Developing an impact mindset for research and scholarship

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Blogpost: https://www.shaileyminocha.info/blog/2024/1/26/developing-impact-mindset-for-research-and-scholarship
Examples of impact

(eSTEEeM case study): A flexible start to a module

(REF 2021) Cardiff University: Adopting Together Service in Wales

(REF 2021) Birmingham University: Sensing product to transform winter road maintenance decision-making

(C&C): Transforming pain management via PainPad

REF2021: https://archive.ref.ac.uk
Why do we work towards impact?

requirement at the time of bidding
accountability to funders and to the institution
career progression
to strengthen the body of knowledge
to make a difference: e.g., social good
influence policy
The impact of a SoTL inquiry implies demonstrable benefits to learning and teaching that are directly attributable to that project.

SoTL: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
2019
Impact Evaluation Framework (IEF)

2020-2021
SoTL in STEM, Badged Open Course (BOC) on OpenLearn

2022-2023
Impact Evaluation of 16 eSTEeM projects


Research impact is defined as demonstrable and/or perceptible benefits to individuals, groups, organisations and society (including human and non-human entities in the present and future) that are causally linked (necessarily or sufficiently) to research.
Key aspects of an impact mindset

- Value-driven intent and action
- Purpose-driven thinking
- Stakeholder engagement
- Collaboration and inter-disciplinarity
- Planning for and evaluating impact
- Communication and outreach
- Continuous learning and adaptability
1. Value-driven intent and action

The intention-action-impact model is adapted from the book, Quiet Leadership, Julian Stodd, [https://seasaltlearning.com/quiet-leadership/](https://seasaltlearning.com/quiet-leadership/)
Values of a SoTL practitioner for impactful SoTL

- Inquisitive
- Open-minded
- Ethical
- Strategic
- Empathetic
- Generous

Value-driven intent and action

- Self-compassion: Bring about more good than harm
- Honesty: Accountability
- Fairness: Collaboration
- Care and Collegiality: REF2021 and REF2029: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Integrity and Ethics

Promote the interests of humans who participate in research before the interests of science and society.

Uphold transparency during the research process

A Values Framework for the Organisation of Research, [https://scienceeurope.org/our-priorities/research-culture/research-values-framework/](https://scienceeurope.org/our-priorities/research-culture/research-values-framework/)
2. Purpose-driven thinking

Mark Reed defines impact as:

‘At its most simple, we can define impact as benefit. It is surprising how much clarity it brings, when you simply ask yourself “What was the benefit?”’

What is impact? https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/what-is-impact-subpage
REF2021 defines impact as

‘effect on, change or *benefit* to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, *beyond academia*’

What is REF impact? [https://archive.ref.ac.uk/guidance-on-results/impact-case-study-database-faqs](https://archive.ref.ac.uk/guidance-on-results/impact-case-study-database-faqs)
ESRC’s categories of impact

academic impact
economic and societal impact
instrumental impact
conceptual impact
capacity building

From Mark Reed's presentation: What types of impact are there? [https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/what-types-of-impact-are-there-subp](https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/what-types-of-impact-are-there-subp)
3. Stakeholder analysis and engagement

Funders
Gatekeepers
Specialist skills
Specialist IT support

Beneficiaries
Stakeholders: negative impact

Participatory role
Advisory role
Advocates
Communications role
Amplifiers
Beneficiaries
Obstructors

Engaged research
Users of the research

4. Collaboration and Interdisciplinarity

A STEM panel member reflects on interdisciplinarity, and coping with climate change:

“As a geophysicist, I’ve studied the earth if you like and go look at it, you know, with or without human beings...so the planetary process. .... Climate change is driven by human behaviour. Understanding human behaviour is a humanities and social science thing.”

5. Planning for and Evaluating impact
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 situation/problem</strong></td>
<td>What situation/problem is the project trying to address or resolve?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2 context</strong></td>
<td>What is the current context of the situation/problem?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3 Aim</strong></td>
<td>What goal or objective is the programme/initiative trying to achieve?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What is your proposed solution to the problem given the context?</td>
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<td><strong>4 stakeholders</strong></td>
<td>Who are the stakeholders (including the beneficiaries) of the project?</td>
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<td><strong>7 resources/inputs</strong></td>
<td>Activities that will mobilise the inputs to produce outputs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Outline the interventions (supported by assumptions) that will bring about</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the desired change.</td>
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<td><strong>7++ outputs</strong></td>
<td>What are the results/deliverables of the activities relevant to the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>achievement of the outcomes?</td>
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<td><strong>6 outcomes and measures</strong></td>
<td>Short and intermediate-term outcomes and measures which must be in place</td>
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<td></td>
<td>for the long-term goals to be achieved.</td>
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<td><strong>5 impact</strong></td>
<td>What are the long-term goals which relate to the 'problem'?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What will result from the removal of the problem?</td>
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<td><strong>~ assumptions</strong></td>
<td>The various conditions on which the project’s success will rely on.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>~ risks</strong></td>
<td>Risks to activities? Risks to impacts not being achieved, or leading to</td>
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<td>unintended consequences?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5-6 time</strong></td>
<td>When will you conduct the various activities? When do you expect the</td>
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<td>impact to be achieved?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>Activities</td>
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**Name:** project  
**[theme – brief description]**
Theory of Change: Question-driven template, Logic Model

• **Question-driven template**: Designed to identify the key information required to develop a theory of change

• **Logic model**: A visual representation of the key information and the links between them

• **Theory of Change (ToC)**: Using the key information (questionnaire) and the visual representation (logic model) identify the key causal pathways for impact

6. Communication and outreach

dissemination - often and widely

blog - individual or a team blog

social media

schools, older people in the community

Exhibitions, fairs

government consultations
panels
public debates

participatory research
users of the research on the advisory board

crowdsourcing ideas or feedback

citizen science

REF2029: ‘rigour’ of engagement
7. Continuous learning and adaptability
Discussion

Humanity-centered design principles (Don Norman), [https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/humanity-centered-design](https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/humanity-centered-design), Interaction Design Foundation.