often did a research output appear on mainstream news websites?

**Social media mentions** – did it get talked about on Twitter or Facebook?

**Blog mentions** – did it get linked to from scientific blogs?

**Wikipedia** – is it cited by any Wikipedia pages?

**F1000, Pubpeer** - has it been reviewed by academics?

**Mendeley saves** – have researchers been saving it to their reference manager?

**Policy citations** – did it get cited in government policy documents?

**Syllabi** – is it a course text or otherwise on the reading list for any university courses?

**Clinical guidelines** – did it get cited by any clinical guidelines?

**Patent citations** – did it get cited by any patents?

## Quantitative methods

### So what's the problem?

It has to be tangible and measurable

It is usually output, not impact or even outcome

Discrepancy between what indicators evaluate and the  
ambitions, missions, realities and practices of science

(CWTS)

At the heart of evaluation lies a conversation about value  
that cannot be had with indicators alone (CWTS)

## Demonstrating impact

### Qualitative/Narratives

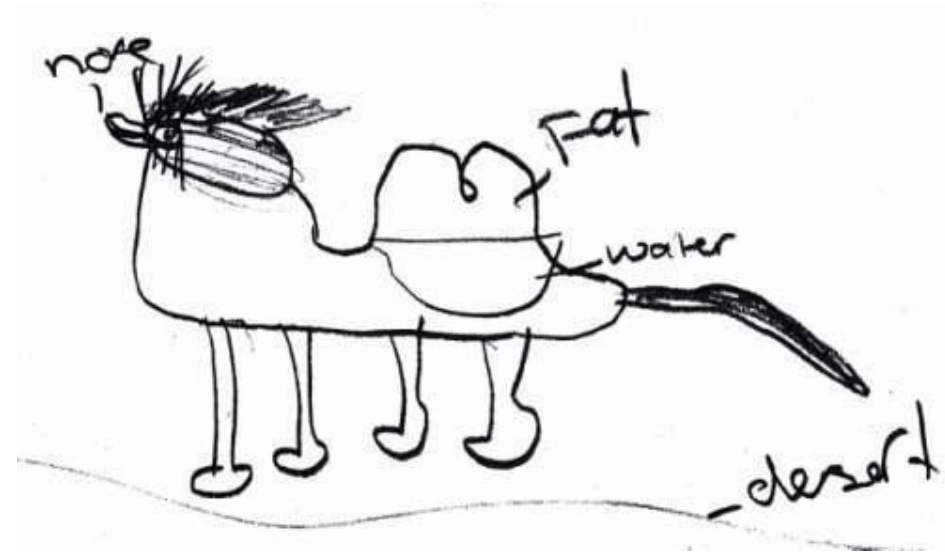
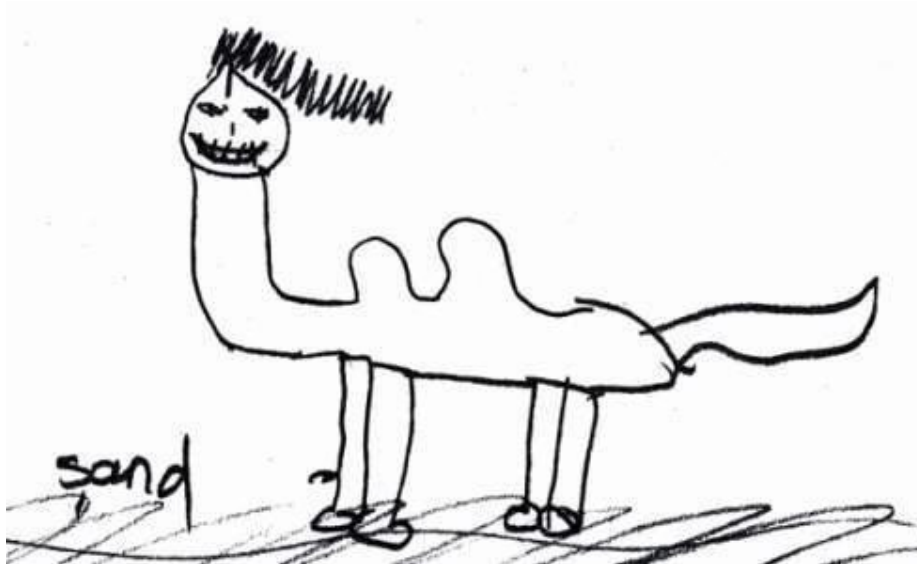
- Public awareness, attitude or understanding of risks improved
- Quality or productivity of professional or public service improved
- Public health or quality of life improved
- Project lowered risks to security
- User experience has improved
- Changes in environmental or architectural design standards or general practice
- Development of ethical standards
- Professional research capabilities improved
- Project challenged conventional wisdom, stimulating debate among stakeholders
- Improved access to justice and other opportunities
- Impact on democratic participation
- Creating, inspiring or supporting new forms of expression (like artistic, literary etc.)
- Understanding, developing and adopting alternative economic models
- Etc...

