

# RESEARCH IMPACT



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# Session

1

Impact in the  
sector

2

Impact literacy

3

Embedding  
impact

# *Part 1: Impact, and impact in the sector*

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**Impact =**  
**Provable effects (benefits) of research in**  
**the 'real world'**



*Beyond dissemination, academic interest or reputation, citations, attention*

# Impact can be....

Something new

Something changed

Something prevented

Something preserved

# Types of research impact

## Instrumental

Change in a thing

## Capacity building

Change in the ability to do something

## Conceptual

Change in the way something is thought about

See: <https://esrc.ukri.org/research/impact-toolkit/what-is-impact/>

# Simplified comparison & measures



## Outputs

Things produced by the research



Often measured by bibliometrics (*eg. citations, h-index etc*) which show scholarly attention



## Knowledge mobilisation

Activities to connect



Qualitative or quantitative demonstrations of activity and reach (*eg. retweets, school visits, training given*)

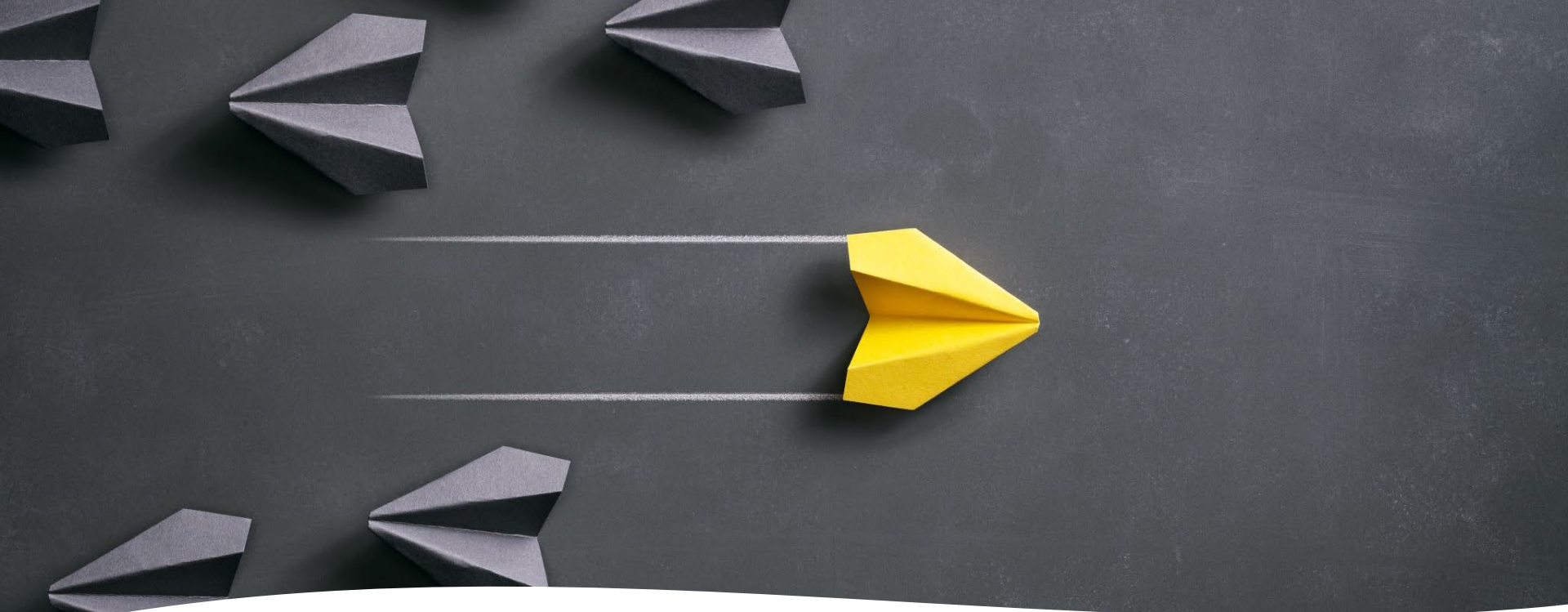


## Research impact

The provable benefits of research in the real world



Qualitative or quantitative evidence which shows real world change



# Some myths

- Impact *only* happens after the research (or publication)
- Impact is *only* from positive findings
- Impact is an endpoint
- Only applied research has impact
- You can't plan impact



# Drivers for research impact

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**We must:** external and instrumentalised requirements such as funding or assessment

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**We should:** broader missions, such as Sustainable Development Goals and Civic agendas

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**We/I want to:** personal motivation, often relating to passion around the subject area, lived experience or appetite for social justice.



