Integrating impact into different types of research, exploring routes to impact, timeframes for impact, impact statements and impact plans
Integrating impact in research is essential for developing a higher education institution’s capabilities to deliver impact. Integration of strategies and support for impact brings benefits for the whole organisation through improvements in research design and research practice. Integrating impact spans into other types of impact such as the impact of effective research management and the impact of research on teaching.

Integrating impact involves researchers routinely producing impact statements (sometimes called an impact summary) and writing impact plans (or a pathway to impact). Researchers may need training and support to integrate these relatively new activities in their work. It means that impact is considered right from the outset of the research, rather than being seen as an add on, or something that will naturally arise without need for thought or intervention.

For higher education institutions, planning impact as part of the research design could help to integrate impact in research practice. For research managers, integrating impact in research can help to manage researcher time and workload allocations. For individual researchers, integrating impact can make developing impact a more realistic and viable part of the research process.

Integrating impact is achieved through making supportive guidance and tools available to researchers and reflecting on how impact practices can be used to best effect. On an individual project basis, integrating impact means examining in some detail the types of practices that could be used in the research and developing a timeframe for impact.

On an individual researcher basis, integrating impact means developing skills in impact planning and new types of practices. Across research groups or themes, integrating impact might involve exploring possible routes to impact that enable interdisciplinary research and partnership working with stakeholders. Across departments and institutions, integrating impact means supporting staff to integrate impact into research design and research proposals.

In this section of the toolkit you will find tools for:

- **Tool 21:** Building impact into different types of research
- **Tool 22:** Exploring possible routes to impact
- **Tool 23:** Developing a timeframe for impact
- **Tool 24:** Writing an impact statement
- **Tool 25:** Writing an impact plan

With these tools users can develop strategy and guidance for researchers on how to integrate impact practices in their research. For example, by using the material to develop templates or supportive resources for writing impact statements and impact plans.

Further learning about integrating impact into research design can be gained from:

- RCUK impact pathways (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impacts/)
- ESRC Impact Toolkit (http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/impact-toolkit/)
- Vitae’s Researcher Development Framework (www.vitae.ac.uk)
- Fast Track Impact, tools and guides for research impact (www.fasttrackimpact.com)
- *Achieving Impact in Research* (2014) edited by Pam Denicolo (Chapter 6: How can impact be planned into research proposals?)
- For advice on involving members of the public in academic research see the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) (www.publicengagment.ac.uk)
Building impact into different types of research

Whether research is theoretical, experimental, applied, blue skies, basic, practice-based, or action orientated, if someone or some group can benefit from it, then there is a good argument that impact can be maximised using impact practices. The challenge, and opportunity, is to develop impact plans or pathways to suit different research contexts and to meet different goals.

Building impact into different types of research requires researchers to have an understanding of what impact is (see Tool 1. Understanding which definition of impact you are working with) and how impact practices can be integrated with the research process (see Tool 13. Reflecting on the knowledge and skills needed for impact). Looking at the processes involved also shows how research impact can extend into the wider work of the organisation.

Research managers and impact leads have an important role to play in supporting researchers to develop knowledge and skills in how to design activities to maximise impact. Research about routes to impact can inform decisions about impact planning.

Analysis of REF 2014 shows that, in general, routes to impact can typically involve eight areas of practice:

- Impact skills and knowledge
- Connecting with context
- Designing research for impact
- Stakeholder engagement
- Public involvement
- Building mechanisms for exchange
- Developing impactful outputs
- Implementing and evaluating impact

The following figure illustrates these eight ways to build impact into research. The position of these practices in relation to other components of research impact is represented visually in Tool 22. Exploring possible routes to impact.

Research managers and impact leads should seek to gain a good understanding of these practices so they can support researchers to develop research and context-specific approaches to impact at a design stage. Researchers should be able to describe impact practices they are using in research proposals (see Tool 23. Writing an impact statement).

On an institutional level, researcher impact practices can be facilitated as part of wider institutional knowledge exchange activities (see Tool 18. Knowledge Exchange as a conduit for research impact).