## Qualitative methods

- Interviews
- Content analysis
- Focus groups
- Qualitative “surveys” (drawings example)
  - Audience participation exercise
  - Written observations during activities

*Results in much better understanding, flexibility and openness  
But it takes more time and is less objectively analysed*

## Example qualitative



Although.....

Credit to Eric Jensen (IMI)





## Mixed methods

**Use both quantitative and qualitative methods, combine metrics with narratives for responsible evaluation**

## Categories of grimpact (as defined by Gemma Derrick)

- Public/private fraud
- Loss of control
- Had an intended negative effect
- Scientific misconduct
- Unnaturally influence public (campaigns/public opinion)
- Silenced “experts”
- Tension between political versus scientific value
- Value linked with political ideology
- Disproportionate research focus based on disease burden
- Establishment of anti-evidence advocacy group
- Establishment of false economics and/or public campaigns
- Changed ways of thinking
- Influenced high level government debate through decrease in trust
- Contributed to increasing inequality in society
- Conflict of interest between the researcher and direct stakeholders



## Monitoring and Evaluating Impact

Considering:

- Evaluation > How will projects collect which data, record it and present it?
- Monitoring > Tracking throughout the process (e.g. save all mentions and interview and such in a folder)
- Do you/they have the time and skills for that? Or is there any support around?
  - If external parties are involved in assessment/evaluation: do they have time/capacity and other ethical considerations

## On the project level - impact pathways

<b>Contexts</b>	What are the wider environmental, political, social, technological, legal and/or economic contexts to which your research may be relevant
<b>Communities</b>	Who are the communities and beneficiaries of your research?
<b>Constituencies</b>	Who has a (positive) interest in your project and can influence change?
<b>Challenge</b>	What is the situation, and challenge, you will solve through your research questions?
<b>Channels</b>	What approaches will you use to reach those constituencies?
<b>Communication</b>	What is the appropriate style, tone and structuring needed to get your main message across?
<b>Capture</b>	How will you demonstrate your impact?

## Planning for impact – keep in mind

Starting at the end...

What are the intended impacts?

(Incorporate stakeholders in determining success factors)

How do you reach these impacts, what are the pathways?

What are the short-term actions and activities you will engage in?

Are any of them demonstratable?

## Core activities

Which activities are necessary to realise your project?

What activities are the most important ones and why?

Which of these activities can you manage yourself and where do you need support

**Important!**

These are not  
“steps”,  
they are  
intertwined

*Source:*

*Impact School  
Berlin*

## Resources

What resources are needed to realize your project?

What resources are the most important and why?

Which of these resources are already at your disposal?

