national
co-ordinating centre
for public engagement

Demonstrating Impact: developing impact case studies for the REF

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www.publicengagement.ac.uk

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Wolf Wolfensberger

Scholar behind change in disability policy

Wolf Wolfensberger, who has died aged 76, had a profound effect on the lives of people with learning disabilities in many countries. His writing has influenced academic thinking and government policy around the world, including the current strategy in the UK, Valuing People Now. Probably a greater legacy, however, is the inspiration that Wolfensberger's work and teaching has given to thousands of ordinary people to act on the notion that people like my youngest son, who has Down's syndrome, do not need to be in institutions, but should have the opportunity to live in an ordinary house, go to a regular school, hold down a job, and enjoy a full social life.

The power of Wolfensberger's ideas lay in his analysis of the way in which society unconsciously distances itself from vulnerable people, treating them as different and therefore justifying services that segregate them and mass them together. He suggested that if support for people with learning disabilities was based on the expectation that they could learn, grow and contribute, there would be no need for "special buildings" or "special schools".

That vision of expectations for disabled people was virtually unheard of when Wolfensberger's book The Principle of Normalization in Human Services was published in 1972, though he had already shown that such ideas were not idealistic rhetoric. A parent-led project in the late 1960s in Nebraska, with Wolfensberger as a key adviser, had established a complete range of services based on ordinary community facilities.

theguardian

Wolfensberger felt institutions had a dehumanising effect on those with disabilities, and advocated normalisation

- What 'impacts' did his work have on society?
- What insights does the obituary offer into how he achieved these impacts?

WHAT IS ‘RESEARCH IMPACT’?

REF2014

For the purposes of the REF, **research** is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.

Impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia

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Impact through the research cycle

1. **Potential/future impact**

   (Pathways to Impact)

2. **Maximising impact of current research**

   (Knowledge Exchange)

3. **Reporting on impact of previous research**

   (REF Impact)

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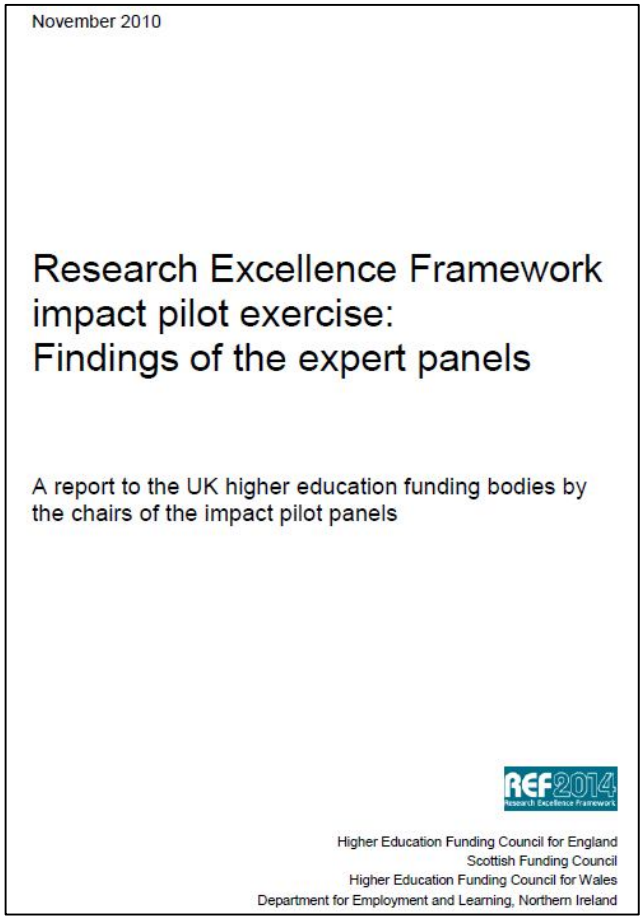
REF IMPACT CASE STUDIES

‘The highest scoring cases in the pilot were those that provided a ***coherent narrative* with *evidence of specific benefits***. Case studies should not cover a series of disconnected activity or list a wide range of benefits without providing details and evidence’


November 2010

Research Excellence Framework impact pilot exercise: Findings of the expert panels

