Collecting Research Impact Evidence

Best Practice Guidance for the Research Community

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#IMPACTEVIDENCE
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**Why we’re here**

- Impact is important to funders
- Real time monitoring essential
- Focus on amplifying impact
- Impact case study preparation
- Impact attribution and evidence
- Key actions
BACKGROUND

Worked across sectors

- Third sector
- Index Top 10 Pharma
- Research organisations

Aligned with international reporting frameworks

- OECD
- UN Global Compact
- Global Reporting Initiative

Expertise

- VV-Impact Tracker
- Impact Reports (e.g. SROI)
- Co-authored papers, training
## What is Impact

**Kellogg Foundation Logic Model for Impact**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Inputs</strong></th>
<th><strong>Outputs</strong></th>
<th><strong>Activities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Outcomes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Impact</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time and material resources e.g. grants</td>
<td>Research activities e.g. research papers and presentations</td>
<td>Translation activities e.g. inclusion in government white paper</td>
<td>Changes that happen e.g. change in understanding</td>
<td>Measurable change that occurs e.g. change in the volume of sales of a product</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT IS IMPACT

HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND (HEFCE) DEFINITION OF IMPACT

“For the purposes of the REF, 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.” (REF, 2012).

RESEARCH COUNCILS UK (RCUK) DEFINITION OF IMPACT

ACADEMIC IMPACT

“The demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to academic advances, across and within disciplines, including significant advances in understanding, methods, theory and application.

When applying for Research Council funding via Je-S, pathways towards academic impact are expected to be outlined in the Academic Beneficiaries and appropriate Case for Support sections.”

ECONOMIC AND SOCIETAL IMPACTS

“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, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom,
- increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy,
- enhancing quality of life, health and creative output.”
WHAT IS IMPACT?

ACADEMIC IMPACT

IDEAS

SKILLED RESEARCHERS

KNOWLEDGE

PEOPLE

WIDER IMPACT

PLANET

PROFIT
RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

Impact case study (KTP):

4. Details of the Impact

In 2003, Carol, jointed by Ted Bricke (both Leicesters) founded a spin-out company – Lexis Ltd (a) commercialise the research summarised above. Since 2000, the company has developed an extensive network of RASP incorporating technologies that make the task of integrating it into larger-scale applications. These include:

- Adding Unicode compatibility and the ability to process input streams containing XML-encoded text.
- Derivatives of the tool for processing large amounts of text.
- Embedding the RASP components within LEA to improve scalability and interoperability (in collaboration with Digitas Ltd) [53]; and
- Integrating the components into a new learning classifier that is also distributed by LexisIR (http://lexir.co.uk/media/le▵ris.pdf). The extended version of RASP is available under a commercial licence [see Section 5, C1].

Below we describe how the research underpins two commercial text-processing applications and services. We indicate the extent of the user population, and the economic benefits in terms of improvements to businesses and revenue from system development and licensing contracts:

- Mobile phone-based question-answering service

From 2004 to 2009, (TEL) Ltd – under the trading names of TELASK and then later Tarperia – provided a UK-wide SMS question-answering service, employing human experts to answer questions submitted by the general public and charging £1 for each answer. In 2007, Tarpers contacted LexisIR to develop a system to understand enquiry-type queries. The system was provided by LexisIR and was in use by 2009. The system processes the text and provides a response, which is checked by a human before being returned. The system ran until mid-2009, when Tarpers was taken over by the US-based information services company, and its operations subsumed into the parent company’s existing infrastructure [C2].

This kind of direct-access automation had not been done previously in a commercial setting. Revisiting the design, the language processing was done by the FSA and the grammar parsing by the LM. The system was trained with a large dataset of enquire-type queries, and the answers were evaluated by human experts. The system was then used to answer new queries, and the performance was evaluated by human experts as well. The system was found to be more accurate than the human experts, and the time taken by a human to answer questions was around 30 seconds, whereas the time taken by the system was much less.

5. Sources to corroborate the Impact

C1. http://lexir.co.uk/licences-and-services/
C2. Communication from the former TEL Ltd, Tarperia and VPL Software Engineering, kgs.
C3. Confidential LexisIR impact 2002: Basic DG Performance and Error Analysis; can be made available for just expenses.
C4. Communications from the Company Secretary, LexisIR Ltd.
C6. Chief Executive, Cambridge Language Examinations, Ltd.
**Impact Assessor Perspectives**

**Attribute the impact to the research**

- Impact evidence helped research assessors to understand how the research led to impact

**Distinguish activities, such as public engagement, from impact**

- Evidence that enables assessors to distinguish activities from actual impact
- E.g. Spin out companies and the sales or jobs they create

**Include simple narratives and empirical data where possible**

- Clear and specific narratives
- Where possible empirical indicators demonstrating the impacts that can be aggregated

**Allow easy access to the impact evidence**

- Ensure the impact data can easily be interrogated, accessed and re-purposed
USES OF IMPACT EVIDENCE
WHAT IS IN IT FOR ACADEMICS?