## Collaborators

Who can you collaborate with in order to realise your project

What can they add to the impact proposition/execution of your project

Why should they collaborate with you

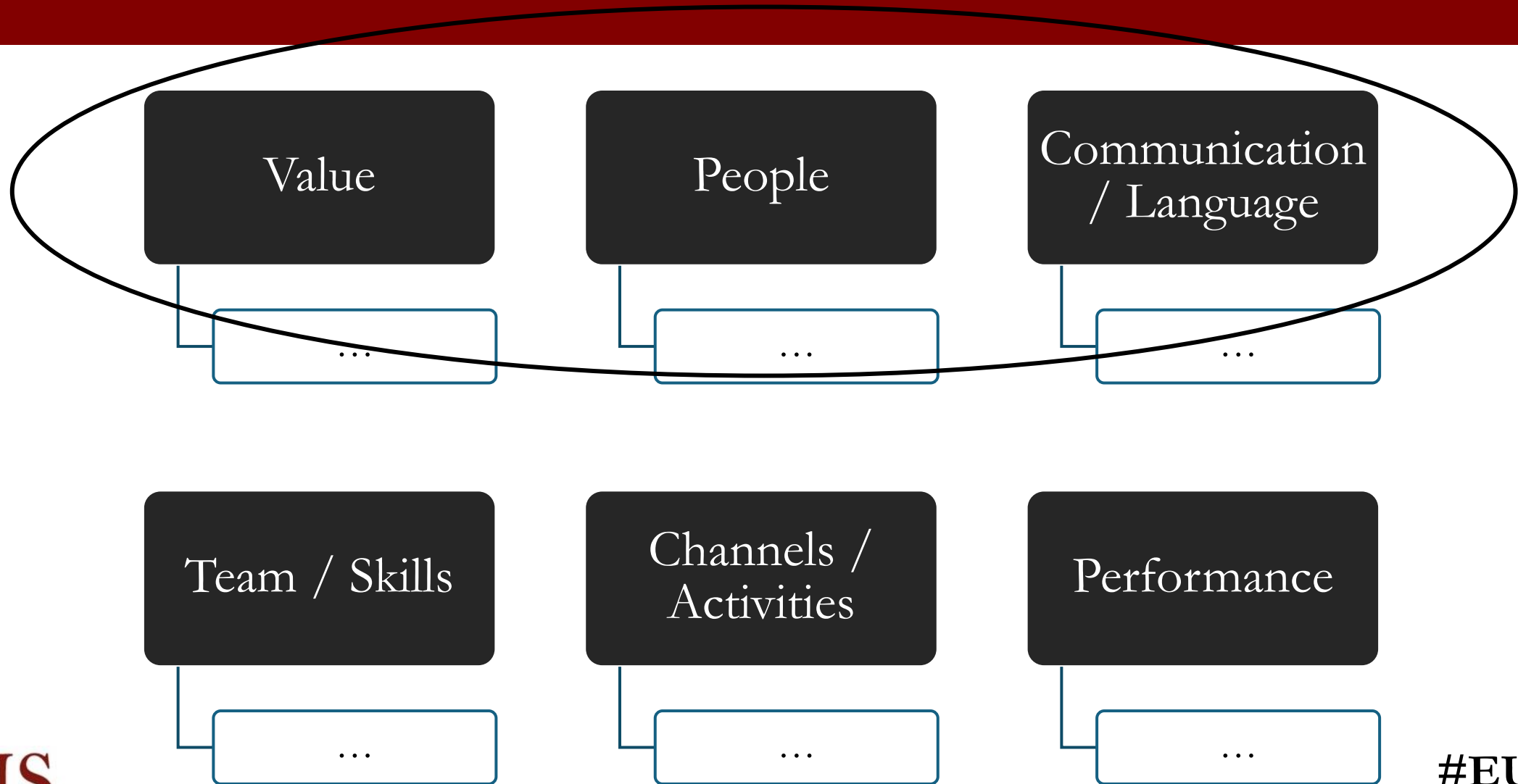
**HOW**

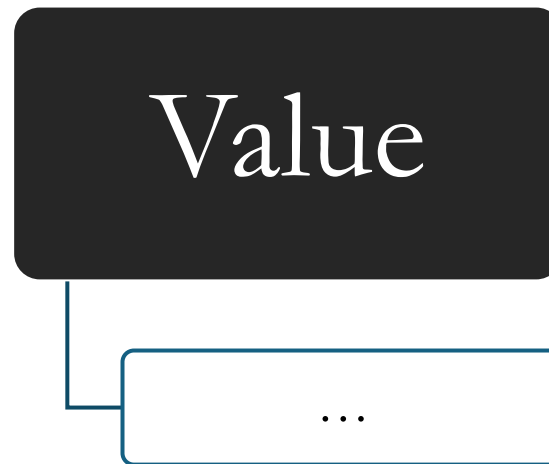
