

Impact: What, Why and How

Impact is about making a difference, benefiting society or the economy, and demonstrating the value of research.

Research England (formerly HEFCE) and the research councils use a common definition of impact: "*The demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy.*"

Impact includes, but is not limited 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.

It also includes the reduction or prevention of harm, risk, cost or other negative effects.

Impact represents 25 per cent of the University's submission to the Research Excellence Framework, with significant implications for funding and reputation.



Top tips

1. Impact should be a consideration in research projects from the outset. Stakeholders will be invested in your research if you involve them throughout, making impact more likely
2. Costs of engagement and impact activities can be included in grant applications
3. Engagement activity should be purposeful – consider who will benefit, and how, then design your activity to make that happen
4. Consider how you will evaluate the impact of your research as part of your planning – think about what evidence you might need and how you will obtain it
5. Impact case studies are always written in the past tense
6. Identify types of impact you expect to achieve, identify who will benefit from this and what evidence you can capture to prove the impact has taken place
7. Signpost each impact so they can't be missed.

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Innovation, Impact and Business support

We can help you by:

1. Finding funding for impact development – ie, translational funds, Impact Accelerators and our own funds
2. Helping you to identify and link up with partners
3. Engaging with external sectors
4. Helping shape projects and growing opportunities
5. Writing and developing Pathways to Impact for important bids

See the Research Toolkit for more information: www.exeter.ac.uk/researchtoolkit/impact/researchimpact