# Universal Declaration of Human Rights



## Article 27

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Terminology from the *Terminologia dels drets humans*  
 UNITED NATIONS, Universal Declaration of Human Rights [online]. Geneva: OHCHR, cop. 1996-2017.

Generalitat del Catalunya  
 Departament de Cultura

termcat  
 Servei de Terminologia

With the support of: Govern d'Andorra

YORK U

@researchimpact

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

*If impact were a person, it would be asking you 'how can you make the world better with your research?'*



Impacts on....

## Legislation, policy and provisions

- New or changed policy
- New or altered provisions
- Political negotiations, draft legislation and deliberations of parliamentary committees
- Addressing and filling legislative gap
- New/changed government strategies
- Influence Supreme Court [*overturning election results*]
- New International Guidelines

## Practice

- Examination of witnesses
- Working methods for drafting and filing cases
- Police use of research evidence

## Structures

- Diversity within judicial appointments process
- Established need for and design of regulatory body

## ‘Vulnerable groups’

- Appropriate adults - quality and accessibility, national standards
- New Court of Protection rules for those who lack capacity
- Change in national guidance /care in reproductive loss
- Informed campaign to decriminalise abortion

## Workers’ rights

- More workers able to bring claims
- Improve workers conditions & related due diligence practices

## Applications in other areas (examples):

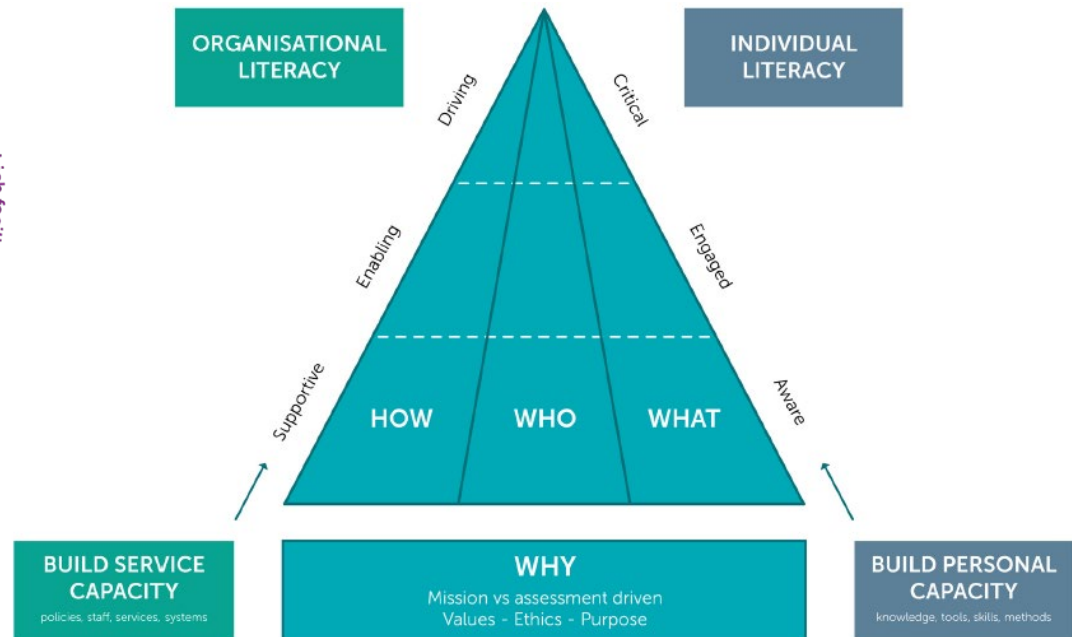
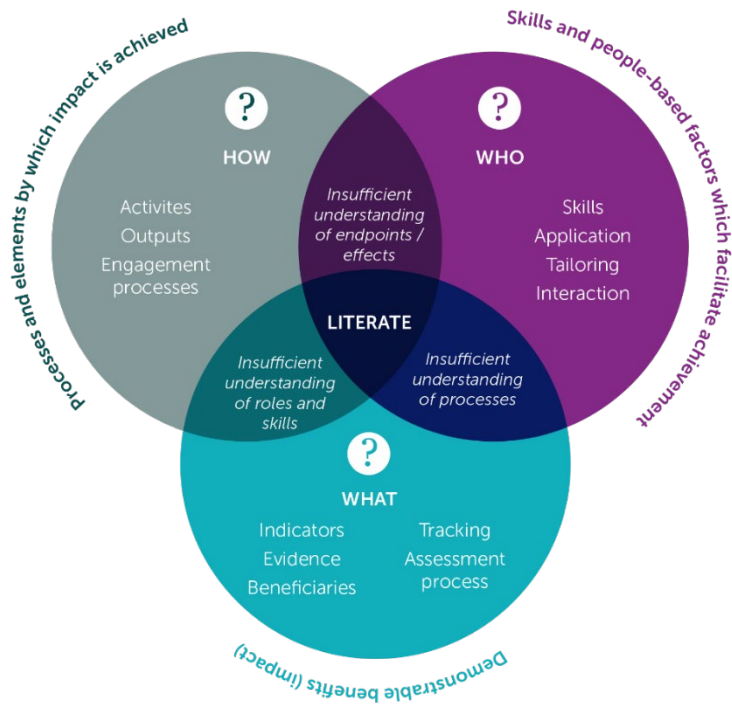
- COVID Proximity tracing – protocol, operating systems and campaigns to Government (data protection and privacy)
- Change in ecumenical practice & new Statement of Principles for unification