A positive institutional culture (see Tool 26. Cultivating an impact culture) can provide supportive structures for research practice to develop (see Tool 29. Embedding universal structures for impact).

Although it is better to plan for impact right from the beginning of the research, impact practices can be integrated into whatever stage of the research process a research study is at or as part of programme development. The approach should be appropriate to the research and the context, and feasible in the time and with the resources available. Information about impact practices can be integrated into the research proposal or protocol, or be produced as a standalone impact plan (see Tool 25. Writing an impact plan).

Impact from research can happen entirely serendipitously, but equally since research is a public good, and potentially with significant public benefits, it is important to seek to exploit those potential benefits deliberately, purposefully, and in an informed way.

D. Coombe, Learning Partner
Integrating impact into research practice

Building mechanisms for exchange

- Implementing and evaluating impact
- Impact skills and knowledge
- Connecting with context
- Designing research with impact
- Stakeholder engagement
- Public involvement
- Developing impactful outputs
Researcher skills and knowledge are essential for undertaking research and achieving impact. Research team skills can support intra organisational team working, interdisciplinary collaborations and international collaborations (see Tool 13. Reflecting on the skills and knowledge needed for impact).

Research teams need skills and knowledge in the following key areas:
- subject expertise (including professional roles and networking skills)
- research design skills (including methods development)
- skills in impact planning
- skills in participatory working
- communication skills

Researchers can develop impact literacy and impact skills as part of their professional development. For example, skills in engagement and impact draw upon the knowledge and expertise of other researchers, stakeholders and research users. For guidance see Vitae's Researcher Development Framework (www.vitae.ac.uk).

By taking time to examine the conditions that surround their research, researchers can identify factors that may help them to connect with the context and generate impact.

Key aspects of context to consider are as follows:
- identifying favourable conditions for collaboration
- keying into political or professional agendas
- making a link to existing strategies or plans for change
- identifying priority areas for research
- gaining indications of the scale of potential benefit or outcomes for beneficiaries

See Tool 28. Connecting with context.

Depending on the focus of the research, researchers can design research for impact. For example, using critical approaches that seek to purposely challenge social inequalities or action orientated research methods to intentionally change particular outcomes. It may be possible to add an applied or translational element to the research.

Whatever the research design being used, as a minimum impact planning can include the following:
- anticipating the types of benefit and beneficiaries of the research (Tool 8. Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits)
- identifying stakeholders and research users
- setting targets for impact (see Tool 24. Writing an impact statement)
- planning opportunities to maximise impact (see Tool 25. Writing an impact plan)
- allocating resources for impact activities
- planning progressive or incremental impact through roll-out or future phases of the research

Continued
### 4. Stakeholder engagement

Research stimulates change when stakeholders contribute their knowledge to defining important or relevant research questions, finding ways to address research issues, and developing research outputs that are fit for purpose.

Researchers should consider issues of:
- stakeholder identification
- stakeholder selection
- recruitment and engagement
- stakeholder’s need for information and support to participate in the research
- ways to support stakeholders to communicate their needs for evidence or research outputs
- stakeholder roles in implementation
- the time and resources required to support engagement

See **Tool 19. Engaging stakeholders in research**

### 5. Public involvement

When it is appropriate to the research, involving members of the public directly in the research process can lead to research that is more likely to meet the needs of such groups. Researchers can make use of consultation, collaboration or other approaches to involve selected members of the public or representatives of consumer or voluntary groups (see **Tool 20. Developing public involvement in research**).

For advice on involving members of the public in academic research see the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (www.publicengagement.ac.uk).

Involvement in the research process can help to gain public backing for the research, capture the lobbying power or influence of user-led organisations, support access to user networks to spread research impact, and enhance research practices and researcher knowledge and skills.

### 6. Building mechanisms for exchange

Find ways to achieve productive interactions with collaborators and stakeholders by employing mechanisms for exchange such as discussion, debate, knowledge exchange, shared learning, and secondments. See **Tool 27. Building mechanisms for exchange**.

Different mechanisms can be face-to-face or virtual (see **Tool 45. Using the word wide web and social media for impact**).

