Integrating societal impact in a research strategy

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Implementing societal impact in new policy initiatives

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AESIS

Overview

Defining (research) impact

- REF 2014 – REF 2021
- @ UGENT
- Supporting impact

New policy initiatives and impact

- Citizen Science projects (+ exercise impact vision)
- Co-creation hub (Helsinki & Ghent experience)

Sharing experiences

- Accomplissh
- Emerald publishing
- AESIS, ISRIA

Demystifying (research) impact

Academics are no longer confined to their university campuses

All of us are working with diverse external communities such as business leaders, health agencies, government bodies, policy makers and citizens.

Collaborating with external partners is facilitating economic or societal benefit beyond traditional academic outputs, fostering a culture of trust, expertise and influence, is leading to what is known as impact.

How to identify and evidence impact?

Recently, impact, as a term, has become so overanalyzed and so overemphasised that it seems to assume these gigantic proportions overshadowing every other priority. Impact is not a new task separate to research and teaching, competing with those things for your limited time and resource, and generally causing stress. It coexists with those things.

Inspired on Rose-Marie BARBEAU, University of Glasgow

What is it about research impact?

The research impact agenda has become increasingly important since REF 2014.
Many funding bodies since then require a statement of research impact as part of the grant application process.

Research impact: **the demonstrable contribution that research makes to society – that is, to communities beyond academia.**

It should be an evidenced and measurable effect, change or benefit to:

- Activities, attitudes, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding
- An audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals beyond Higher Education
- In any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally

Research impact grows out of academic work, by engagement with research users: from specialist groups to companies or the general public.

Impact is partly driven by the results of the research, and partly by how that research is then used/shared/communicated.

REF2014
Research Excellence Framework

Impact: 20 per cent of the overall results

Definition for the REF	'Impact' is any effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.
Information provided in submissions	Each submission included: **Impact case studies**. These four-page documents described impacts that had occurred between January 2008 and July 2013. The submitting university must have produced high quality research since 1993 that contributed to the impacts. Each submission included one case study, plus an additional case study for every 10 staff. **An impact template**. This document explained how the submitted unit had enabled impact from its research during the period from 2008 to 2013, and its future strategy for impact.
Assessment criteria	Impact case studies were assessed in terms of the '*reach and significance*' of the impacts. Impact templates were assessed in terms of how far the approach and strategy are conducive to achieving impacts.

REF 2021
Impact 25%
Outputs 60%
Environment 15%

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

292. Impact **includes**, but is not limited to, an effect on, change or benefit to:

- the activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding
- of an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals
- in any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.

293. Impact **includes** the reduction or prevention of harm, risk, cost or other negative effects.

REF 2021

Impact 25%

Outputs 60%

Environment 15%

295. Impacts will be assessed in terms of their 'reach and significance' regardless of the geographic location in which they occurred, whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally. The UK funding bodies expect that many impacts will contribute to the economy, society and culture within the UK, but equally value the international contribution of UK research.

297. The REF aims to assess the impact of excellent research undertaken within each submitted unit. This will be evidenced by specific examples of impacts that have been underpinned by research undertaken within the unit over a period of time. The focus of the assessment is the impact of the submitted unit's research, not the impact of individuals or individual research outputs, although they may contribute to the evidence of the submitted unit's impact.

298. Each submission must include **impact case studies (REF3)** describing specific impacts that have occurred during the assessment period (1 August 2013 to 31 July 2020) that were underpinned by excellent research undertaken in the submitted unit. The underpinning research must have been produced by the submitting HEI during the period 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2020[18].

REF2014
Research Excellence Framework

Clinical Medicine

Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care

Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy

Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience

Biological Sciences

Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

Impacts on health and welfare:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals and groups (both human and animals) whose quality of life has been enhanced (or potential harm mitigated)

- Outcomes for patients or related groups have improved.
- Public health and well-being has improved.
- A new clinical or lifestyle intervention (for example, drug, diet, treatment or therapy) has been developed, trialled with patients, related or other groups (for example, prisoners, community samples), and definitive (positive or negative) outcome demonstrated.
- A new diagnostic or clinical technology has been adopted.
- Disease prevention or markers of health have been enhanced by research.
- Animal health and welfare has been enhanced by research.
- Care and educational practices have changed.
- Clinical, dietary or healthcare guidelines have changed.
- Healthcare training guidelines have changed.
- Decisions by a health service or regulatory authority have been informed by research.
- Public awareness of a health risk or benefit has been raised.
- Public engagement/involvement in research has improved.
- Public behaviour has changed.
- The user experience has improved.
- Animal health and welfare has been enhanced by research.
- The control of diseases has changed.

REF2014
Research Excellence Framework

Clinical Medicine

Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care

Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy

Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience

Biological Sciences

Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

Impacts on society, culture and creativity: Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours or practices have been influenced	• Public understanding has improved. • Public debate has been stimulated or informed by research. • Changes to social policy have been informed by research. • Changes to social policy have led to improved social welfare, equality or social inclusion.
Impacts on the economy: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually the NHS, private health care, or agriculture activity.	• Policies have been introduced which have had an impact on economic growth or incentivising productivity. • The costs of treatment or healthcare have changed as a result of research-led changes in practice. • Gains in productivity have been realised as a result of research-led changes in practice. • The roles and/or incentives for health professionals and organisations have changed, resulting in improved service delivery.
Impacts on commerce: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually companies, either new or established, or other types of organisation which undertake activity that creates wealth	• A spin-out or new business has been created and established its viability by generating revenue or profits. • Industry (including overseas industry) has invested in research and development. • The performance of an existing business has been improved. • A business or sector has adopted a new technology or process. • The strategy, operations or management practices of a business have changed. • A new product or service is in production or has been commercialised. • Highly skilled people have taken up specialist roles (including academic consultancy) in companies or other organisations. • Jobs have been created or protected. • Social enterprise initiatives have been created.

Supported by TTO services

REF2014
Excellence Framework

Clinical Medicine

Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care

Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy

Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience

Biological Sciences

Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

Impacts on public policy and services: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually government, public sector, and charity organisations and societies, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society, through the implementation of policies	• Policy debate has been stimulated or moved forward by research evidence. • Policy decisions or changes to legislation, regulations or guidelines have been informed by research evidence. • The implementation of a policy (for example, health, environment or agricultural policy) or the delivery of a public service has changed. • A new technology or process has been adopted. • The quality, accessibility, acceptability or cost-effectiveness of a public service has been improved. • The public has benefitted from public service improvements. • Control measures for infections have improved.
Impacts on production: Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals (including groups of individuals) whose production has been enhanced	• Production, yields or quality have increased or level of waste has been reduced. • Decisions by regulatory authorities have been influenced by research. • Costs of production, including food, have been reduced. • Husbandry methods have changed. • Management practices in production businesses have changed.
Impacts on practitioners and services: Impacts where beneficiaries are organisations or individuals, including service users involved in the development of and delivery of professional services	• Professional standards, guidelines or training have been influenced by research. • Practitioners/professionals have used research findings in conducting their work. • The quality or efficiency of a professional service has improved. • Work force planning has been influenced by research. • Forensic methods have been influenced by research. • Educational or pedagogical practices and methods have changed outside of the submitting unit. • Law enforcement and security practices have changed.

