



RESEARCH LEADERS IMPACT TOOLKIT

Introduction

This toolkit is for higher education institutions to develop an embedded approach to research impact. It covers a broad spectrum of impact areas to enable different staff groups and stakeholders to coordinate the leadership and management of impact.

With the support of the UK higher education funding councils this toolkit was developed by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and six academic learning partners. Read more **About the toolkit** and how it was developed.

You can use the navigation menu below to explore sections of the toolkit or browse the **List of tools**. Alternatively, you can follow suggested directions through the toolkit for:

- ▶ **Senior organisational leaders**
- ▶ **Research managers**
- ▶ **Impact and knowledge exchange leads**
- ▶ **Enterprise and engagement leads**
- ▶ **Researchers**
- ▶ **Professional services staff**



Understanding

Understanding what impact means for higher education institutions is essential for achieving an embedded approach to research impact. Users of this toolkit can orientate themselves to the issues by knowing which definitions of impact they are working with and key principles for research impact. This theme explains what outstanding impact means, how to predict the type of benefits that might arise, and how to set impact targets. It explains how to mobilise capacity and staff knowledge and skills for impact, including putting in place leadership and management for impact.

Developing

The theme of developing research impact explores ways to engage whole higher education institutions in achieving impact. It includes developing impact through interdisciplinary research and using Knowledge Exchange as a conduit for impact. In this theme of the toolkit you will also find strategies for how to get more from relationships with stakeholders and how to involve research users and members of the public in research. It contains tools for integrating impact into different types of research, how to write impact statements and impact plans, and cultivate an impact culture.

Evidencing

In this theme of the toolkit you will find information and tools to evaluate impact from research and to judge the strength of your claim to impact. It suggests ways to capture different types of qualitative and quantitative evidence using measures, indicators, altmetrics and research information systems. This theme of the toolkit also covers strategies for communicating with policymakers, research users and the public, and using the world wide web and social media for impact.

Orientating to the different definitions, principles, drivers, benefits and challenges of impact

Visioning outstanding impact, rationale and interests, anticipated benefits, impact targets, and areas for improvement

Mobilising through leadership, management, staff skills and knowledge development, and accessing support

Engaging whole organisations in impact, interdisciplinary research, Knowledge Exchange, stakeholder engagement and public involvement

Integrating impact into different types of research, exploring routes to impact, timeframes for impact, impact statements and impact plans

Embedding impact in organisational culture, mechanisms for exchange, connecting with context, universal structures for impact, and propagating promising impact

Evaluating impact, planning an evaluation, evaluating stakeholder engagement, public involvement and the strength of your claim to impact

Capturing different types of impact evidence, using measures, indicators, altmetrics and research information systems

Communicating with policymakers, research users and the public, using the world wide web and social media for impact

Suggested directions through the toolkit

Senior organisational leaders

The impact tools that are likely to be most useful for chancellors, vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, principals, deputy vice-chancellors, heads of faculty, heads of department, heads of quality assurance and enhancement, heads of research partnerships are as follows:

Tool 3.	Knowing your drivers for impact
Tool 4.	Understanding the benefits of impact
Tool 6.	Knowing the key features of outstanding impact
Tool 9.	Knowing what to take into consideration when setting impact targets
Tool 10.	Identifying areas for improvement in your organisation or department
Tool 11.	Inspiring impact through leadership
Tool 16.	Engaging whole organisations in achieving impact
Tool 26.	Cultivating an impact culture

Research managers

The impact tools that are likely to be most useful for directors of strategic research, directors of research and development, senior research managers, collaboration managers, and strategic project managers, senior researchers, principal investigators, research programme and project leads are as follows:

Tool 6.	Knowing the key features of outstanding impact
Tool 8.	Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits
Tool 10.	Identifying areas for improvement in your organisation or department
Tool 12.	Supporting impact with management
Tool 13.	Reflecting on the skills and knowledge needed for impact
Tool 14.	Providing basic impact training for research staff
Tool 15.	Accessing advanced training, funding and specialist support
Tool 16.	Engaging whole organisations in achieving impact

Tool 22. Exploring possible routes to impact

Tool 26. Cultivating an impact culture

Tool 29. Embedding universal impact structures

Tool 30. Propagating promising impact

Impact and knowledge exchange leads

The impact tools that are likely to be most useful for directors of knowledge exchange or innovation, entrepreneurship, impact leads, impact officers, impact champions, knowledge translation specialists, knowledge transfer specialists staff facilitating interactions between higher education and business, public and third sectors, contract and collaborative research are as follows:

Tool 6.	Knowing the key features of outstanding impact
Tool 7.	Understanding different interests and motivators
Tool 8.	Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits
Tool 13.	Reflecting on the skills and knowledge needed for impact
Tool 18.	Knowledge Exchange as a conduit for research impact
Tool 22.	Exploring possible routes to impact
Tool 27.	Building mechanisms for exchange

Enterprise and engagement leads

The impact tools that are likely to be most useful for enterprise leads, community and public involvement leads, improvement and innovation leads, local economic development leads, engagement specialists are as follows:

Tool 6.	Knowing the key features of outstanding impact
Tool 11.	Engaging stakeholders in research
Tool 12.	Developing public involvement in research
Tool 27.	Building mechanisms for exchange
Tool 28.	Connecting research with contextual levers
Tool 33.	Evaluating stakeholder engagement
Tool 34.	Evaluating public involvement

Researchers

The impact tools that are likely to be most useful for researchers, research coordinators, research administrators and research support staff are as follows:

Tool 8. Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits

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

Tool 35. Evaluating the strength of your claim to impact

Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact

Tool 37. Using measures and quantitative indicators of impact

Lecturers, research supervisors, staff involved in the continuing professional development of researchers and people who are teaching research methods courses may find the following tools most useful:

Tool 13. Reflecting on the skills and knowledge needed for impact

Tool 14. Providing basic impact training for research staff

Tool 15. Accessing advanced training, funding and specialist support

New researchers, research students and members of the public involved in academic research can develop their skills and understanding of research impact with the following tools:

Tool 4. Understanding the benefits of impact

Tool 8. Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits

Tool 24. Writing an impact statement

Tool 25. Writing an impact plan

Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact

Professional services staff

The impact tools that are likely to be most useful for senior administrators, research officers and research team administrators are as follows:

Tool 4. Understanding the benefits of impact

Tool 26. Cultivating an impact culture

Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact

Research information systems managers and staff capturing impact data are likely to find the following tools to be most useful:

Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact

Tool 37. Using measures and quantitative indicators of impact

Tool 38. Using altmetrics

Tool 39. Getting the most out of Research Information Systems

Tool 40. Capturing stakeholder's, research user's and beneficiary's perspectives of impact

Sections of this toolkit that could be most useful for research communication or marketing teams are as follows:

Tool 41. Influencing policy and policymakers

Tool 42. Generating a reputation for impact

Tool 43. Communicating with research users

Tool 44. Communicating with the public

Tool 45. Using the world wide web and social media for impact

List of tools

UNDERSTANDING

Orientating

Tool 1. Understanding which definition of impact you are working with

Tool 2. Being aware of five fundamental principles of impact

Tool 3. Knowing your drivers for impact

Tool 4. Understanding the benefits of impact

Tool 5. Being aware of the challenges impact can raise

Visioning

Tool 6. Knowing the key features of outstanding impact

Tool 7. Understanding different interests and motivators

Tool 8. Anticipating the horizon of possible benefits

Tool 9. Knowing what to take into consideration when setting impact targets

Tool 10. Identifying areas for improvement in your organisation or department

Mobilising

Tool 11. Inspiring impact through leadership

Tool 12. Supporting impact with management

Tool 13. Reflecting on the skills and knowledge needed for impact

Tool 14. Providing basic impact training for research staff

Tool 15. Accessing advanced training, funding and specialist support

DEVELOPING

Engaging

Tool 16. Engaging whole organisations in achieving impact

Tool 17. Developing impact through interdisciplinary research

Tool 18. Knowledge Exchange as a conduit for research impact

Tool 19. Engaging stakeholders in research

Tool 20. Developing public involvement in research

Integrating

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

Embedding

Tool 26. Cultivating an impact culture

Tool 27. Building mechanisms for exchange

Tool 28. Connecting with context

Tool 29. Embedding universal impact structures

Tool 30. Propagating promising impact

EVIDENCING

Evaluating

Tool 31. Reflecting on impact evaluation criteria

Tool 32. Planning an impact evaluation

Tool 33. Evaluating stakeholder engagement

Tool 34. Evaluating public involvement

Tool 35. Evaluating the strength of your claim to impact

Capturing

Tool 36. Collecting different types of evidence to show impact

Tool 37. Using measures and quantitative indicators of impact

Tool 38. Using altmetrics

Tool 39. Getting the most out of Research Information Systems

Tool 40. Capturing stakeholder's, research user's and beneficiary's perspectives of impact

Communicating

Tool 41. Influencing policy and policymakers

Tool 42. Generating a reputation for impact

Tool 43. Communicating with research users

Tool 44. Communicating with the public

Tool 45. Using the world wide web and social media for impact

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