Consider using different mechanisms for different purposes, such as:
- stimulating interest in the research
- keying into the interests of different stakeholder groups
- enabling perspective sharing through the research process
- building knowledge between disciplines or about research issues
- spreading knowledge or expertise across organisations or countries
- ways of validating knowledge or the impact research has had

Continued
7. Developing impactful outputs

Impact can be extended by broadening the range of outputs and products of research beyond academic outputs. Impactful outputs, such as policy briefs or professional training, may be produced during the course of the research rather than at the end. Such activities may sit apart from academic outputs, although they may align with them or translate findings to different audiences.

In order to maximise impact and use of research resources researchers could consider the following:
- gain stakeholder packing for research outputs
- aim to produce tailored outputs that are acceptable to the public or end-users
- create products that have utility or are ‘fit for purpose’
- develop products or outputs that align with existing plans for change, for example new policy or practice directives
- work with research user representatives to develop outputs that provide a sense of ownership to target research user groups
- create products or outputs in formats that convey a clear message with credibility
- design products or outputs that use language and formats that are familiar to target research users
- present outputs in ways that make it easy to take up research outputs eg clear sets of recommendations for different audiences, key messages, actionable information or guidance
- develop distinctive products or outputs have the potential to generate detectable change that can be evaluated

Focusing on developing impactful outputs from research can maximise impact through improved uptake and implementation. See Tool 30. Propagating promising impact.

8. Implementing and evaluating

Implementing includes dissemination or adaption of research outputs by research users. Researchers can plan to support uptake and adoption in partnership with research users.

To maximise impact researchers could consider the following:
- use of an implementation strategy that clearly identifies stages of implementation
- use of a dissemination strategy that includes publicly accessible information about the research
- development of summaries, briefings or web-based information about the research for specific audiences
- in-depth work to develop research outputs that connect with the preferred language, resources or modes of communication of specific research users

Evaluating impact includes planning to capture, record, monitor and assess the outcomes of the research in context. Evaluation can draw stakeholders’ or research users’ attention to particular outcomes and raise awareness of the impact of the research. See Tool 32. Planning an impact evaluation.

Apply this tool

- **Senior organisational leaders** can use this information to gain an overview of the main areas of impact practices that may need to be supported with resources and leadership.
- **Research managers** can use this information to advise researchers about different impact practices that may suit the contexts they are working in.
- **Impact and knowledge exchange leads** can use this information in practical one-to-one support sessions with researchers.
- **Enterprise and engagement leads** can use this information to consider the different stages of the research process that they can provide support to research teams.
- **Researchers** can use this information to consider which impact practices they can adopt at any stage of the research, or when writing an impact plan.
- **Professional services staff** can use this information to consider the different stages of the research process that they can provide support to research teams.
Exploring possible routes to impact

The following figure is a tool for exploring possible routes to impact. It sets out some of the main components of research impact and shows how they relate to the research process.

The figure was developed using categories of information derived from the REF 2014 impact case studies. For further information about how this figure was developed using REF 2014 case study data see the full report (www.lfhe.ac.uk/Morrow5.2). It builds on the idea that researchers can integrate impact practices into the research process using eight areas of impact practice (see Tool 21. Building impact into different types of research).

The figure illustrates that research impact is a dynamic process that involves different components of the research system. It can be used as a broad framework to explore possible routes to impact. For example, by considering connections with context, impact practices and the range of mechanisms for exchange that might be used to achieve impact.

The figure shows potential beneficiaries of academic research as including: stakeholders (eg policymakers or commissioners), researchers (and collaborators), research users (people directly using the research), and end-users (eg the public or service users). This wide range extends beyond some definitions, or the scope of REF (see Tool 1. Understanding which definition of impact you are working with).

Drawing from REF 2014 findings the figure suggests that different types of impact can include: use of research evidence (type I), use of research products (type II), effects on individuals (type III), and effects on groups/organisations (type IV). These were the main types of impact reported in REF 2014.