- Project funding
- Researcher profile
  - What do you want to be known for?
- Career progression
IMPACT TYPE

- Economic prosperity, business and industry
- Environment (planet, air, plant life, wildlife)
- Health, welfare and quality of life
- International development
- Process change
- Public policy, public services and law
- Society, culture and creativity
- Academic advancement, increasing skills teaching and learning
### Impact Types

**What types of evidence are you collecting to show these impact types?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic prosperity, business and industry</th>
<th>Environment (planet, air, plant life, wildlife)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health, welfare and quality of life</td>
<td>International development</td>
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<td>Public policy, public services and law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Society, culture and creativity</td>
<td>Academic advancement, increasing skills teaching and learning</td>
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**Research Impact Network answers**

- Quality-adjusted life year
- Office of National Statistics
- Book sales/downloads/lending figures
- Critic reviews – published and online
- Sales figures
- Jobs created (FTE) / saved
- Performance charge
- Implementation of training
- Offers of platforms e.g. columnist for local, national, international paper
- Offers of residency or secondments
- Online commentary and social media volumes
- Citation by international charities and governments
- New strategy document
- New guidance issued by authority
- Patents
- Change in the amount of resources allocated to specific areas
- New businesses created in an area
- News reports of commercial exits
- Sales figures of launch of new product
- Third party formal evaluation results
- Number of spinouts
- Pollution reports
- Bio-diversity counts
**Stakeholder**

Q: **What channels will you use to collect evidence from these groups?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ‘General Public’</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Interest groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small to medium businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large businesses and multinational companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Enterprises</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil Society</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary organisations</td>
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<table>
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<th>Public Sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools, colleges of life-long learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and leisure Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and wellbeing agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional, national government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authorises, strategic bodies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Research Impact Network answers**

- Annual reports from institutes, companies, governments and NGOs
- Letters of support
- Steering group positions
- Work cited in further funding applications by community/voluntary groups
- Press coverage
- HANSARD
- Surveys- paper and online
- Dialogue through public facing (recorded) events
- One-to-one testimonials
- Focus groups
- Newsletter open-rates
- Comments on TV programmes/news articles and websites
- Event feedback
- Social Media website hits, tweeds
- Personal letter from individual at third party organisations
- Company websites and press releases
- Secondments- Offer letters
- Community meetings and minutes
- On-going testimonials from community party
IMPACT IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT LIFECYCLE

1. Identify potential impact
2. Plan impact activities and set up evidence capture
3. Carry out impact activities
4. Capture impact evidence
5. Impact statement to funding organisation and project stakeholders
6. Use impact reports as evidence to scale the reach of the project

- Funding opportunity
- Write funding grant
- Grant approval
- Deliver project
- Report results
How will you collect evidence of impact from each of the following activities?

- Events, conferences, seminars and workshops
- Press activity
- Government activity: steering committees, white papers
- Business/industry collaborations or consultancy
- Creation of a digital/web presence
- Collaboration, people exchange
- Education, training and skills
- Spin Out Company, patent and license Agreements
## Impact Evidence to Capture

### Stakeholder Information
- Annual reports from institutes, companies, governments and NGOs
- Community meetings and minutes
- Company websites and press releases
- Work cited in further funding applications by community/voluntary groups
- Press coverage

### Testimonials
- Letters of support
- One-to-one testimonials
- Focus groups
- Personal letter from individual at third party organisations
- Surveys-paper and online
- Event feedback
- On-going testimonials from community party

### Online traffic
- Newsletter open-rates
- Social Media website hits, tweets
- Comments on TV programmes/news articles and websites

### Positions of responsibility
- Steering group positions
  - Dialogue through public facing (recorded) events
  - Secondments-Offer letters
  - HANSARD
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EVIDENCE CAPTURE TOOLS

VV-Impact Tracker Evidence Vault

Survey Monkey / Smart survey

Google Alert - Trends

Focus groups / Interviews

HANSARD
WHAT YOU CAN DO NEXT?

- Plan for impact at the beginning of projects
- Review current projects for where impact may occur
- Identify your stakeholders
- Identify what you want to collect
- Identify how you can collect this data
- Identify funding and resources for impact activities
- Identify where to capture impact data
- Re-purpose the information
THANK YOU

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