Clinical Medicine

Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care

Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy

Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience

Biological Sciences

Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

Impacts on the environment:

Impacts where the key beneficiary is the natural or built environment

- Policy debate on climate change or the environment has been influenced by research.
- Environmental policy decisions have been influenced by research evidence.
- Planning decisions have been informed by research.
- The management or conservation of natural resources has changed.
- The management of an environmental risk or hazard has changed.

Impacts on international development:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are international bodies, countries, governments or communities

- International policy development has been influenced by research.
- International agencies or institutions have been influenced by research.
- Quality of life in a developing country has improved.

Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences

Chemistry

Physics

Mathematical Sciences

Computer Science and Informatics

Aeronautical, Mechanical, Chemical and Manufacturing Engineering

Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials

Civil and Construction Engineering

General Engineering

Economic impacts

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include businesses, either new or established, or other types of organisation which undertake activity that may create wealth

- The performance of an existing business has been improved through the introduction of new, or the improvement of existing, products, processes or services; the adoption of new, updated or enhanced technical standards and/or protocols; or the enhancement of strategy, operations or management practices.
- A spin-out or new business has been created, established its viability, or generated revenue or profits.
- A new business sector or activity has been created.
- A business or sector has adopted a new or significantly changed technology or process, including through acquisition and/or joint venture.
- Performance has been improved, or new or changed technologies or processes adopted, in companies or other organisations through highly skilled people having taken up specialist roles that draw on their research, or through the provision of consultancy or training that draws on their research.
- Potential future losses have been mitigated by improved methods of risk assessment and management in safety or security critical situations.

Impacts on public policy and services

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charities and public sector organisations and society, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society

- A policy has been implemented (including those realised through changes to legislation) or the delivery of a public service has changed.
- (Sections of) the public have benefited from public service improvements.
- In delivering a public service, a new technology or process has been adopted or an existing technology or process improved.
- Policy debate has been stimulated or informed by research evidence.
- Policy decisions or changes to legislation, regulations or guidelines have been informed by research evidence.
- Changes to education or the school curriculum have been informed by research.
- Risks to the security of nation states have been reduced.
- The development of policies and services of benefit to the developing world has been informed by research.

Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
Chemistry
Physics
Mathematical Sciences
Computer Science and Informatics
Aeronautical, Mechanical, Chemical and Manufacturing Engineering
Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials
Civil and Construction Engineering
General Engineering

Impacts on society, culture and creativity

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours, creative practices and other activity have been influenced

- Public discourse has been stimulated or informed by research.
- Public interest and engagement in science and engineering has been stimulated, including through the enhancement of science and engineering-related education in schools.
- The awareness, attitudes or understanding of (sections of) the public have been informed, and their ability to make informed decisions on issues improved, by engaging them with research.
- The work of an NGO, charitable or other organisation has been influenced by the research.
- Research has contributed to community regeneration.

Health impacts

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include individuals (including groups of individuals) whose health outcomes have been improved or whose quality of life has been enhanced (or potential harm mitigated) through the application of enhanced healthcare for individuals or public health activities

- A new drug, treatment or therapy, diagnostic or medical technology has been developed, trialled with patients, or adopted.
- Patient health outcomes have improved through, for example, the availability of new drug, treatment or therapy, diagnostic or medical technology, changes to patient care practices, or changes to clinical or healthcare guidelines.
- Public health and quality of life has been enhanced through, for example, enhanced public awareness of a health risk, enhanced disease prevention or, in developing countries, improved water quality or access to healthcare.
- Decisions by a health service or regulatory authority have been informed by research.
- The costs of treatment or healthcare have reduced.
- Quality of life in a developed or developing country has been improved by new products or processes.

Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
Chemistry
Physics
Mathematical Sciences
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General Engineering

Impacts on practitioners and professional services

Impacts where beneficiaries may include organisations or individuals involved in the development of and delivery of professional services

- Changes to professional standards, guidelines or training have been informed by research.
- Practitioners/professionals/lawyers have used research findings in the conduct of their work.
- The quality or efficiency or productivity of a professional service has improved.
- Professional bodies and learned societies have used research to define best practice.
- Practices have changed, or new or improved processes have been adopted, in companies or other organisations, through the provision of training or consultancy.
- Expert and legal work or forensic methods have been informed by research.

Impacts on the environment

Impacts where the key beneficiaries are the natural environment and/or the built environment, together with societies, individuals or groups of individuals who benefit as a result

- The environment has been improved through the introduction of new product(s), process(es) or service(s); the improvement of existing product(s), process(es) or services; or the enhancement of strategy, operations or management practices.
- New methods, models, monitoring or techniques have been developed that have led to changes or benefits.
- Policy debate on the environment, environmental policy decisions or planning decisions have been stimulated or informed by research and research evidence.
- The management or conservation of natural resources, including energy, water and food, has been influenced or changed.
- The management of an environmental risk or hazard has changed.
- The operations of a business or public service have been changed to achieve environmental (green) objectives.
- Direct intervention, based on research evidence, has led to reduction in carbon dioxide or other environmentally damaging emissions.

Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology
Economics and Econometrics
Business and Management Studies
Law
Politics and International Studies
Social Work and Social Policy
Sociology
Anthropology and Development Studies
Education
Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism

Impacts on creativity, culture and society:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours, practices, rights or duties have been influenced

- Enhancements to heritage preservation, conservation and presentation; the latter including museum and gallery exhibitions.
- Production of cultural artefacts, including for example, films, novels and TV programmes.
- Public or political debate has been shaped or informed; this may include activity that has challenged established norms, modes of thought or practices.
- Improved social welfare, equality, social inclusion; improved access to justice and other opportunities (including employment and education).
- Improvements to legal and other frameworks for securing intellectual property rights.
- Enhancements to policy and practice for securing poverty alleviation.
- Influential contributions to campaigns for social, economic political and/or legal change.
- Enhanced cultural understanding of issues and phenomena; shaping or informing public attitudes and values.

Economic, commercial, organisational impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries may include new or established businesses, or other types of organisation undertaking activities which create wealth

- Changed approach to management of resources has resulted in improved service delivery.
- Development of new or improved materials, products or processes.
- Improved support for the development of 'small scale' technologies.
- Improved effectiveness of workplace practices.
- Improvements in legal frameworks, regulatory environment or governance of business entities.
- Better access to finance opportunities.
- Contribution to improved social, cultural and environmental sustainability.
- Enhanced corporate social responsibility policies.
- More effective dispute resolution.
- Understanding, developing and adopting alternative economic models (such as fair trade).

Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
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Education
Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism

Impacts on the environment:

Impacts where the key beneficiaries are the natural, historic and/or built environment, together with societies, individuals or groups of individuals who benefit as a result

- Specific changes in public awareness or behaviours relevant to the environment.
- Improved management or conservation of natural resources or environmental risk.
- Improved management of an environmental risk or hazard.
- Operations or practice of a business or public service have been changed to achieve environmental objectives.
- Improved design or implementation of environmental policy or regulation.
- Changed conservation policy/practice or resource management practices.
- Changes in environmental or architectural design standards or general practice.
- Influence on professional practice or codes.
- Changes in practices or policies affecting biodiversity.