For further information about mechanisms for exchange see Tool 27: Building mechanisms for exchange.
Exploring routes to research impact

Types of research impact
I. Use of evidence
II. Research products
III. Effect on individuals
IV. Effect on groups/organisations

Impact evidence
- Evidence-based
- Research-based
- Expert review
- User review
- Self report
- Informed opinion

Impact processes
- Impact generation
  - Researcher impact skills
  - Connecting with context
  - Designing research for impact
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Public/user involvement
  - Mechanisms for exchange
  - Developing impactful outputs
  - Implementing and evaluating outcomes

Mechanisms
- Stimulating interest
- Keying into interests
- Broaching sensitive subjects
- Perspective sharing
- Creating spaces for exchange
- Building knowledge
- Spreading knowledge
- Spreading expertise
- Validating knowledge/impact

Contextual factors
- Socio-economic factors
- Political, professional or public agendas
- Wider strategies or plans for change
- Scale of potential benefit

Outcome measures
- Systems of standard units
  - Measures of importance
  - Measures of effect
  - Measures of value

Research processes
- Knowledge generation
  - Design of research aims
  - Design of research methods
  - Construction of research knowledge
  - Development of research outcomes
  - Dissemination of research outputs
  - Program development

Beneficiaries
- End-users
- Research users
- Researchers
- Stakeholders

Mechanisms
- Stimulating interest
- Keying into interests
- Broaching sensitive subjects
- Perspective sharing
- Creating spaces for exchange
- Building knowledge
- Spreading knowledge
- Spreading expertise
- Validating knowledge/impact

Research processes
- Knowledge generation
  - Design of research aims
  - Design of research methods
  - Construction of research knowledge
  - Development of research outcomes
  - Dissemination of research outputs
  - Program development

Contextual factors
- Socio-economic factors
- Political, professional or public agendas
- Wider strategies or plans for change
- Scale of potential benefit
Apply this tool

- **Senior organisational leaders** can use this figure to gain an overview of the different components involved in achieving impact.
- **Research managers** can use this figure to examine how different components of research impact might be supported through research management.
- **Impact and knowledge exchange leads** can use this tool in researcher training to explain how pathways to impact relate to the research process.
- **Enterprise and engagement leads** can use this figure to plan when and how to support researchers with impact work.
- **Researchers** can use this tool for impact planning by considering how the different components of research impact might relate to their research.
- **Professional services staff** can use this figure to plan when and how to support research teams with impact work.
Developing a timeframe for impact

Analysis of REF 2014 impact case studies by King’s College London and Digital Science (available from www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/policy-institute) shows that on average it takes an estimated three to nine years for research to have an impact on society (based on analysis of publication dates of references to the research). The speed by which that impact occurs varies by discipline.

Timescales to impact in basic and discovery sciences can be much longer than applied research. This does not mean that fundamental research is not having an impact. There can be ground-breaking moments in the research process where knowledge moves forward but does not directly affect beneficiaries. Nonetheless the impact is important and valuable in the context of addressing the big or complex challenges that society faces, such as poverty, disease or war (see Tool 9. Knowing what to take into consideration when setting impact targets).

Some forms of impact emerge during the research process and it can be possible to prospectively capture some of the subtle forms of change that occur (see Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact) using an impact capture system (see Tool 39. Getting the most out of Research Information Systems). Other forms of impact occur over the longer-term, or are more lasting forms of impact. This can include legacy effects, where impact is sustained over decades and provides a marker for future policy, research or practice.