A report to the UK higher education funding bodies by the chairs of the impact pilot panels

REF2014 Research Excellence Framework

Higher Education Funding Council for England
Scottish Funding Council
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland

The case study template

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

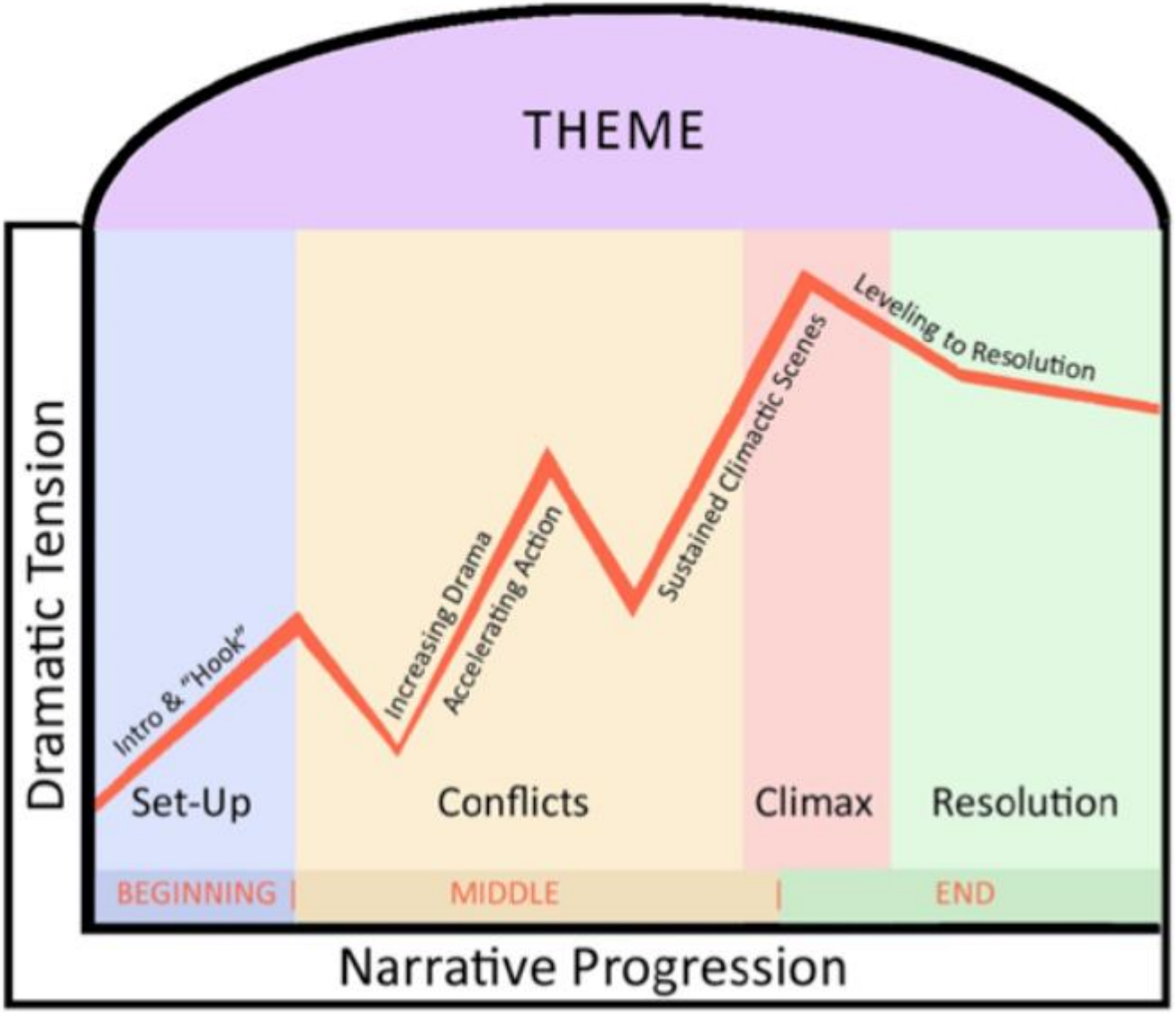
4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Apocalypse Now
REDUX

aninconvenienttruth
A GLOBAL WARNING
by far the most terrifying film you will ever see.
now playing in select theaters

The Narrative Arc



The Narrative Arc

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

The Narrative Arc

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

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4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

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The main character: your research

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

This section should outline the key research insights or findings that underpinned the impact, and provide details of what research was undertaken, when, and by whom.