Health and welfare impacts:

Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals and groups (human or animal) whose quality of life has been enhanced (or harm mitigated) or whose rights or interests have been protected or advocated

- Development or adoption of new indicators of health and well-being.
- Development of policy and practice with regard to medical ethics, health services or social care provision.
- Influence on CPD.
- Influence or shaping of relevant legislation.
- Influencing policy or practice leading to improved take-up or use of services.
- Improved provision or access to services.
- Development of ethical standards.
- Improved standards in training.
- Improved health and welfare outcomes.

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Education
Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism

Impacts on practitioners and professional services: Impacts where the beneficiaries may include organisations or individuals involved in the development and/or delivery of professional services and ethics	• Changed practice for specific groups (which may include cessation of certain practices shown to be ineffective by research). • Influence on professional standards, guidelines or training. • Development of resources to enhance professional practice. • Use of research findings in the conduct of professional work or practice. • Influence on planning or management of services. • Use of research findings by professional bodies to define best practice, formulate policy, or to lobby government or other stakeholders. • Practitioner debate has been informed or stimulated by research findings. • Research has challenged conventional wisdom, stimulating debate among stakeholders.
Impacts on public policy, law and services: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually government, public sector and charity organisations and societies, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society through the implementation or non-implementation of policies, systems or reforms	• Legislative change, development of legal principle or effect on legal practice. • Forms of regulation, dispute resolution or access to justice have been influenced. • Shaping or influence on policy made by government, quasi-government bodies, NGOs or private organisations. • Changes to the delivery or form of any service for the public. • Policy debate has been stimulated or informed by research evidence, which may have led to confirmation of policy, change in policy direction, implementation or withdrawal of policy. • Effect on the quality, accessibility, cost-effectiveness or efficiency of services. • Impact on democratic participation. • Influencing the work of NGOs or commercial organisations. • Improved public understanding of social issues. • Enabling a challenge to conventional wisdom.

Area Studies
Modern Languages and Linguistics
English Language and Literature
History
Classics
Philosophy
Theology and Religious Studies
Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management

Table D1 Indicative range of impacts

Civil society	Informing and influencing the form and content of associations between people or groups to illuminate and challenge cultural values and social assumptions.
Cultural life	Creating and interpreting cultural capital in all of its forms to enrich and expand the lives, imaginations and sensibilities of individuals and groups.
Economic prosperity	Applying and transferring the insights and knowledge gained from research to create wealth in the manufacturing, service, creative and cultural sectors.
Education	Informing and influencing the form or the content of the education of any age group in any part of the world where they extend significantly beyond the submitting HEI.
Policy making	Informing and influencing policy debate and practice through interventions relating to any aspect of human or animal well-being or the environment.
Public discourse	Extending the range and improving the quality of evidence, argument and expression to enhance public understanding of the major issues and challenges faced by individuals and society.
Public services	Contributing to the development and delivery of public services or legislation to support the welfare, education, understanding or empowerment of diverse individuals and groups in society, including the disadvantaged or marginalised.

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Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
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- Generating new ways of thinking that influence creative practice.
- Creating, inspiring and supporting new forms of artistic, literary, linguistic, social, economic, religious, and other expression.
- Contributing to innovation and entrepreneurial activity through the design and delivery of new products or services.
- Contributing to economic prosperity via the creative sector including publishing, music, theatre, museums and galleries, film and television, fashion, tourism, and computer games.
- Informing or influencing practice or policy as a result of research on the nature and extent of religious, sexual, ethnic or linguistic discrimination.
- Research into the languages and cultures of minority linguistic, ethnic, religious, immigrant, cultures and communities used by government, NGOs, charities or private sector to understand and respond to their needs.
- Helping professionals and organisations adapt to changing cultural values.
- Contributing to continuing personal and professional development.
- Preserving, conserving, and presenting cultural heritage.
- Developing stimuli to tourism and contributing to the quality of the tourist experience.
- Influencing the design and delivery of curriculum and syllabi in schools, other HEIs or other educational institutions where the impact extends significantly beyond the submitting HEI, for example through the widespread use of text books, primary sources or an IT resource in education.
- Contributing to processes of commemoration, memorialisation and reconciliation.
- Contributing to a wider public understanding of basic standards of wellbeing and human rights conceptions.
- Informing or influencing the development of expert systems in areas such as medicine, human resources, accounting, and financial services.
- Influencing the methods, ideas or ethics of any profession.
- Providing expert advice to governments, NGOs, charities and the private sector in the UK and internationally, and thereby influencing policy and/or practice.
- Engaging with and mediating between NGOs and charities in the UK and internationally to influence their activities, for example in relation to health, education and the environment.
- Contributing to widening public access to and participation in the political process.

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Table D2 Examples of evidence of impact

Quantitative indicators	• Publication and sales figures both in the UK and overseas, audience or attendance figures (including demographic data where relevant), broadcasting data and other forms of media, download figures, or database and web-site hits over a sustained period. • Funding from public or other charitable bodies. • Evidence of use of education materials arising from the research (where they extend significantly beyond the submitting HEI). • Tourism data, including audience figures and visitor numbers at exhibitions, events, performances. • Growth of small businesses in the creative industries. Generation of new products. Sales figures and income generated. Employment data (for example, evidence of jobs created).
Critiques or citations in users' documents	• Citations in reviews outside academic literature. Independent citations in the media, including in online documents. Reviews, blogs and postings. Programme, exhibition or catalogue notes. Prizes. Translations. Recorded feedback. • Inclusion in teaching materials or teaching bibliographies. Replication of work in structure of courses. • Evidence of uptake of research in documents produced by public or commercial bodies; citations in policy documents and reviews, or other published reports on policy debates.
Public engagement	• Information about the number and profile of people engaged and types of audience. Follow-up activities or media coverage. Evidence of sales, downloads of linked resources or access to web content. • Descriptions of the social, cultural or other significance of the research insights with which the public have engaged. Evaluation data. User feedback or testimony. Critical external reviews of the engagement activity. Evidence of third party involvement, for example how collaborators have modified their practices, contributions (financial or in-kind) by third parties to enhance services or support for the public, or evidence of funds from third parties to enhance or extend the engagement activity. Evidence of sustainability, through, for example, a sustained or ongoing engagement with a group, a significant increase in participation in events or programmes, continuing sales, downloads, or use of resources.
Policy engagements	• Evidence of influence on a debate in public policy and practice through membership of or distinctive contributions to expert panels and policy committees or advice to government (at local, national or international level). • Formal partnership agreements or research collaboration with major institutions, NGOs and public bodies. Consultancies to public or other bodies that utilise research expertise. • Evidence of engagement with campaign and pressure groups and other civil organisations (including membership and activities of those organisations and campaigns) as a result of research. • Changes to professional standards and behaviour.
Independent testimony	• Acknowledgements in annual reports or other publications of NGOs, charities and other civil society organisations. Testimony of experts or users who can attest to the reach and/or significance of impact. Third-party evidence of changed policies, practices, processes, strategies.
Formal evaluations	• Professional evaluations of exhibitions, performances or other outputs. Formal peer reviews of funded impact-relevant research. Studies on the social return on investment.