Timescales are important for providing research funders and evaluators with evidence of impact within the timeframes they are interested in, even if impact has not come to fruition. Another approach to evidencing impact is to revisit research that was completed some time ago in order to retrospectively review impact over a longer timescale.
### Developing a timeframe for impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Examples of possible types of impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Process impact**      | • Improved researcher impact literacy or skills (see Tool 13. Reflecting on the skills and knowledge needed for impact)  
                          • Collaborative research within institutions, between HE institutions or with international research partners  
                          • Interdisciplinary approaches to research that aim to tackle big or complex societal challenges (see Tool 17. Developing impact through interdisciplinary research)  
                          • More relevant research aims, more robust research designs or methods that are better able to address research questions  
                          • New or improved mechanisms for engagement of stakeholders or the public in research (see Tool 27. Building mechanisms for engagement)  
                          • Development of academic outputs or other impactful outputs through the course of the research  
                          • Impact on stakeholders (see Tool 33. Evaluating stakeholder engagement)  
                          • Impact on members of the public (see Tool 34. Evaluating public involvement)                                                                                                                                                   |
| **Immediate impact**    | • Discovery or learning that moves a programme of research forward or informs applied research  
                          • Immediate influence of the research findings, for example influencing policymaker’s views on issues (see Tool 41. Influencing policy and policymakers)  
                          • Immediate use of evidence, for example using research case studies to inform bespoke dissemination and feedback events for groups of research users (see Tool 43. Communicating with research users)  
                          • Immediate improvements in public awareness or understanding, for example through public events (see Tool 44. Communicating with the public)                                                                                           |
| **Intermediate impact** | • Uptake and use of research outputs developed from the research eg publications, products, books, web-based materials (see Tool 38. Using altmetrics)  
                          • Impact on policy or practice, for example to bring about a change in the law or professional guidance (see Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact)  
                          • Impact on research user’s awareness, understanding or behaviour (see Tool 40. Capturing stakeholder’s, research user’s and beneficiary’s perspectives of impact)                                                                 |

Continued
### Timeframe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Examples of possible types of impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long-term impact</strong>&lt;br&gt;Impact that occurs five or more years after the research ends and effects on beneficiaries are well-established</td>
<td>• Accomplishment of long-term research goals&lt;br&gt;• Impact targets are reached and there is good evidence of impact (see Tool 35. Evaluating the strength of your claim to impact)&lt;br&gt;• There is evidence of reach or spread of impact to new localities or practice contexts (see Tool 31. Reflecting on impact evaluation criteria)&lt;br&gt;• Long-term impact on the wider research context, for example through established policy or guidelines for practice&lt;br&gt;• Long-term impact on individuals or groups of beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legacy effects</strong>&lt;br&gt;Impact that is sustained over decades, has a lasting legacy and is a marker for future policy, research or practice</td>
<td>• Long-standing recognition of the significance of the research in bringing about change or benefits for beneficiaries&lt;br&gt;• Widespread or international uptake of the research and translation into new contexts or settings&lt;br&gt;• The continuing influence of seminal research on society through established policy, research or practice&lt;br&gt;• Sustained influence by the research on public or professional awareness, understanding or behaviour&lt;br&gt;• Substantial quantifiable data to show longstanding impact (see Tool 37. Using measures and quantitative indicators of impact)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Apply this tool

- **Senior organisational leaders** can use this information to inform realistic timescales for achieving and evaluating institutional impact targets.
- **Research managers** can use this information to consider different timescales to impact and the implications for research management.
- **Impact and knowledge exchange leads** can use this information to communicate with staff about the different timescales to impact and the implications for collecting different types of evidence about impact.
- **Researchers** can use this tool in impact planning to anticipate when different types of impact are likely to occur and to consider when to capture them.
- **Professional services staff** can use this information to consider how they might capture different types of institutional impact emerging from research over time.
Research Leader’s Impact Toolkit

Integrating

**Tool 24:**

**Writing an impact statement**

The UK Research Councils, universities and charitable research funders all provide their own information about pathways to impact. All of these organisations say that impact should be well thought through and appropriate to the research. Research funders want to see that researchers have considered what the main types of impact are likely to be.

Some funders ask applicants to write an impact statement, which is a short description of the potential impacts and beneficiaries of the research. An impact statement may be used in the public domain to convey the importance of the research (some funders call this an impact summary).

Reviewers may use an impact statement to judge the potential impact from the proposed research. For example, the potential to enhance the wider evidence base, to meet the needs of beneficiaries, or to have a lasting transformative effect on society. An impact statement should indicate what type of impact may occur over time and the likely reach, that is, whether benefits of the research may extend to other population groups, settings or countries.