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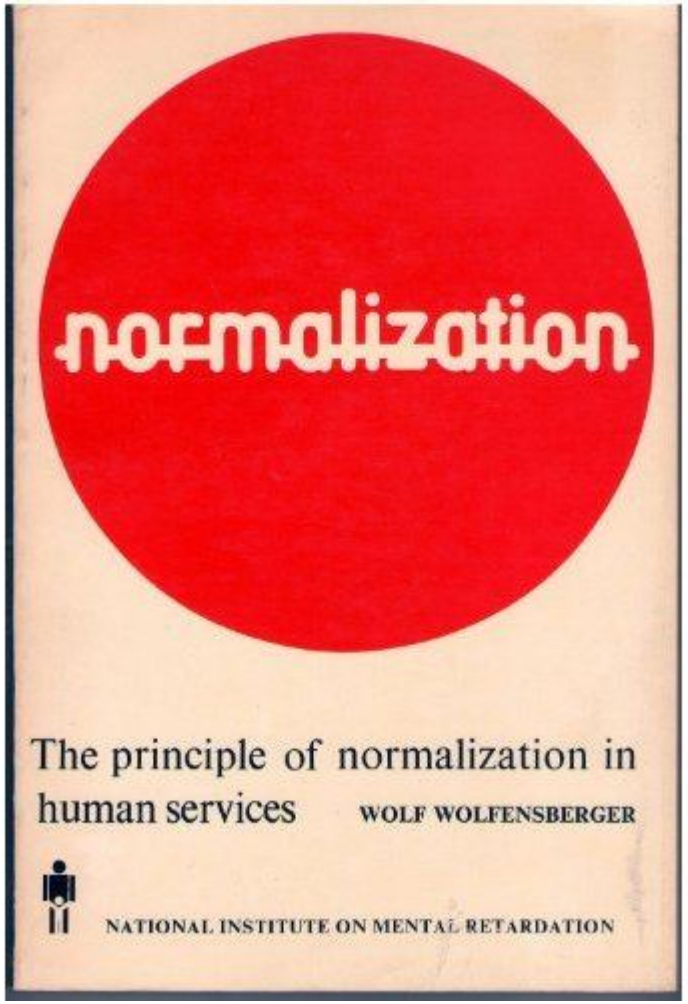
Is the purpose and focus of the research clearly explained?

- ***What was the problem or opportunity it addressed?***
- ***What specific insights did it bring to bear?***



‘The power of Wolfensberger’s ideas lay in his analysis of the way in which society unconsciously distances itself from vulnerable people, treating them as different and therefore justifying services that segregate them and mass them together.

He suggested that if support for people with learning disabilities was based on the expectation that they could learn, grow and contribute, there would be no need for ‘special schools’’

The underpinning research

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DETAILS OF THE IMPACT

The Narrative Arc

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The Narrative Arc

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

1. Summary of the impact

'This section should provide a narrative, with supporting evidence, to explain:

•how the research underpinned (made a distinct and material contribution to) the impact.

•A clear explanation of the process or means through which the research led to, underpinned or made a contribution to the impact

•the nature and extent of the impact'.

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- *The case study template requires significant revision to encourage a* ***coherent narrative****, explaining what research was undertaken, what the claimed benefits or impacts were, and how the research was linked to the benefits.*

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- *The highest scoring cases in the pilot were those that provided a* ***coherent narrative with evidence of specific benefits****. Case studies should not cover a series of disconnected activity or list a wide range of benefits without providing details* and evidence.

Why?

PROMPT: CREATING YOUR ‘HOOK’

TWO Horizon

Home Episodes Clips

The Hunt for the Higgs: A Horizon Special

DURATION: 1 HOUR

Horizon goes behind the scenes at CERN to follow one of the most epic and expensive scientific quests of all time: the search for the Higgs particle, believed to give mass to everything in our universe.