Take away from the REF experience

REF 2021 Impact 25% Outputs 60% Environment 15%

REF2014 Research Excellence Framework

Impact agenda is here to stay!

Scientists are supposed to predict it in fund applications H2020
QA is assessing it (for REF amongst others)

Impact = the demonstrable real world benefit of research

Key words: attributable, change, non-academic, evidence

Critical remarks voiced by the research community remain

- Assumption of linear process between research and benefit
- Collaborative and co-creative aspects are overlooked
- Predicting impact is impossible, planning for it is worthwhile
- Undervalued meaningful interactions

Methodological challenges of Research Impact Assessment (RIA)

Morgan Jones M, Grant J, et al. Making the grade: methodologies for assessing and evidencing research impact. In: Dean A, Wykes M, Stevens H, editors. Seven Essays on Impact. DESCRIBE project report for JISC. Exeter: University of Exeter; 2013. p. 25–43.

Five common methodological challenges

- Time lags: how do we assess the impact of research if it usually takes a long time for impact to occur? When is the right timing?
- Attribution and contribution: how do we attribute particular impacts to particular research projects and researchers (and vice-versa) if research is often incremental and collaborative?
- Marginal differences: how do we distinguish between high and low impact if there is no shared understanding of impact or assessment standards yet?
- Transaction costs: how do we ensure that the benefits of RIA outweigh its costs if the assessment process can be costly and burdensome?
- Unit of assessment: how do we determine an appropriate unit of assessment if research can be multi-disciplinary and multi-impactful?

Ghent University institutional impact policy

MISSION STATEMENT

Ghent University wants to be a **creative community** of staff, students and alumni, connected by the values the university carries out: **engagement**, **openness** and **pluralism**.

Our motto is **Dare to Think**: we encourage students and staff members to adopt a critical approach.

GHENT UNIVERSITY

Societal impact policy statement issued in 2014

Ghent University institutional impact policy

GHENT UNIVERSITY

Engagement of Ghent University staff members implies that they are committed to demonstrating the vital role of Ghent university in contributing to society, in terms of education and training, the production and dissemination of new knowledge, and the sustained engagement with societal stakeholders facing the national and international challenges (SDG).

Impact, therefore, is an integral part of what Ghent University does.

Confusion in terms: (societal) value creation (in Belgium and the Netherlands often referred to as 'valorisation') is creating added value of scientific knowledge and expertise outside academia. But economic added value seems to be isolated form the societal impact.

If the created added value is aimed at or is of specific importance to a community of external stakeholders (ranging from the general public to very specific groups of stakeholders) the value creation is deemed 'societal'.

Research impact versus economic contribution – purposeful benefits

The Economic Contribution of the Flemish Universities

A report to

VLIR Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad

University of Antwerp · KU LEUVEN · VUB Vrije Universiteit Brussel · GHENT UNIVERSITY · UHASSELT

December 2017

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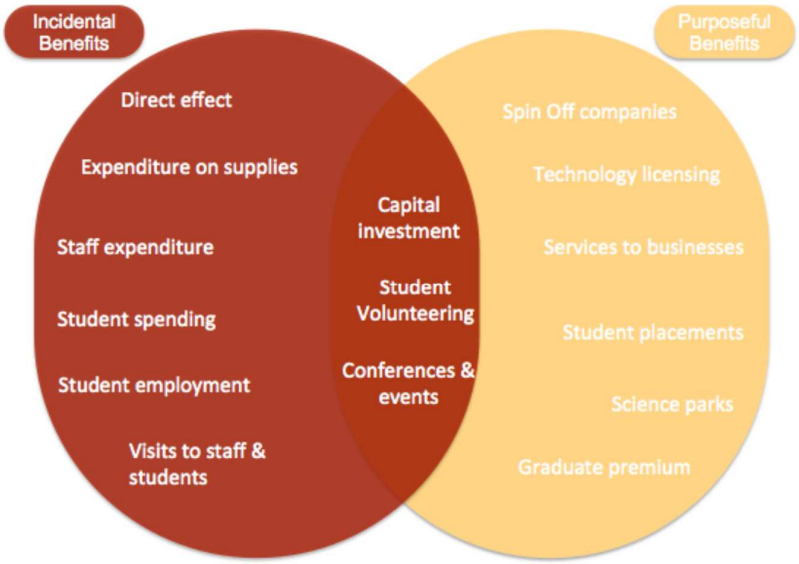


Ghent University institutional impact policy

GHENT UNIVERSITY

68
SPIN-OFFS
(2008-2017)

22
VALORISATION
CONSORTIA

439
PATENTS
(2008-2017)

INTENSIVE
COLLABORATION
WITH COMPANIES

Ghent University institutional societal impact policy

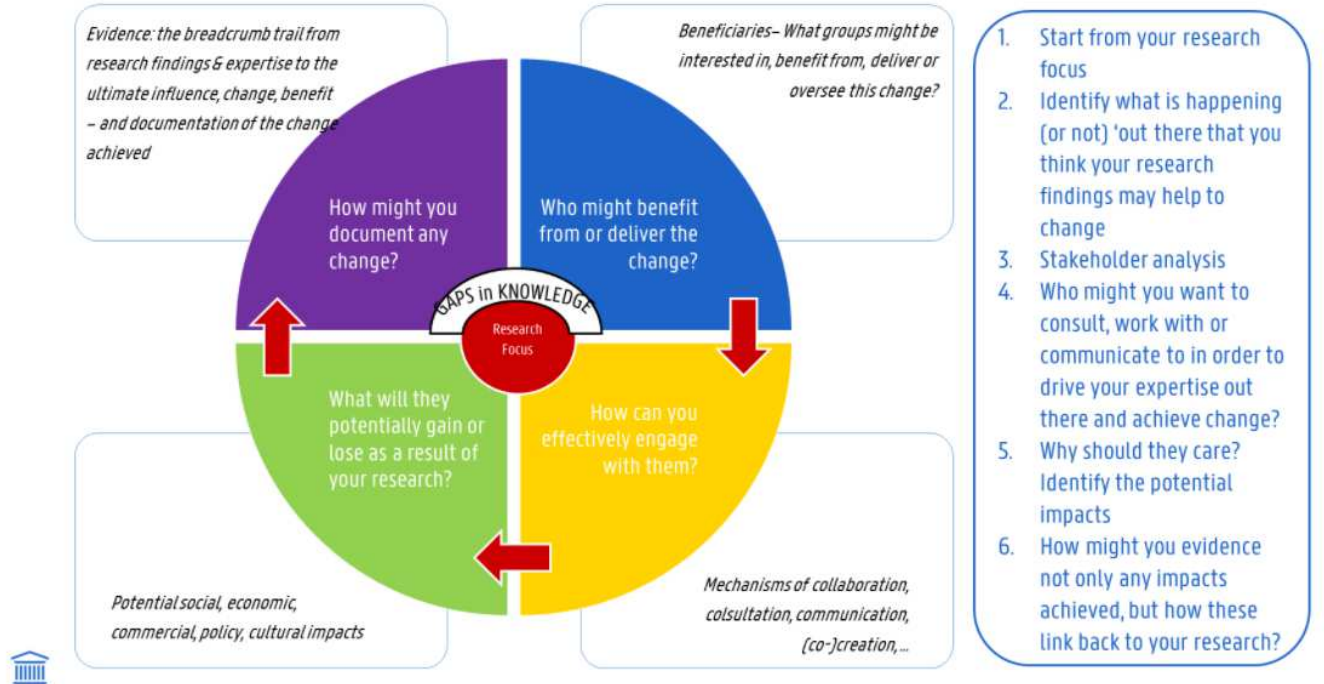
In its mission to stimulate and incentivise the contributions of Ghent University's research community to society, the university adopted a **policy plan**, putting forward an approach:

- Which is relevant to all fields of science
- Which respects basic fundamental research
- Which takes into account the individuality and talent of researchers
- Which recognises societal value creation as an iterative process: from the initial research question to the methods used and the dissemination of the results

The policy plan focuses on creating an academic environment within Ghent University conducive to societal value creation via a set of actions:

- Showcasing success stories
- Decentralised community of practice
- Science Communication, e.g. mandatory lay summary of PhD thesis, awards
- Recognition in recruitment and personalized career progression criteria

Ghent University institutional impact policy – support planning for it



PLANNING IMPACT – BROAD APPROACH

What is in it for the individual scientist?

How can participating in the research impact agenda enhance future career progression?

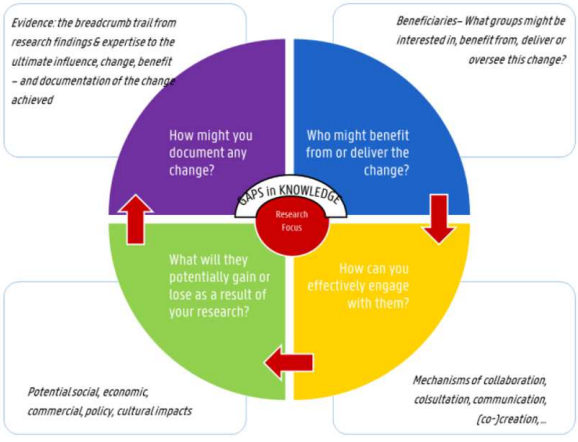
Accepting and understanding research impact within your area of academic interest – as well as engaging in external activities – translates into multiple benefits for professional development and helps to keep your work relevant.

For example, you might:

- Learn skills that can be transferred to the academic research and teaching environment
- Cultivate new relationships that generate unexpected opportunities
- Improve your ability to communicate effectively with a diverse range of individuals who have different perspectives and experiences to share
- Increase your confidence levels and inspire others to fulfill their potential or reach their goals
- Raise your profile and reputation

Inspired on Rose-Marie BARBEAU, University of Glasgow, survey results based on participants of open acces course: Research Impact: Making a Difference

Research impact vision – identify the gap



1. Summarise your core goal in one or two sentences. Be specific (for example, "to develop a novel treatment for patients with bone cancer") and avoid making sweeping statements (for example, "to cure cancer")

2. Examine your goal from an external perspective. What's happening (or not happening) beyond academia that your findings might change?

3. Make a list of anyone who could be directly affected by the change (primary beneficiaries)

4. Make a list of individuals or groups connected to the primary beneficiaries who might also be affected by the change (secondary and tertiary beneficiaries)

5. Articulate what these various communities will gain from the change

6. Consider how you'll engage with these various communities to facilitate the change (communicate, collaborate or consult)

Research impact vision template derived from open access course: Research Impact: Making a Difference

Research impact – evidence 1 of 3

Building up an evidence trail that links the societal or economic change back to your original research is a key feature of this process, providing robust evidence of measurable change to support research impact is already required by many funding bodies worldwide. It is divided into three interconnected categories: **dissemination** of your research, **relationships** with external stakeholders and **substantiation** of the outcomes.

Dissemination: you can:

- Work with institutional communications officers, journal editors, publishers and the popular media: TV, radio, newspapers, or digital platforms
- Make yourself known to directories of media experts if you can speak or write about a subject likely to be of interest to the general public
- Use social media platforms and public engagement activities to disseminate information about your research to a wide audience
- Join online forums and interest groups relevant to your research impact vision
- Track dissemination of your research using digital tagging and analytical tools (e.g. ORCID and Altmetric)

Inspired on Rose-Marie BARBEAU, University of Glasgow

Research impact – evidence 2 of 3

Relationships:

Disseminating your research will raise your profile and reputation as an expert in the field, which in turn will create opportunities to engage with external stakeholders.

In terms of the evidence trail, these relationships are often the key supporting link between your original research and its eventual societal or economic benefit.

Therefore, it is important to save all documentation pertinent to engagement for future reference. For example:

- Formal invitations to participate in events, meetings or committees
- Contracts or other legal documents that outline the nature of the relationship
- Testimonials from representatives within stakeholder organisations (preferably from an individual who holds a position of authority)
- Posts, tweets, comments, and other digital outputs that provide evidence of new or ongoing relationships

Inspired on Rose-Marie BARBEAU, University of Glasgow

Research impact – evidence 3 of 3

Substantiation:

- Annual reports
- Guidelines
- Media coverage of events or product launches
- Meeting minutes
- Patent applications
- Policy documents
- Position statements
- Professional training manuals
- Programs for public talks, exhibitions or events
- Recommendations of regulatory bodies
- Training manuals

Specific examples of material that was used to substantiate research impact as part of a UK-wide assessment can be found in the Research Excellence Framework 2014 database of research impact case studies. This database is considered to be the benchmark for identifying and substantiating research impact.

Inspired on Rose-Marie BARBEAU, University of Glasgow

Research impact – working with industry

Inspired on Malcom Skingle, director Academic Liason GlaxoSmithKline

Research impact – working with industry

Key messages

- The academic–industrial collaboration requires a programme of research with clearly defined objectives and timelines, as well as the participation of motivated individuals with a willingness to work together
- Ensuring that a budget is in place is also a key success factor for any academic partnership with industry
- Academics should review the published literature, as well as the company's website and annual report, to determine what the industrial collaboration would bring to their research programme
- Academics should identify competitors working within the Higher Education sector and highlight the unique selling points of their own research and the specifics of what they can offer the company
- Academics should use their networks to find a suitable individual within the company to help negotiate the partnership (for example, someone with access to funds or a champion for the research area)
- A successful industrial collaboration needs regular communication, honesty and transparency from both parties; however, academics must appreciate that the relationship could break down owing to external issues (for example, a shift in company strategy or changes in personnel)

Inspired on Malcom Skingle, director Academic Liason GlaxoSmithKline

Research impact – working with Health Service

Inspired on Karen Bell Head of Research and Development and Innovation Champion for a regional health board within the Scottish National Health Service

Research impact – working with Health Service

Key messages

- Health services are seeking innovations from academics that can be rapidly implemented, modified to meet their particular needs and extended to other clinical areas
- The shared goals should be clearly mapped out as achieving tangible results (particularly in the short term) can enhance motivation among participating healthcare staff
- Research programmes should be practical, yet fun, to maintain high levels of staff engagement in the process
- Early engagement, planning, flexibility and taking the time to build relationships are all vital for a successful partnership between academia and health services
- Both sides must have perseverance and optimism: some aspects of the research might not work out as expected but failure could be a stepping stone to future success

Inspired on Karen Bell Head of Research and Development and Innovation Champion for a regional health board within the Scottish National Health Service

Research impact – working with charity funding

Research impact – working with charity funding

Working with charity funding agencies

Find A Better Way is a UK charity committed to helping countries and individuals affected by the legacy of landmines. This organisation has funded a large multidisciplinary research programme at the University of Glasgow. Co-led by Matthew Dalby (Professor of Cell Engineering) and Manuel Salmeron-Sanchez (Chair of Biomedical Engineering) – and involving researchers with backgrounds ranging from stem cell biology to nanoscale technology – the project is exploiting various tools to promote regeneration of bone lost as a consequence of blast injury.