Political parties ♦ Trade Unions ♦ Judges ♦ Religious Groups ♦ Workers ♦ Vulnerable people ♦ Military ♦ Housing ♦ Police ♦ Local Authority ♦ Detainees ♦ Air Quality ♦ Modern Slavery ♦ Tax ♦ Human Rights.....

# *Part 2: Impact Literacy*

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# Impact Literacy



- Bayley, J. and Phipps, D. (2017) **Building the Concept of Impact Literacy**, Evidence and Policy (available online) <https://doi.org/10.1332/174426417X15034894876108>
- Bayley J and Phipps D. **Extending the concept of research impact literacy: levels of literacy, institutional role and ethical considerations [version 1; peer review: 2 approved]** Emerald Open Research 2019, 1:14 (<https://doi.org/10.12688/emeraldopenres.13140.1>)
- Bayley, J., 2023. **Creating Meaningful Impact: The Essential Guide to Developing an Impact-Literate Mindset**. Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://books.emeraldinsight.com/book/detail/creating-meaningful-impact/?k=9781804551929>
- **Impact Literacy workbook:** <https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/about/our-stance/our-impact>
- **Impact Institutional Health workbook:** <https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/about/our-stance/our-impact>

**WHY**

The purpose /  
reason

**HOW**

The methods

**Impact  
Literacy**

**WHO**

The stakeholders

**WHAT**

The benefits  
(impacts)



*Impact is in  
the eye of  
the beholder*

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# What can we mobilise?

It's not just about positive findings....

- 👍 New knowledge, insights or evidence (*'we now know'*)
- 👍 New concepts, ideas or perspectives (*'we have rethought'*)
- 👍 Insights into ways things are understood (*'we know how we know'*)
- 👍 New or modified research methods (*'we know how to'*)
- 👍 Experiences of what doesn't work (*'we know not to'*)
- 👍 A materially usable 'thing' eg. process, tool or intervention (*'we now have a thing for'*)
- 👍 A new practice or way of performing (*'we have a new way to'*)
- 👍 Newly heard voices, especially through coproduction (*'we've now heard from'*)
- 👍 A new definition or set of parameters (*'we can now specify'*)

# Who? *Impact is a team sport*

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- **Within the organisation**
  - Researchers, research managers, leaders etc
- **Outside the organisation**
  - Those who might benefit
  - Those who share the same goals
  - Those who can implement
  - Those who advocate for change
  - Those can see if the change happens



# How - challenges



No 'one size fits all' paths



Not knowledge *transfer*; requires engagement and translation



Changeable environments



Resistance



Time lag & longer journeys for some



Capacity and de-implementation



Regulation requirements



Resources

# How

Engage	Engage with society early	Engage in ways that suit [society]	<i>Be active:</i> Go beyond dissemination
Assess	Check (not presume) need	Assess capacity for change	Assess barriers
Manage & plan	Plug into expertise within institution	Map realistic pathways	Establish line of sight to impact

# Some mechanisms for 'how'



## Mobilising research

Dissemination and communication, websites, blogs, seminars, outreach, engagement etc