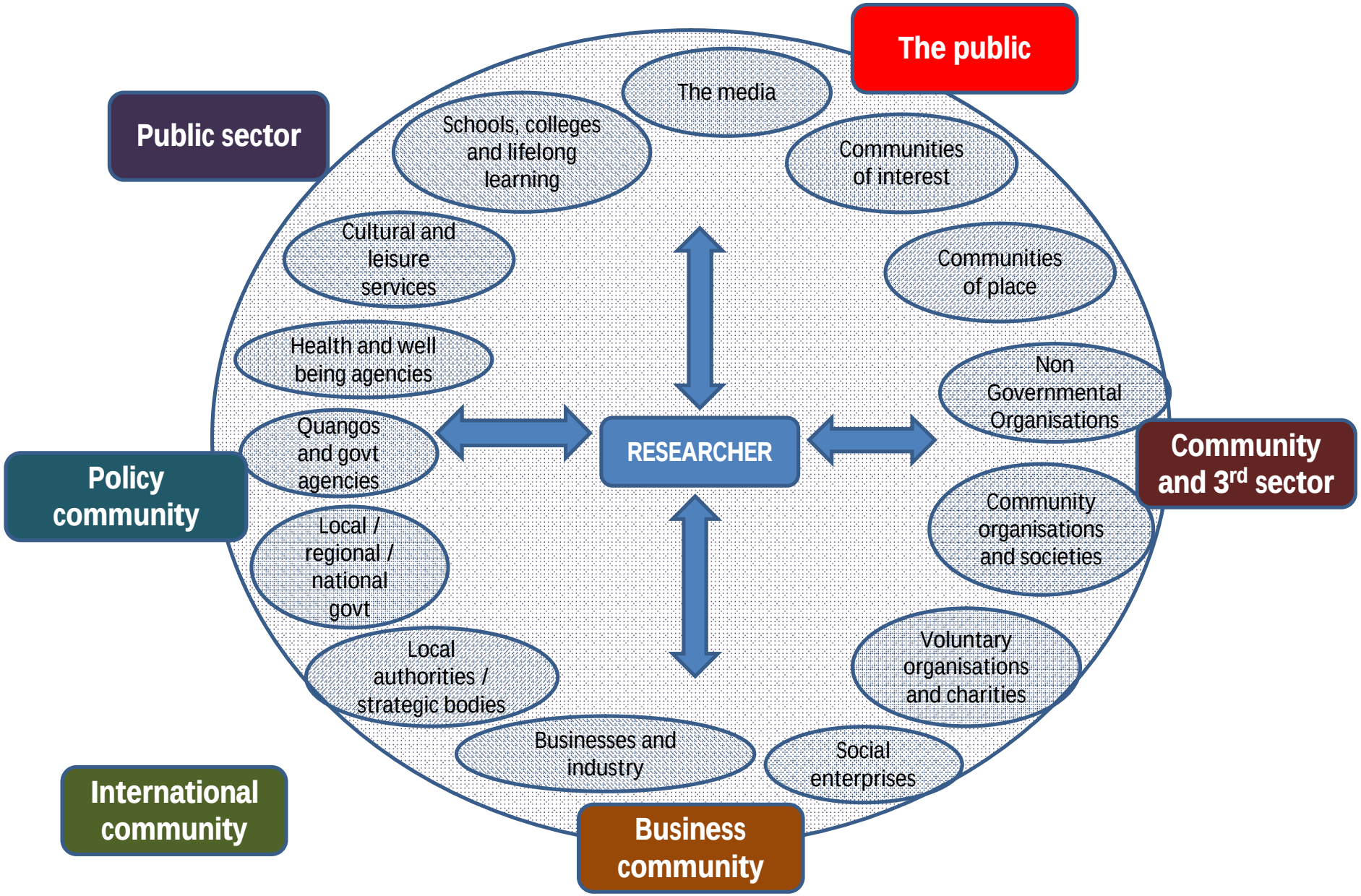
However, the hunt for Higgs is part of a much grander search for how the universe works. It promises to help answer questions like why we exist and is a vital part of a Grand Unified Theory of nature. At the heart of the pursuit of the elusive particle is the same feature that makes snowflakes beautiful and human faces attractive: the simple and enchanting idea of symmetry. < Show less