**WITH  
WHAT**

**WITH  
WHOM**

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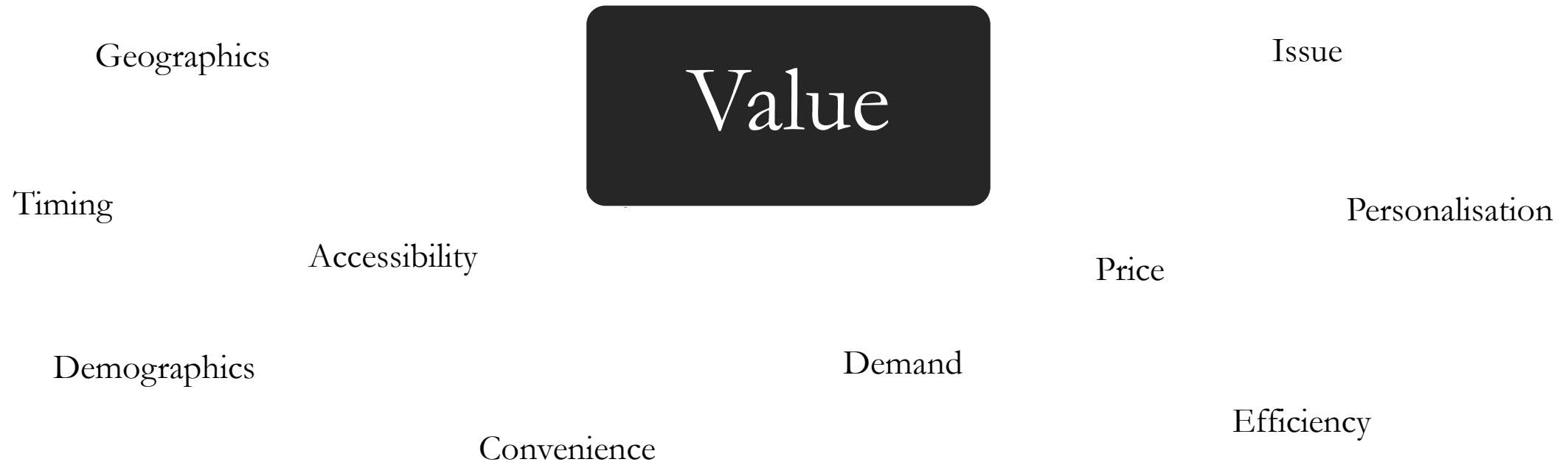
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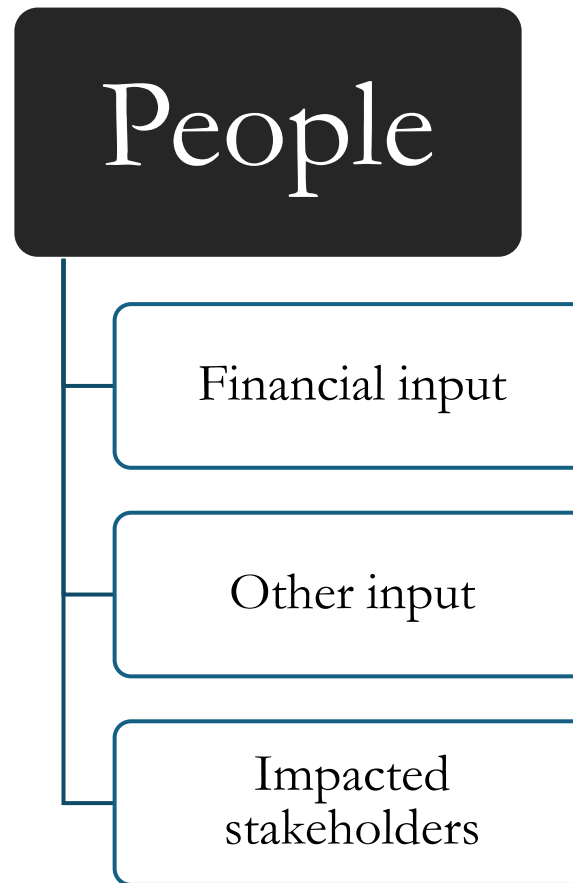
**What is the value of your research to society?**