## Mobilising researchers

Eg. outward secondments, knowledge transfer partnerships, 'in residence'



## Mobilising non-academics

Eg. inward secondments, 'artist in residence', use of University labs

# If we're claiming impact, we're saying....

“We did research on \_\_\_\_\_. We connected this research to society by \_\_\_\_\_. Because of this research, \_\_\_\_\_ changed, as demonstrated by \_\_\_\_\_”



Qualitative or quantitative information from a legitimate (external) source to corroborate the claim of 'real world change'.  
May consist of a single or multiple pieces, with typical formats including testimonials, organisational reports, citations in policy documents (+ many others)

# *Part 3: Embedding impact*

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# Creating a healthy space: 5 Cs of Institutional Health



## **Commitment:**

Is the organization committed to impact via strategy, systems, staff?



## **Competencies:**

Is there advice, training, support to develop skills for impact?



## **Clarity:**

Do staff understand impact, expectations and how their roles fit?



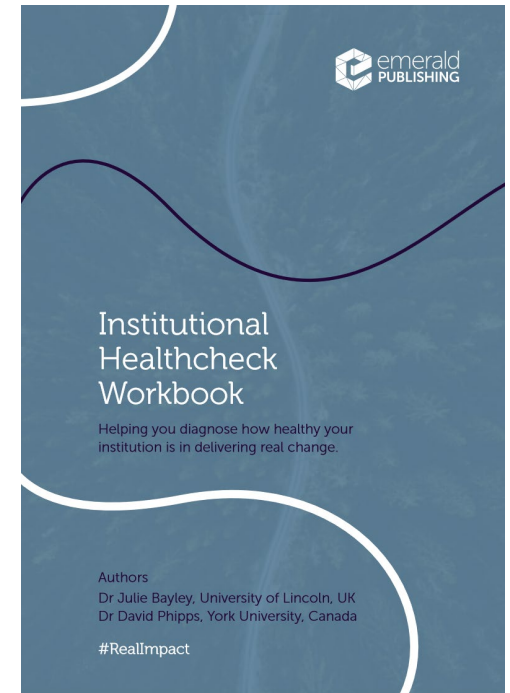
## **Connectivity:**

Do the organizational units work together, connect to strategy, cohesive?



## **Coproduction:**

What is the extent and quality of engagement with non-academic stakeholders?



<https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/about/our-stance/our-impact>





Not valued, no space  
created, no strategic  
vision

## Commitment

Impact valued and  
acknowledged  
(strategy, process &  
effort)



No skills  
development

## Competencies

Skills developed  
Impact literate staff

Unclear or  
unconfident

## Clarity

Everyone clear on what  
impact is and their role  
in it

Disconnected or  
singular  
responsibility

## Connectivity

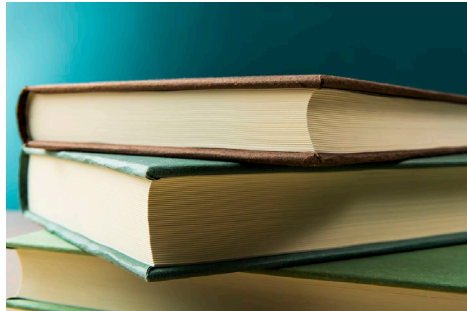
Teams and resources  
coordinated

Few or superficial  
links

## Coproduction

Strong & meaningful  
links

**Learn:** Build  
your impact  
literacy



**Connect:**  
We all have  
a piece of  
the puzzle

**Chase  
meaning  
not unicorns**

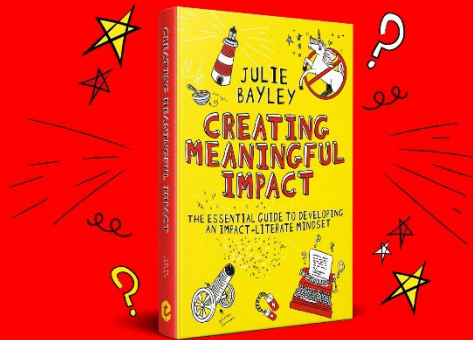


**Shine a light  
on impact  
across  
academic  
practices**

# THANK YOU



## CREATING MEANINGFUL IMPACT:



**THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO DEVELOPING  
AN IMPACT-LITERATE MINDSET**

**JULIE BAYLEY, UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN**



**AVAILABLE NOW IN PAPERBACK & EBOOK**

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