241 Share

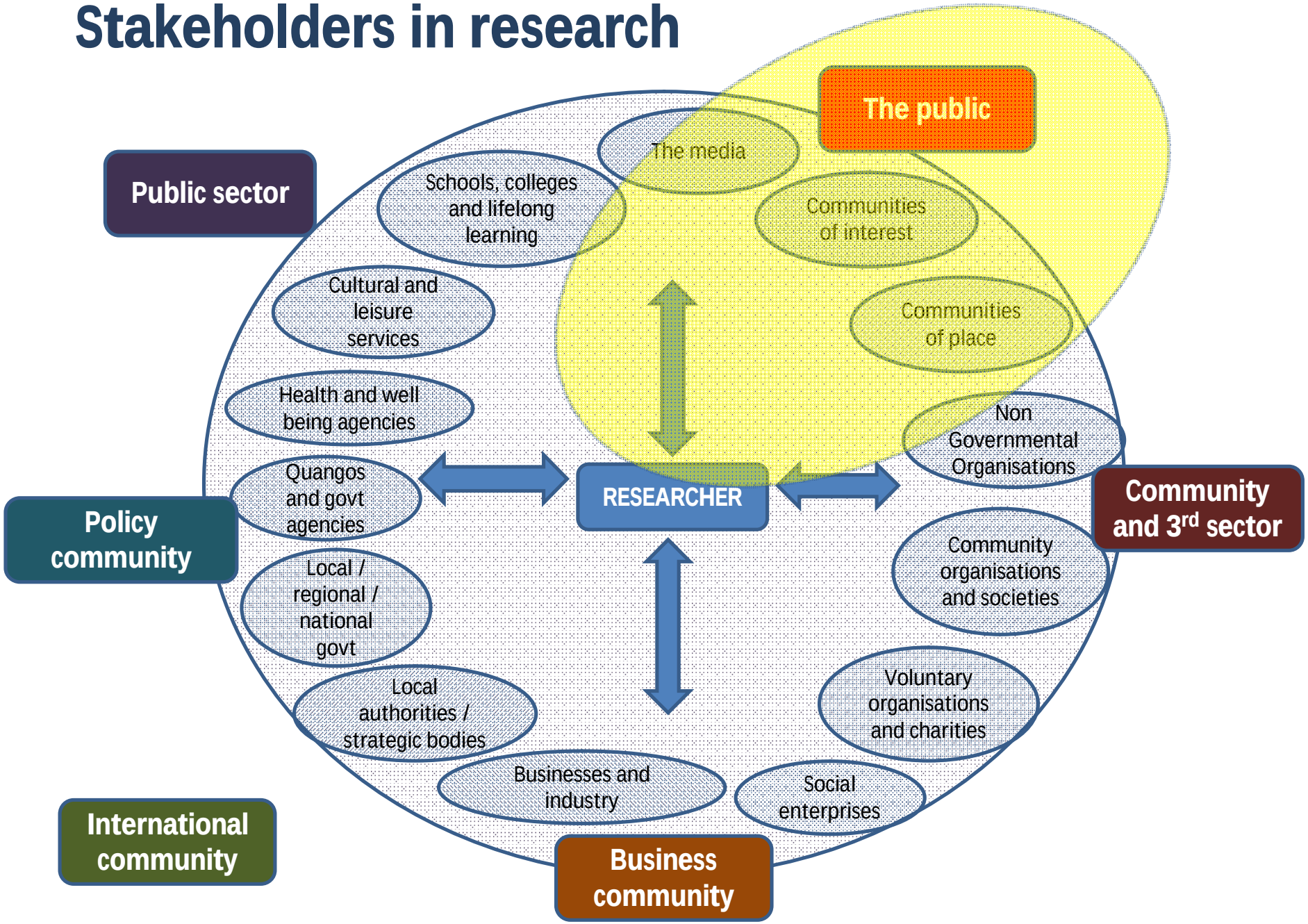
Who?