Key messages

- The support of a funding agency from outside your usual field of interest could broaden the scope of your research impact vision and facilitate unexpected interdisciplinary collaborations
- Coming up with a timely and practical solution to a specific problem posed by the funding agency could secure support for your research programme
- The outcomes and lessons learned from one project might be applied to other situations or populations and so potentially extend the reach of the research impact

Inspired on Lou McGrath Chief Executive Officer of Find A Better Way

Research impact – working with the public

Research impact – working with the public

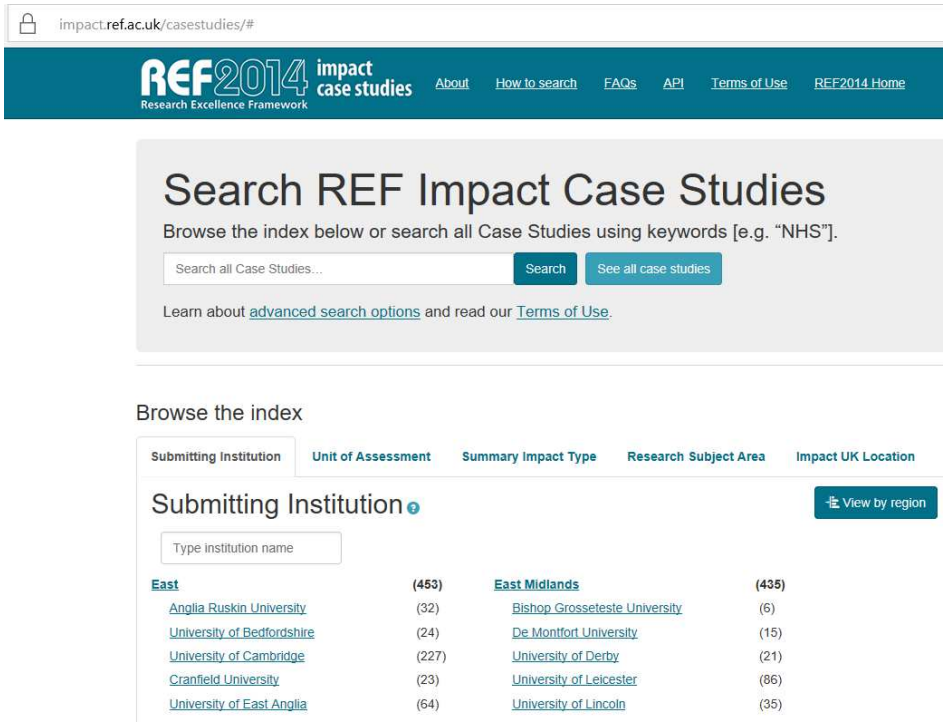
Interaction with the general public is increasingly acknowledged as a route to maximise research impact because citizens are often the direct beneficiaries of societal and economic change

Key messages:

- Members of the public bring a new perspective, differing life experiences and a wealth of transferable skills to the research impact process
- Public representatives can help set the agenda, frame key questions and find solutions because they understand what's important to the end-users of your work
- Members of the public tend to be highly motivated as they want to make a difference

Inspired on Elspeth Banks and Iaim MacPherson Clinical Senior Lecturer in Medical Oncology, University of Glasgow

Research impact – connecting to Citizen Science



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NCCPE Award Winners

SMASHfestUK

A narrative-driven festival with a specific mission to widen participation and build diversity in STEM, through the arts.

Heart and Lung Shops

Scientists collaborated with designers to develop interactive experiences around cardiovascular and respiratory research.

Impact case study (REF3b)

REF2014 Research Excellence Framework

Institution: University of Birmingham
Unit of Assessment: UoA 17 – Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology
Title of case study: Biodiversity in Cities: public engagement with the urban environment
1. Summary of the impact Urban biodiversity supports the functioning of the urban ecosystem and provides recreational opportunities. This is a West Midlands-based public engagement case study demonstrating both environmental and social impact through a five-year BIG Lottery-funded project based on research into urban biodiversity led by Professor Jon Sadler. The project - OPALWM – focused much of its public engagement activity on some of the most economically-deprived areas of Birmingham and the Black Country, locations that the scientific research had identified as having unrealised environmental opportunities. OPALWM achieved extensive recorded reach (122 organisations; 26,000 people; 60,000 website hits) and active engagement from schools, volunteers and wildlife groups. It has a sustainability plan designed to maintain its impact after its BIG Lottery funding ends in November 2013.
2. Underpinning research Urban biodiversity provides recreational opportunities and supports the functioning of the urban ecosystem, providing potentially valuable, if as yet poorly quantified, ecological services. The research underpinning this case study was led by Jon Sadler (Professor of Biogeography) and focused on the relationships between cityscape habitats and their biodiversity. Although

The OPAL programme also has led to the development of a European Citizen Science Association (formed March 2013), which seeks to engage 5 million people across Europe over the next 4 years in citizen science.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. OPAL Community Environment Report (2013) http://www.opalexplorenature.org/CEreport
2. OPALWM MEV returns to the BIG Lottery; available from the University.
3. Information on bees on "Bang Goes the Theory" (http://www.opalexplorenature.org/BangGoesTheoryNews) and Midlands today (http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/birmingham/hi/front_page/newsid_8703000/8703839.stm)
4. External interviews / focus group responses collected by Dr Glyn Everett to evaluate the impact of OPALWM activities available from the University
5. OPALWM Year end (3) report to the BIG Lottery. Case Study 1; Appendix III
6. Testimonials to OPALWM on the value and impact of their activity; available from the University
7. Total number of national survey results uploads/returns to the OPAL national website for the West Midlands region. Spreadsheet created by OPAL Dec 2011
8. Film – [redacted]: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEfKlKaTGT0 and local films made by children at Castle Vale: http://www.environmentaltrust.org.uk/Media.html

Research impact – considering Citizen Science further

Citizen Science: ordinary citizens become active participants in scientific research.

Citizen Science may well be the most important new trend in the scientific world: it enables citizens to collaborate on scientific projects regardless of their backgrounds. Citizen Science means they are no longer just the audience for science communication. They are also involved in the science itself – and actively.

The best known example: the Galaxy Zoo project, started in 2007 - astronomers from Oxford University website involved citizens in the classification of nebulas.
Since then, more than a quarter of a million users have contributed to more than 60 million classifications, resulting in several scientific publications.

Research impact – considering Citizen Science further

Categories and Participation Levels
Image Courtesy: OpenScientist

Pyramid: as the levels of complexity (or activity) increase, the number of available projects and number of people participating decreases. Even if someone wants to participate at a high level, they need many people collecting data and performing the initial analyses that they can build on for their expert level analysis.

