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# What's the evidence for that?

IDENTIFYING, CAPTURING AND DEMONSTRATING  
IMPACT IN THE UK CONTEXT

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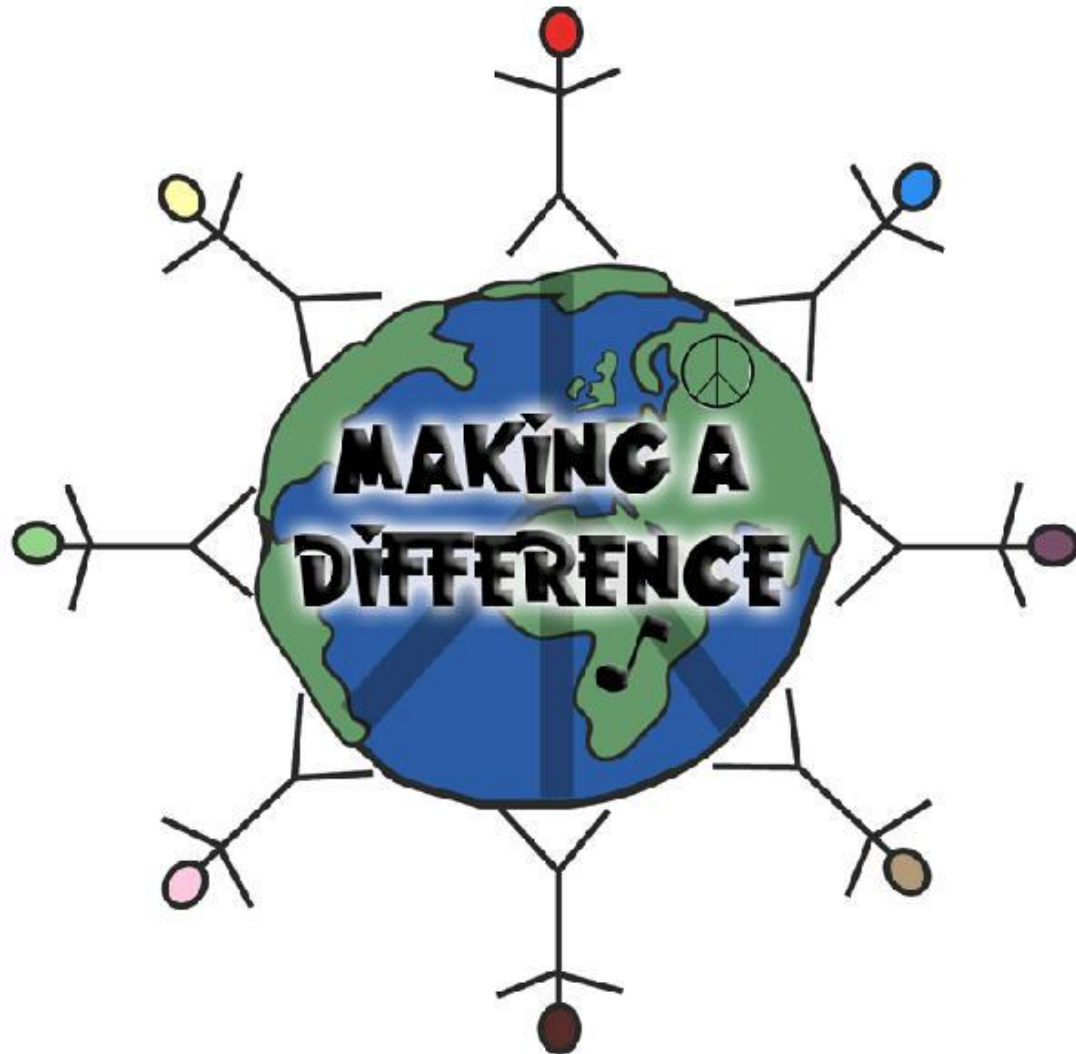
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# The “Impact Agenda”



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Influencing the world since 1583





# The “Impact Agenda”

## **2009: Pathways to Impact – Research Councils**

*‘the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy’.*

-> What would you do to help ensure your research benefits society?

## **2014: Assessing impact - Research Excellence Framework**

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

-> What happened? And how did society benefit?





# The Research Excellence Framework REF

- Assessment of all research in the UK – every 7 years
- Determines the block (non-competitive) funding for research
- Outputs 60%, Environment 15%, **Impact 25%**
- Impact case studies – narrative with evidence
  - 1 case per ca 15 employee
  - Score 1\*- 4\* based on *Reach* and *Significance*
  - One 4\* case study may be worth up to £1M
  - 2\* case studies are worth £0



## Challenges:

- Capturing: Knowing that the research has had impact.
- Attribution: Demonstrating that the impact would not have happened without the research.
- Evidence: Documenting the benefit and its reach and significance.



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Law and Criminology:  
Enhancing the  
effectiveness of  
youth justice  
policy and practice



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## ACTIVITY/OUTPUT

*Exhibition, talk,  
performance, hands-  
on activity*

*Media, Opinion,  
Expert comments*

*Reports & meetings  
to influence decision  
makers*

*New technology,  
spin-out, licensing*

## IMPACT

*Enhanced  
understanding,  
increased  
profile/income*

*Influencing public  
debate*

*Change in legislation,  
guidance,  
professional practice*

*Better products &  
services*

## EVIDENCE

*Audience feedback,  
reviews, tickets  
tourism data*

*Viewing figures  
Response, citation,  
social media,*

*Citation in guidance,  
standards,  
testimonials*

*Revenue, jobs,  
investment,  
testimonials,  
feedback*





# The Impact of Impact

- + Increased the reward and recognition for impactful research(ers)
- + Created a culture of external engagement benefiting teaching, research as well as society
- Focus on assessment skew resources towards documentation rather than actually creating benefit
- Focus on measurable instrumental impact over conceptual
- When REF impact case study becomes the goal in itself



## 28 Feb: Celebration of impact – REF free zone





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