PROMPT: YOUR BENEFICIARIES

Stakeholders in research



Stakeholders in research



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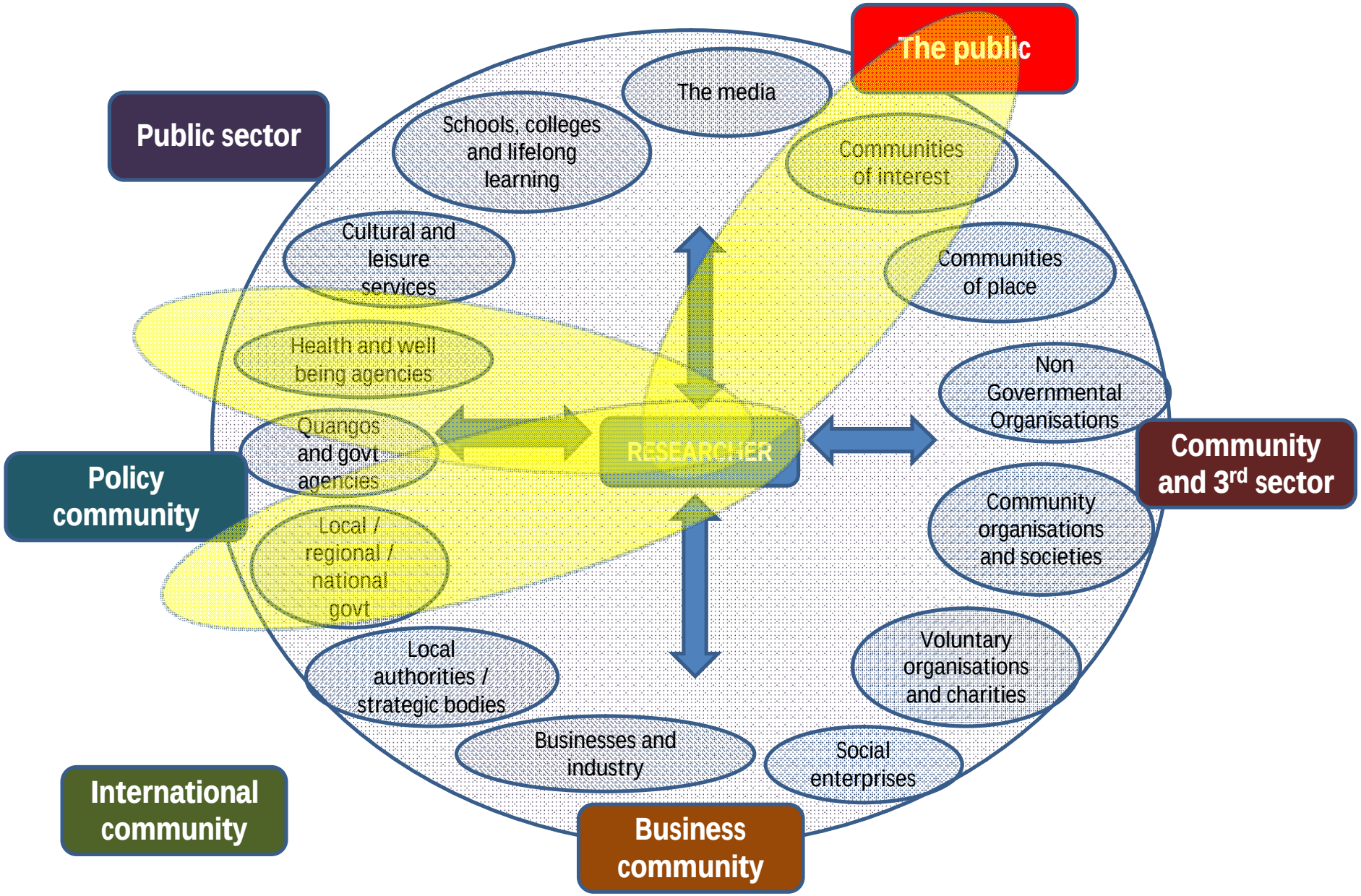

How and when?