Research impact – considering Citizen Science further

Contributory: Generally designed by scientists and for which members of the public primarily contribute data; also includes studies in which scientists analyze citizens' observations, such as those in journal and other records, whether or not those citizens are still alive.

Collaborative: Generally designed by scientists for which members of the public contribute data but may also help to refine project design, analyze data, or disseminate findings.

Co-created: Designed by scientists and members of the public working together and for which at least some of the public participants are actively involved in most or all steps of the scientific process; also includes research wholly conceived and implemented by amateur (non-professional) scientists.

Exercise: what could be the impact vision of a CS project?

2 examples

Vespa-Watch

Monitoring of Vespa velutina

Research Impact Vision Template

This template has been designed to help you build up a picture of your potential research impact. The format provides a quick and easy way to capture ideas, activities and outcomes as they evolve.

1. What is your core goal?
Summarise the specific question that your work seeks to answer (ideally in one or two sentences).

2. What might change?
Scrutinise your work from an external perspective to identify areas of unmet need. For example, a gap in knowledge or understanding among specific groups or sectors; a gap in knowledge or understanding about a specific process or technology; a requirement to identify, respond to, and solve a specific problem; a demand in the market that your findings could address; or policy that is either non-existent or not fit for purpose.

3. Who are the primary beneficiaries?

List anyone who will be directly affected by the change (e.g. businesses, consumers, patients, etc).

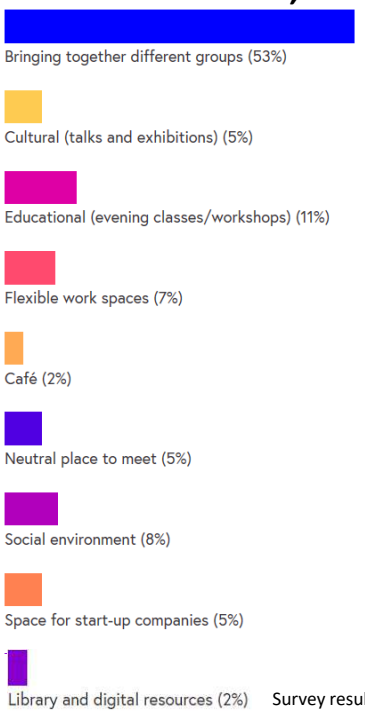
4. Who are the secondary and tertiary beneficiaries?
List individuals, organisations or sectors connected to the primary beneficiaries that might also be affected by the change (e.g. carers, charities, cultural organisations, energy suppliers, family members, financial services, global security, governments, health services, industry, justice systems, non-governmental organisations, policy makers, regulatory bodies, social services, tourism, urban planners, etc).

5. What will the beneficiaries gain from the change?
Consider why potential beneficiaries might be interested in your work. Will they be getting new or improved policies, understanding, practice, products, processes or systems? Are there additional benefits? For example, if your findings influence policy, are you able to provide support and/or guidance to individuals and groups delivering the new policy? If the findings change practice, could they also be of interest to other populations or sectors?

6. How will you engage with these beneficiaries?
Think about the most effective ways to reach each beneficiary. Whichever method you choose, be sure to build in mechanisms that enable beneficiaries to engage with you directly, whether to provide views, ask questions or supply additional information.

Research impact – fostering @ co-creation hubs

Co-creation hubs , academics look externally to forge productive relations with stakeholders.



GHENT : the Foundry: location / space to stimulate creativity, innovation & entrepreneurship
2 activities: DO!: our centre for entrepreneurship and Ghent Design Factory: to promote design thinking and going from problem to solution

Survey results based on participants of open acces course: Research Impact: Making a Difference

Research impact – fostering @ co-creation hubs

Key messages:
A co-creation hub that is embedded within the university campus builds an innovative ecosystem with tangible benefits for everyone involved. For example, such facilities can:

- Raise the reputation of the university within the wider community as an place where societal and economic change is high on the agenda
- Provide space and support for start-up companies
- Enable product development and testing in a real-world setting
- Help students to develop an entrepreneurial spirit
- Provide a conduit to engage the public in research impact (for example, talks and special events)

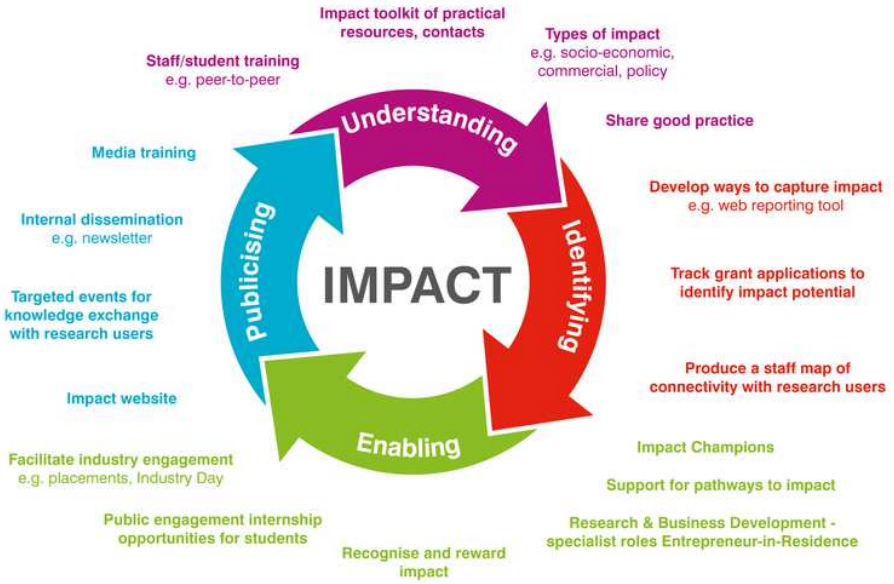
ACCOMPLISSH co-creation and research impact in the social sciences and humanities

Quadruple Helix partners - different expectations

- Academic partners - represent their institutions as credible participants in co-creation, responsibility to promote societal change
- Industrial partners, besides medical or technological projects for financial return, show an increasing appetite to build partnerships in the social sciences and humanities
- Government partners prioritise the public interest and needs of their citizens
- Societal partners have limited resources available to participate in co-creation; however, they can offer access to relevant communities and so promote public engagement

Recommendation: offer spaces for interactions to occur, whether in the real world or online

e.g co-creation hub Helsinki



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Emerald news

Dr Julie Bayley and Emerald partnership to help strengthen 'impact literacy' in the academic community

Dr Julie Bayley and Emerald will accelerate the impact debate and deliver tangible tools and training to build capacity and skill within the impact community

Bingley, United Kingdom, 29 March 2018 – We're pleased to announce a new partnership with Dr Julie Bayley – incoming Direct of Research Impact Development (University of Lincoln), champion of the ARMA Impact Special Interest Group and one of the mo influential voices in research impact.

The research sector is increasingly tasked with demonstrating impact, and at Emerald we recognize the challenges for colleagues within the UK and internationally.

