Research staff forum
Understanding research impact
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Key terms

- **REF2014**: Research Excellence Framework
- **RCUK**: Research Councils UK
- **Beneficiaries/research users**: the individuals or groups of people who benefit from a specific piece of research
What is impact?

“Impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia”

- HEFCE definition for REF 2014
The **demonstrable** contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy. Economic and societal impacts embrace all the extremely diverse ways in which research-related knowledge and skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations by:

- fostering global economic performance (UK competitiveness)
- increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy,
- enhancing quality of life, health and creative output.
Why impact?

- Not a new concept
- Allocate funding in an age of austerity
- Accountability for publicly funded research and benefits
- Early focus on economic benefits
Impact as a funding criterion

Research Excellence Framework 2020
- Outputs 65%
- Impact 20% or ???
- Research environment 15%

Funders (RCUK, EU)
- Focus on beneficiaries
- Research uptake
- Effects of research uptake

Retrospective

Prospective
Core messages

- Engaging with **non-academic** research users (relationships)
- **Maximising** the impact of research (research communications)
- **Training** highly-skilled people (capacity-building)
Types of impact

**ACADEMIC IMPACT**
- Scientific advancement
- Teaching and Learning
- Skills development
- Methodologies, techniques, approaches

**NON-ACADEMIC IMPACT**
- Health and welfare
- Public policy and services
- Practitioners
- Culture and society
- Economic and commercial
- Environment

[www.sussex.ac.uk/research/impact](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/impact)
RCUK – Pathways to Impact

Pathways to Impact

Academic Impacts
- Enhancing the knowledge economy
- Training highly skilled researchers
- Improving teaching and learning
- Improving health and well-being
- Wealth creation, economic prosperity and regeneration
- Contributing towards the health of academic disciplines

Economic and Societal Impacts
- Enhancing cultural enrichment and quality of life
- Commercialisation and exploitation
- Improving social welfare, social cohesion and/or national security
- Attracting R&D investment
- Environmental sustainability, protection and impact
- Increasing public engagement with research and related societal issues

Worldwide academic advancement
Innovative methodologies, equipment, techniques, technologies and cross-disciplinary approaches
Contributing towards the health of academic disciplines

Enhancing the research capacity, knowledge and skills of public, private and third sector organisations
Changing organisational culture and practices
How can/does your research make a difference to the world?

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<th>How?</th>
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The formula (RCUK)

Who are the beneficiaries?

How might they benefit?

What will you do so that they have the opportunity to benefit?

Impact Summary

Pathways to impact
Other formulas

Outputs
The direct and measurable Products of a project’s activity e.g. publications, software, guidelines, training materials, workshop/events etc.

Outcomes
The results stemming from the use of products/services and project activity e.g. X number of trained people, improved skills, increased awareness etc.

Impact
The broader effects of the outcomes, e.g. increased employability, more effective practice, enhanced quality of life etc.

Dissemination strategy OR Communication plan
What’s the impact?

1. This research addresses the internationalisation of Emerging Market Family Firms (EMFF) and the question of how they compete and collaborate in European markets.

2. The future of UK Higher Education: Universities as actors in the knowledge society.


4. The project aims to trace the history of teenage sexuality through first composing and then juxtaposing three slices of time: the supposedly ‘permissive’ sixties 1865-70; the ‘backlash’ of 1985-90 and a moment of ‘sexualisation’ represented by the project’s own time frame of 2015-20.

5. Understanding the role of ‘X’ polymerase in damage tolerance during genome replication in eukaryotic cells.
What’s in it for you?

Better chances of funding
Increased awareness of your research
New perspectives on research questions
Opportunities for early feedback
Collaborations and partnerships
New skills
Positioning yourself in a global game
In summary

- Start thinking about it
- Don’t miss opportunities for networks and networking
- Try to engage with non-academic partners
- Improve related skills (media training, res comms)
- Take advantage of smaller-scale funding and engagement opportunity (e.g. shadowing schemes)
- Research Impact toolkit
  [http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/impact](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/staff/research/impact)
- Impact case studies:
  [http://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/impact/](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/impact/)
THANK YOU
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