**Know your context: what makes this project unique?**

**Who are they?  
Think of unusual  
suspects...**



**Which values are  
relevant to them?**

Understanding which values are important to each stakeholder is not only relevant in successful engagement, but also in determining their level of interest



## Prioritise audiences / stakeholders



**Interest**



**Influence**

## Or reachability. achievability and access?!

✓ First contact stakeholders	Universities, Research Institutes, Research Councils, Private funders, Public funders, Ministries, NGO's, Companies, etc	Universities, Research Institutes, Research Councils, Private funders, Public funders, Ministries, NGO's, Companies, etc
✓ Who is interested	Universities, Research Institutes, Research Councils, Private funders, NGO's, Companies	Universities, Research Institutes, Research Councils, Public funders, Ministries, NGO's, Companies
✓ Who is willing to listen	Universities, Research Institutes, Private funders, NGO's, Companies	Collective unions, Universities, Research Councils, Public funders, Ministries, NGO's
✓ Who is willing to put in time	Universities & Private funders	Collective unions, Research Councils, Local Ministries

*Prioritise and don't start with the unwilling audience, no matter how relevant your research might be for them. If you can't convince them of the worth of your work now, gain support elsewhere and find momentum.*

*Stay openminded, flexible and keep snowballing for new audiences*

Also

Reach out to overarching  
organisations, but engage



Build your own long-term  
Network (be creative)



Be aware what people want  
and use that to grab attention  
(first paragraph/minute)



# Applying in model

Stakeholders beyond  
the usual suspects

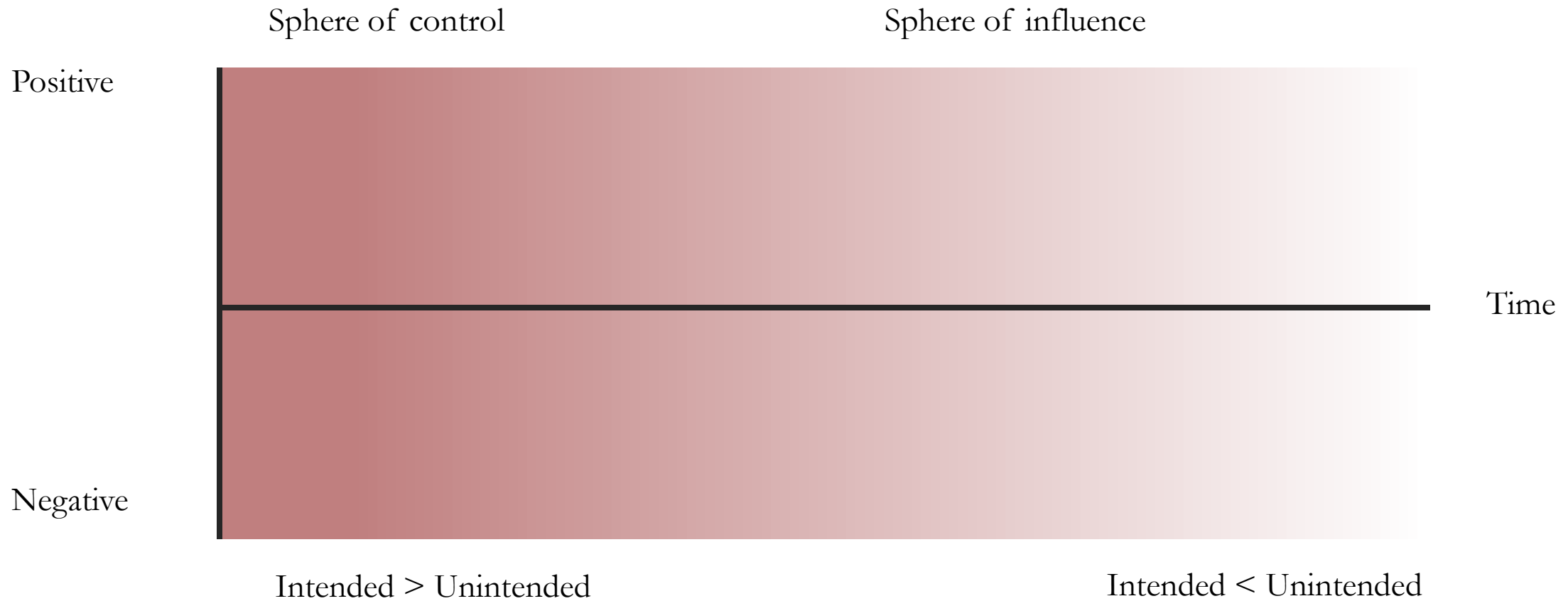
Sphere of control,  
influence or interest