Alongside national assessment exercises (e.g. Research Excellence Framework 2014, 2021), there is growing recognition that traditional metrics cannot fully demonstrate the value of academic research. For example, seven of the UK's research councils recently signed up to DORA (the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment), heralding a call to shift from blunt journal impact factors towards more comprehensive indicators of influence. This move has added further heat to an already lively debate on the importance of academic research delivering real impact, extending beyond citations and other established scholarly metrics.

There is a genuine need to help researchers prove their work is making a meaningful difference at a time when funding is increasingly dependent on demonstrating influence on practice, policy and society. Julie and Emerald will work together to build tools and training, helping the academic community to navigate these challenges by becoming more 'impact literate'. Our

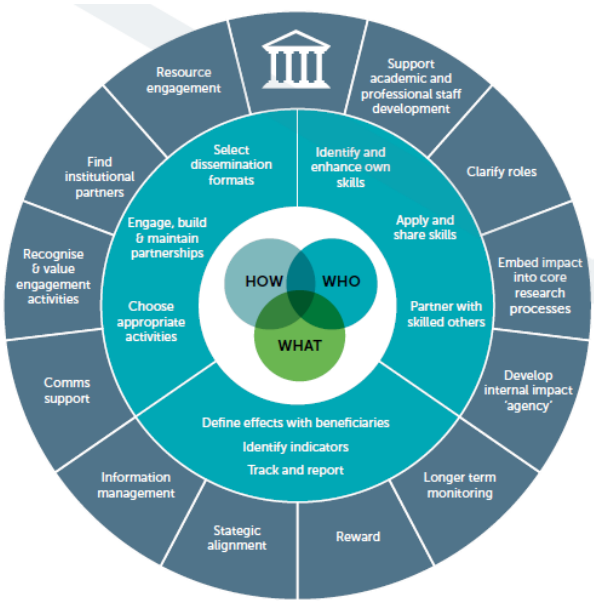
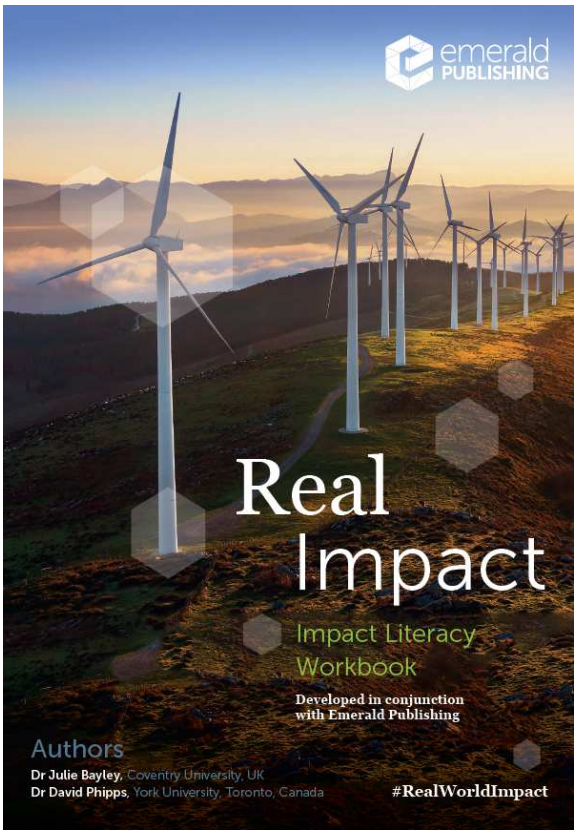
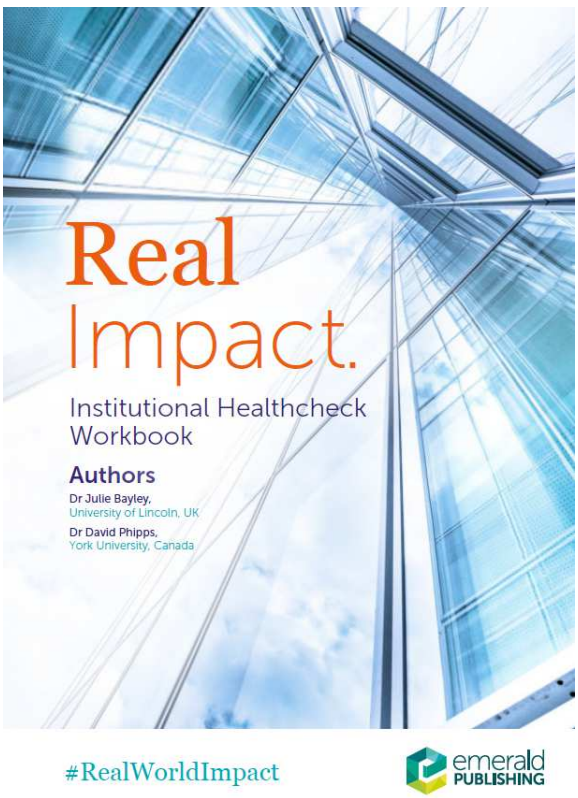


Figure 2: Impact literate institutions
From Bayley, J. and Phipps, D. (2017) Building the Concept of Impact Literacy, Evidence and Policy (available online) https://doi.org/10.1332/174426417X15034894876108





Ten guidelines for Research Impact Assessment

International School on Research Impact Assessment (ISRIA)
http://theinternationalschoolonria.com

Adam et al. Health Research Policy and Systems (2018) 16:8
DOI 10.1186/s12961-018-0281-5

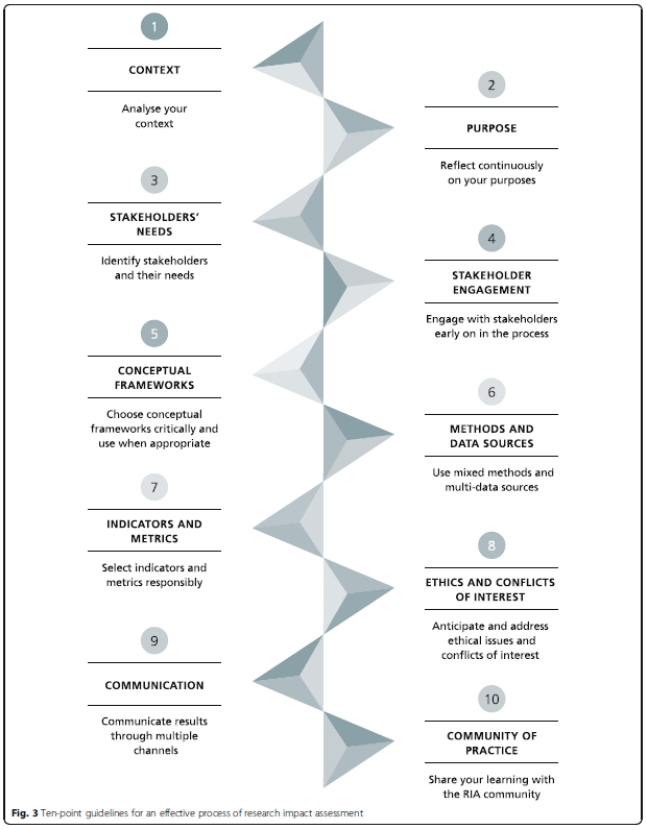


Fig. 3 Ten-point guidelines for an effective process of research impact assessment