An impact statement should also outline the wider potential impact of the research. For example, a funding proposal can look stronger if what is proposed is likely to have an impact beyond the lifetime of the award. Also, consider whether the research will advance thinking on a particular theme or issue, or enhance knowledge and understanding internationally.

**Writing an impact statement**

1. **State who is likely to benefit from the research**
   - Describe the potential groups of beneficiaries; this may be very specific types of people, or general groups such as the public or the academic community
   - Explain how impact may address their needs or improve outcomes for beneficiaries
   - Consider local, national and international beneficiaries

2. **State how they are likely to benefit**
   - Explain the range of potential benefits (see Tool 8. Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits)
   - Estimate scale or size of potential benefits and explain how you calculated your figures
   - Explain likely timescales (immediate, medium-, and long-term) and the longevity of impact (see Tool 23. Developing a timeframe for impact)

3. **State your impact targets**
   - Explain which types of impact you will try to maximise and why (see Tool 9. Knowing what to take into consideration when setting impact targets)
   - Explain how the types of impact you are focusing on relate to your research questions
   - Indicate other types of impact that cannot be predicted or may occur serendipitously

Continued
4. State how will you ensure beneficiaries are able to benefit

- Explain the links you will make between the research and beneficiaries, for example using information giving, consultation, collaboration, or direct involvement (see Tool 27. Building mechanisms for exchange)
- Explain how strategies for implementation or dissemination will deliver benefits to beneficiaries (eg see Tool 44. Communicating with the public)
- Explain how you will gain and use feedback from your beneficiaries about impact (or by proxy through research users) (see Tool 40. Capturing stakeholder’s, research user’s and beneficiary’s perspectives of impact)

Apply this tool

- **Research managers** can use this tool in supervision or coaching sessions with researchers to support them in writing an impact statement for their research.
- **Impact and knowledge exchange leads** can use this tool to discuss with researchers what an impact statement means and how to write one.
- **Researchers** can use this tool when writing an impact statement for a funding proposal.
## Tool 25: Writing an impact plan

The purpose of an impact plan (or a pathway to impact statement) is to set out what you will do to realise the potential impacts from your research. It should explain what is appropriate and reasonable for the proposed research. An impact plan is best written in the early stages of planning the research, so that it informs the research design, rather than being an add-on.

An impact plan should consider diversity and variety of forms of impact, timescales within which impacts might emerge, and approaches through which impact might be achieved. The following tool covers these essential elements. If the research will use stakeholder engagement or public involvement, find ways to involve appropriate stakeholder or public representatives in developing these elements of the impact plan.

Always refer to guidance about impact provided by the funding body you are applying to. Research funders stress that the quality of the research will still be the primary factor for decision on funding. However, impact plans are formally assessed by peer reviewers and a good plan could make a difference for proposals that are near the funding cut-off.

Reviewers of your proposal are likely to consider how effectively and realistically you have addressed impact in your proposal. This may include assessing: how convincingly the potential impact of the activity has been described, how that impact compares to their normal expectations for the general type of activity proposed, how appropriate/effective the arrangements described for facilitating the impact are, and how appropriate the collaboration arrangements in the proposal are in this respect.

### Writing an impact plan

#### 1. Convey your understanding of the meaning and value of impact

- Explain what you mean by impact (see Tool 1. Understanding which definition of impact you are working with)
- Show that you are aware of the benefits of impact (see Tool 4. Understanding the benefits of impact) and the limitations of impact (see Tool 2. Being aware of five fundamental principles of impact)
- State why it is important to achieve impact from the research (see Tool 3. Knowing your drivers for impact)

#### 2. Express your vision of impact for the research

- Explain your impact targets (see Tool 9. Knowing what to take into consideration when setting impact targets)
- Explain the rationale for these targets (see Tool 7. Understanding different interests and motivators)
- Describe how your impact targets relate to anticipated benefits (see Tool 8. Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits)