Positive, negative or  
neutral



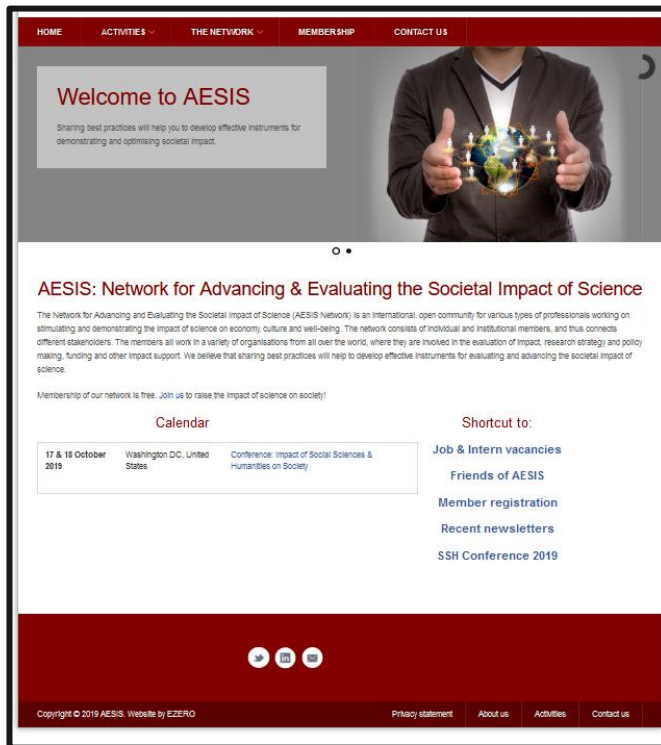
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## Should not be done alone!



Be honest with yourself about your skills & time. If you work at a larger organisation, the skills/people/material might already be available to you. If not there, search in other networks (even your personal one).

**Be aware of your context, network, skills and time**

What are the facilities at your university (hubs, networks, other disciplines) or in your surroundings? E.g. Webdesign, policy experts, software, communications specialist, bookkeeping, patent officer, acting, administration, etc.

**It is not a one-way street, don't throw knowledge at societal stakeholders but understand their needs, drives and knowledge (yes!) and use that for advancing your impact**

## What do we need?



Securing EU Funding by Communicating  
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**And of course:**



**AESIS**

**#EUF25**

- Grimpact -> Gemma Derrick
- Fast track impact planning ([link](#)) by Mark Reed
- Impact examples and indicators -> [UCD & REF](#)

# Lunch

*We will be back at 13.45*