



HOW TO CREATE A STAKEHOLDER MAP

From **Research** to **Policy**

The what, why and when of stakeholder mapping

A stakeholder map is an effective way of identifying and visually representing all the people, organisations and third parties that can influence or be influenced by your research, and how they are connected to you and to each other.

If you want your research to have effective and long-lasting impact outside of academia, it is important to give some time and thought to identifying who your policy stakeholders are, how they fit within the broader picture, and how you can approach them and collaborate with them.

Glossary

Stakeholders are people, organisations and third parties who influence, regulate and implement policy in your area of research:

- **Influencers** are those who inform and influence decision-making, they can be researchers or lobby groups, or even the affected communities themselves.
- **Regulators** are those who hold the power to create policies, broadly speaking they are Central and local government, metro mayors and devolved administrations; but in some areas there might be other sector-specific regulators.
- **Implementers** are those who ensure policies are followed by changing either their own or other people's behaviours.

If your project has a policy element, or you intend to have policy impact, we recommend carrying out a stakeholder mapping exercise **at the start of your project**, so that you can involve your stakeholders throughout the project and ensure your research answers your stakeholders' key questions. Conducting a stakeholder mapping exercise will help ground your research project in real-world impact and deliver long-term benefits for your project.

How do I identify my stakeholders?

In order to identify relevant stakeholders for your research, you can ask yourself these questions:

- Who makes policy in my area?** (e.g., is it central government or local authorities? Which department? Are devolved legislatures involved?)
- Who influences policy in my research area?** (e.g., public figures, think tanks, charities, etc.)
- Who is affected by policy in my area?** (e.g., specific age groups, local communities, patients, service users)

Try and think about your stakeholders from a variety of sectors:

- **Parliament and Government** (Select Committees, APPGs, Government Departments Public bodies, specific MPs or Civil Servants who are advocates in this area). You can check out [our other how-to guides](#) to find out how to search for these stakeholders.
- **Local authorities** (city councils, county councils, metro areas)
- **Charities, NGOs and third-sector organisations**
- **Think-tanks and lobby groups**
- **Community groups**
- **Industry associations**
- **Media outlets**

The what, why and when of stakeholder mapping

As a first step, we recommend trying to list as many of them as possible, while staying relevant to your research area. To do so, you can use our [Stakeholder map template](#) spreadsheet, which will help you categorise your list and identify relevant people to contact within those organisations. Feel free to [reach out to us](#) for support identifying and contacting potential stakeholders. In this first step, try and keep your approach as broad as possible, there will be opportunities to weed out less relevant stakeholders later on.

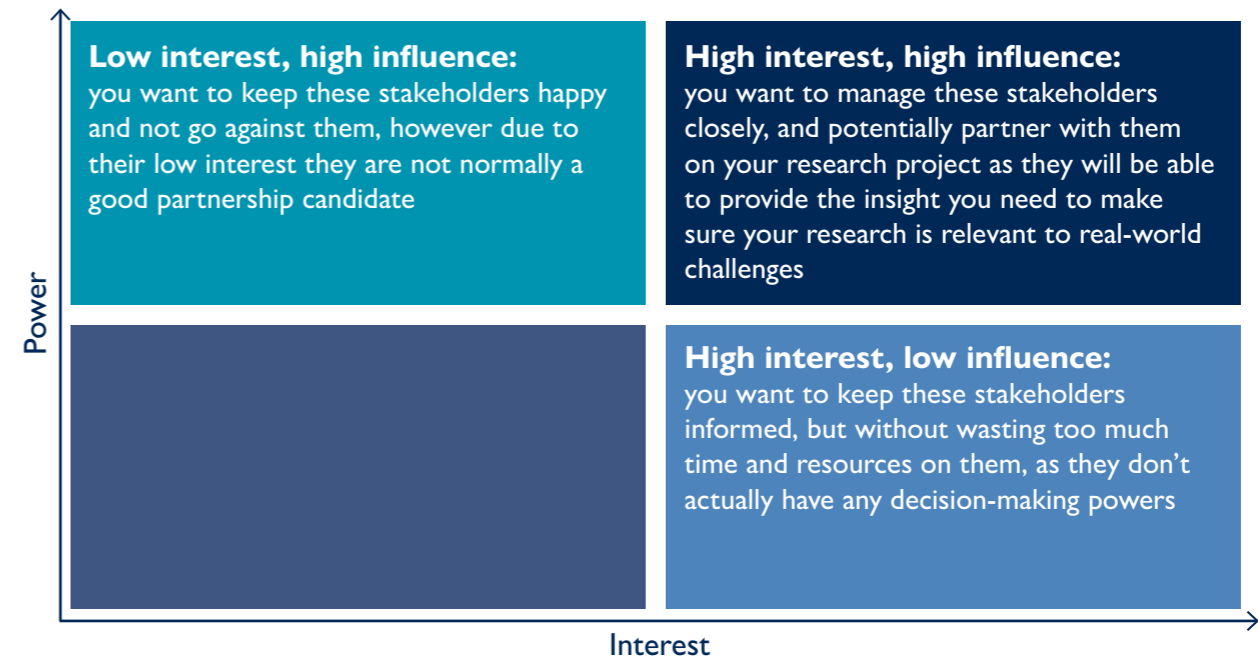
How do I visualise my stakeholder map?

Once you have a list of stakeholders, it is a good idea to represent it visually, for example in a mind map, in order to better understand how your stakeholders are connected to you and to each other.

It might also be useful to create a **priority matrix** to analyse your stakeholders' power and influence, and how to approach them. In order to create a priority matrix, rate each stakeholder's interest (how much they're affected by your research) and influence (how much power they hold to change policy in your research area).



You can then divide them into four categories:



For more information on how to structure a stakeholder map, check out [this guidance my Miro](#).

What happens next?

Once you have identified your priority areas, you can develop a plan to engage your main stakeholders, based on their level of interest and influence. For further support with reaching out to stakeholders, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).



20221B008

Get in touch

Send us an email at PolicyEngagement@exeter.ac.uk at any stage of the process for assistance.