#### 3. State your capability to achieve impact

- Describe the leadership and management support you will have access to such as advisory or steering groups, supervision or mentorship (see Tool 11. Inspiring impact through leadership and Tool 12. Supporting impact with management)
- Explain the knowledge and skills you have to deliver impact (see Tool 13. Reflecting on the skills and knowledge needed for impact)
- Explain any impact training that will be undertaken or learning that is likely to be gained during the research (see Tool 14. Providing basic impact training for research staff)

Continued
4. Explain how you will actively engage with other researchers, relevant users of the research, stakeholders and beneficiaries

- Explain how the research will engage with the wider work of the organisation eg through teaching and learning (see Tool 16. Engaging whole organisations in achieving impact)
- Provide details of any interdisciplinary collaborations (see Tool 17. Developing impact through interdisciplinary research)
- Provide details of your plans to identify and involve relevant users of the research and stakeholders at appropriate stages to enhance impact. Explain how you will resource and manage engagement and how you will feedback to those involved (see Tool 19. Engaging stakeholders in research)
- Include details of any existing relationships with stakeholders, users or the public that you will build upon or extend (see Tool 20. Developing public involvement in research)

5. State how you will integrate impact in your research activities

- Explain how you have built impact practices into your research design (see Tool 21. Building impact into different types of research)
- Describe any pathway, models or frameworks you are using (see Tool 22. Exploring possible routes to impact)
- Include project specific costs relating to proposed impact activities
- Suggest when impact may begin to emerge from the research (see Tool 23. Developing a timeframe for impact)
- Explain how you will make use of an Impact Statement (see Tool 24. Writing an impact statement) or Impact Plan (see Tool 25. Writing an impact plan) throughout the research, for example to review progress on impact targets

6. Describe how you will draw on support and connections available to you

- Explain the mechanisms for exchange of information or knowledge that you will use (see Tool 27. Building mechanisms for exchange)
- Explain how you will connect the research with the wider context to maximise impact (see Tool 28. Connecting with context)
- Explain the organisational systems and structures that you can connect with to maximise impact (see Tool 29. Embedding universal impact structures)
- Explain the professional, learning and support networks you will make use of (see Tool 30. Propagating promising impact)

7. State how you will evaluate impact

- Explain any evaluative framework or methods that you plan to use to assess impact (see Tool 32. Planning an impact evaluation)
- State how you will evaluate any stakeholder involvement in the research (see Tool 33. Evaluating stakeholder engagement)
- State how you will evaluate any public involvement in the research (see Tool 34. Evaluating public involvement)
- State how you will evaluate your claim to impact (see Tool 35. Evaluating the strength of your claim to impact)
8. State how you will capture impact

- Explain the types of evidence you will collect about impact (see Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact)
- Describe any measures, scales or indicators of impact that you will use (see Tool 37. Using measures and quantitative indicators of impact)
- Explain any altmetrics you might use (see Tool 38. Using altmetrics)
- Explain how you will use Research Information Systems (RIS; see Tool 39. Getting the most out of Research Information Systems)
- Explain how you will capture views about the research (see Tool 40. Capturing stakeholder’s, research user’s and beneficiary’s perspectives of impact)

9. State how you will communicate impact

- Explain your plans to communicate about impact from the research with policymakers (see Tool 41. Influencing policy and policymakers)
- State what you will do to build reputation for impact (see Tool 42. Generating a reputation for impact)
- Explain how you will communicate with research users (see Tool 43. Communicating with research users)
- Explain how you will communicate with the public (see Tool 44. Communicating with the public)
- Include reference to any reporting requirements that funders may have stipulated including academic publication
- Provide details of any plans for dissemination of information about impact using social media (see Tool 45. Using the world wide web and social media for impact)

Apply this tool

- **Research managers** can use this tool in supervision or coaching sessions with researchers to encourage them to think about impact from the outset of their research and to allocate time and resources for impact as part of the research design.
- **Impact and knowledge exchange leads** can use this tool to discuss what impact planning means with researchers and to suggest strategies that suit specific research studies and contexts.
- **Researchers** can use this tool to discuss and write an impact plan.
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Authored and developed by Dr Elizabeth Morrow, Research Support Northern Ireland.

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