

# Impact into grants

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# Session overview

- What is Impact?
- Why does research impact matter to funders?
- Planning for impact
- Funding Process
- Common Mistakes
- Conclusions
- Support & useful information



# What is Research Impact

Research Impact is an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life.

*“Impact is the good that researchers can do in the world”* **Professor Mark Reed (Fast Track impact)**



# Example of a funder's definition



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NIHR's vision is to improve the health and the wealth of the nation through research. This means that for them, research impact is how knowledge generated from research benefits people's health and well-being, how health and care services are delivered, and can bring about benefits to our society and our economy.



# Types of Impact

- Understanding & Awareness
- Attitudinal
- Economic
- Environmental
- Health & Wellbeing
- Policy
- Decision making & behavior change
- Cultural
- Capacity & preparedness



# Importance to Funders

- Accountability and Funding:
  - Funders need to show that their funded research is impactful
  - Funder is accountable. NIHR - DoHSC
  - Public funding agencies must demonstrate value added to justify continued investment
- Why Demonstrate Impact:
  - Ensures accountability
  - Advocates for further public spending
  - Supports the case for continued investment





# Broader Importance

- **Motivation:**
  - Desire to make the world a better place
  - Personal reasons
  - Additional motivation when you see change happen
- **Career progression:**
  - Gaining new partners or stakeholders
  - Strengthen academic promotions application
  - Illustrates the benefits & quality of your work
- **Research Excellence Framework (REF):**
  - Individual & institutional reputation
  - Achieve Quality Related Funding (QR)
  - Celebrate impactful research



# Planning for Impact

A theory of change is a clear, logical framework that outlines how your activities are expected to lead to the desired impacts.

- It provides a roadmap for measuring progress towards your impact goals.
- To develop your theory of change.
- Identify your long-term impact goals.
- Determine the intermediate outcomes necessary to achieve them.
- Map out the activities and inputs required to produce outcomes and impacts.
- Identify barriers to success.





# Developing Effective Impact within grant proposals

- **Project team** – does it include commissioners, beneficiaries (e.g. the public), and other stakeholders?
- **Stakeholder and Public Engagement** - is there strong involvement from the beginning to the end of the study (and beyond)?
- **Expected Impact** – is it described clearly within the detailed project plan/case study? Does it tie in with the proposed work? Is it realistic and are there clear, achievable milestones?
- **Responsibility** - is it clear who will be responsible for the Impact?
- **Resources** - is the Impact work fully resourced?
- **Knowledge Mobilisation and Dissemination** – How will you communicate the research?



# Funding process

Impact will be assessed throughout and can play a critical role in the outcome of your application for funding

- Initial sift/outline stage in some calls
- Reviews received (with or without right to reply)
- PI response
- Panel includes reviewers outside sub-discipline & practitioners
- Panel discussion
- Ranking
- Decision



# Stand out with impact

Two types of reviewer:

- the risk adverse – sceptical – impact within the project term
- bored panellists – excited by high risk – impact beyond the project term
- Problem statement – contextual scale & importance.
- Identify impact goals, activities & outputs – clarity.
- Link the activities to impact goals & beneficiaries.
- Evidence of engagement and stakeholders to add credibility.
- Identify each group benefit from each impact goal.
- Highlight not funding would lead to negative impacts.
- Collaboration with highly influential organisations for coproduction.



# Common mistakes

- Application focuses on the pathway to impact
- Engagement is a mechanism to inform & apply research
- Focused too heavily on research & not the benefits
- Impact objectives aren't ordered with causal links



# Conclusions

- Start as soon as call comes out
- Impact plan & concept note can be prepared for adaption for specific call
- Be clear, specific and realistic
- Focus on benefits and changes not pathways
- Ensure impact activity is costed in
- Consider your long-term impact goals



# Useful links

- NIHR Impact Guide – <https://www.rdsresources.org.uk/rds-impact-guide?tags=Impact>
- NIHR Impact – Glossary of Terms - <https://www.rdsresources.org.uk/impact-glossary-of-terms?tags=Impact>
- ESRC Impact Toolkit - <https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/impact-toolkit-for-economic-and-social-sciences/>
- The Health Foundation toolkit - <https://www.health.org.uk/publications/communicating-your-research-a-toolkit>





# Useful tools

- Problem definition tool - [https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/Resources\\_2017\\_version\\_10.pdf](https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/Resources_2017_version_10.pdf)
- Pyramid principle by Barbara Minto - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1y15zjp47KQ&t=0s>
- Fast Track Impact Planning template - <https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/i-want-to-plan-my-impact>
- Stakeholder analysis - <https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/post/2019/03/11/how-to-do-stakeholder-analysis>





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# Research Funding Managers

The University has a team of Research Funding Managers who can support your application for funding. They can:

- Help identify appropriate funding sources
- Help you to understand the Funder's guidance and requirements
- Review your application and advise on content, structure and formatting
- Assist with the internal peer review and approval process
- Support you with using the Funder's submission system

Team email:  
[researchadvice@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:researchadvice@plymouth.ac.uk)



Susan Eick



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# Funding Advisors

The Funding Advisors work across the whole University to provide resource costs for externally funded projects and commercial consultancy.

The team provides advice and guidance to applicants regarding:

- Full economic costing (fEC) and the University costing methodology
- Funder's financial regulations
- Funder's application process
- UoP's [internal approval process](#) on Award Manager:
  - Costing / budget
  - Peer review
  - Approval by Head of School and Dean (+ Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research for applications over £2m).

Team email: [fundingadvisoryservice@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:fundingadvisoryservice@plymouth.ac.uk). Please give them at least 3 weeks' notice.



# Other support from R&I

- [Commercial Consultancy and Contract Research](#)
- [Innovation Funding Team](#)
- [Intellectual property and commercialisation](#) – David Mozley / Justin Rigden
- [Research governance, integrity, ethics and policies](#) - [plymouthsponsor@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:plymouthsponsor@plymouth.ac.uk)
- [Research impact](#) – Jane Minett
- [Public engagement](#) - Iola Nelson
- [Policy engagement](#) - – Rosie Langridge
- Grant Agreements and Collaboration Agreements – Legal Services ([legalservices@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:legalservices@plymouth.ac.uk))

