Publishing for Impact

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STM Publishing Impact
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How does impact happen?
Dynamic Knowledge Inventory: a model of impact for the humanities and the social sciences
The flow of knowledge from academia to wider society

- Single discipline
  - Renewal
  - Discovery
  - Integration
  - Application

- Joined up scholarship
  - Bridging
  - University - local integration
  - Academic Service

- Impacts interface
  - Media
  - Specialist Media
  - Professions
  - Corporations
  - Entrepreneurs
  - Think tanks
  - Policy communities
  - NGOs

- Wider society
  - Media, cultural and civil society systems
  - Economic and business systems
  - Public policy systems

The flow of knowledge from academia to wider society
Can academics both publish and have impact?

External visibility scale

Academic outputs scale

- Communicator: 7%
- Influential: 9%
- Solid middle: 16%
- Publisher: 27%
- Applied researcher: 17%
- Invisible: 25%

Social media effects
And results from the UK Research Excellence Framework in 2014 agree
What can focusing on impact show us?
A. What and how we are researching
Impactful research tends to be multidisciplinary and multi-authored.

Over 80 per cent of the REF impact case studies included underpinning research that was multidisciplinary.
And we are seeing increasing international co-authorship
Collaborative research also tends to get more citations.

Most outputs in our dataset were single authored, but more cites went to outputs that had at least one other author.
Comparing academic and external citations shows interesting differences between disciplines.
B. How our work is communicated
The increase in open access publishing in the UK

- UK: 35% Green OA
- UK: 5% Gold OA
- World: 17% Gold OA
Digital scholars
Academics are making use of digital tools to share their research

- LinkedIn
- Google Scholar Citations
- Mendeley
- Twitter

Percentage to all academics in the dataset

- Regular activity
- Occasional activity
Twitter is increasingly more useful for dissemination than other channels
The academic blogosphere is now a key way to communicate your work.
Social media could change how we do research.
The academic career path has been thoroughly destabilised by the precarious practices of the neoliberal university.

It is an increasingly difficult time to begin an academic career. The pressures of the REF, casualization and adjunctification of teaching and the disappearance of research funding are enormous obstacles academics face. Sydney Calkin looks at how academics have in many ways become model neoliberal subjects. How might we effectively challenge the growing acceptance of the unpaid, underpaid, zero hours work within universities?

• Mewburn and Thomson: small-scale study of 100 blogs
• Rather than a site for translation, more evidence of conversations happening between academics – and much of it about academia itself.
• Discourse, is similar in purpose, if not necessarily in form or content, to the academic discourse happening in journals

Perhaps though we are replicating offline habits of talking amongst ourselves.
C. How our work is translated
A key problem for the social sciences is the relative lack of 'mediating middle' that builds long-term links and identifies impacts.
External mediators

410k

625k students
35k academics

Research staff
32k

Value of mediation of social science in the UK

£24.2bn

Indirect & induced value

£4.8bn

University spending

£2.7bn

Research funded

£851m

People value

Economic value
D. How we are going to ‘measure’ impact
One of the most common concerns that colleagues discussed with us is that impact metrics focus on **what is measurable at the expense of what is important**. But, as the report highlights in relation to excellence, it’s more than this. When you design a metric for impact you are explicitly constructing a definition of what impact is and when you go on to use that metric, **you are locking in that definition** (blog post on The Metric Tide, 2015).
A ‘basket’ of metrics could include . . .

**Dissemination**

- **Shared**
  - Popular press mentions
  - Twitter retweets
  - Facebook likes
  - Pinterest shares

- **Downloaded**
  - Web views
  - PDF downloads
  - Blog readers
  - Podcast listens
  - Time spent reading

- **Engaged**
  - Event audience numbers
  - Exhibition visits
  - Practitioner networking events

**Impact**

- **Discussed**
  - Utilised in public debate
  - Referenced by journalists
  - Referenced in parliamentary debate

- **Cited**
  - Referenced in government, think tank or NGOs reports
  - Mentioned in legal arguments
  - Used as case study evidence

- **Used**
  - Academics as members of corporate boards
  - Or in government advisory positions
  - As members of practitioner networks
  - Paid for research

- **Co-Developed**
  - Utilised in teaching materials
  - Taken up by in professional organisations
  - Built on to improve any kind of performance

**Houses of Parliament**
Parliamentary Office of Science & Technology
The quantitative evidence supporting claims for impact was diverse and inconsistent, suggesting that the development of robust impact metrics is unlikely … impact indicators are not sufficiently developed and tested to be used to make funding decisions.

From REF2014 we can see there is no agreement on what impact metrics to use.
And metric tools are developing quickly

The Colours of the Donut

- Policy documents
- News
- Blogs
- Twitter
- Post-publication peer-reviews
- Facebook
- Sina Weibo
- Wikipedia
- Google+
- LinkedIn
- Reddit
- Faculty1000
- Q&A (stack overflow)
- Youtube
- Pinterest
What innovations in publishing for impact will be see?