PROMPT: THE LINKS IN THE CHAIN

‘The impact journey’

INPUTS: The research methodology and approach that we deployed…

‘The impact journey’

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ACTIVITIES & OUTPUTS: What we actually did, and what we produced

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ENGAGEMENT: Who we involved and how…

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UPTAKE: What kinds of reaction and awareness began to build…

‘The impact journey’

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USAGE: How people began to use the research, eg to build reflect on practice, develop skills

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ENGAGEMENT: Who we involved and how…

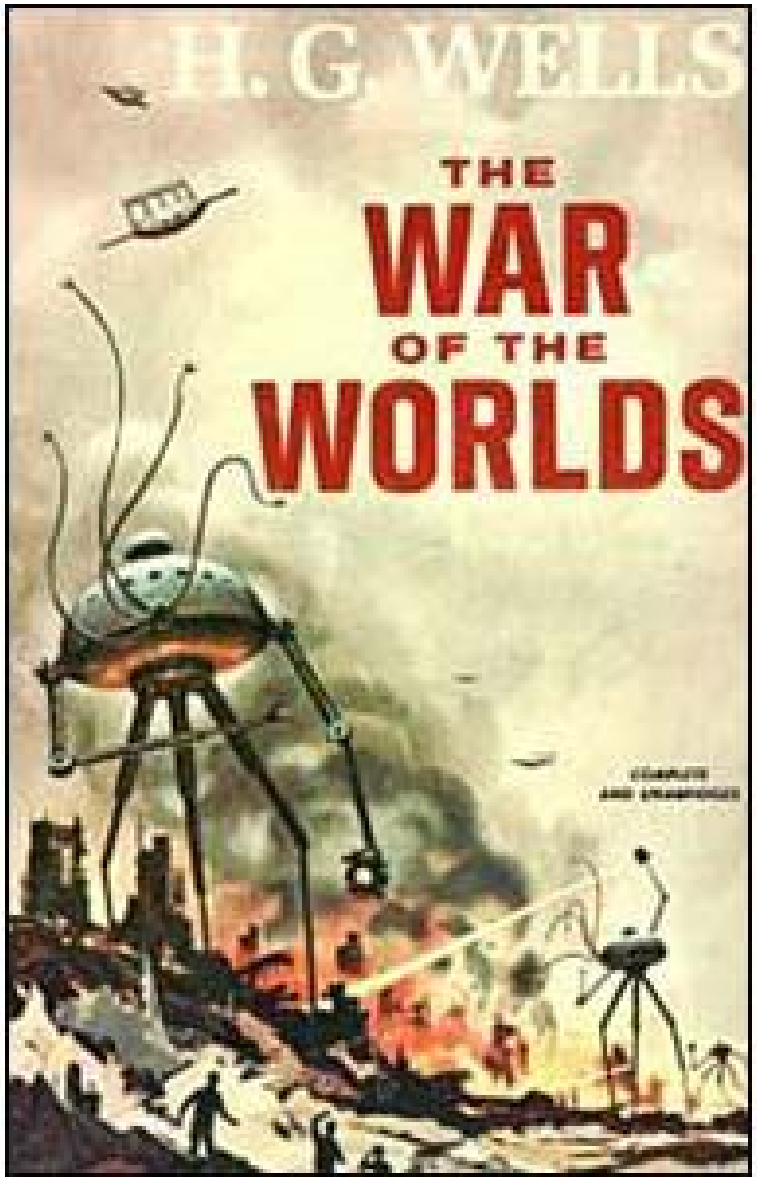
UPTAKE: What kinds of reaction and awareness began to build…

USAGE: How people began to use the research, eg to build reflect on practice, develop skills

IMPACT: How the research insights demonstrably changed behaviours and / practices

Evidence?

MAKING IT REAL



‘Brilliant for descriptive writing and detail. Nothing is left unturned and with this detail you can really build a picture of the Martians and the battered landscape’.

‘***reach***’ *(how widely the impact has been felt)*

‘***significance***’ *(how much difference was made to the beneficiaries).*

REF2014 Research Excellence Framework

Impact domains

www.publicengagement.ac.uk

Culture and society

A Impacts on society, culture and creativity: Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours or practices have been influenced

B Impacts on society, culture and creativity Impacts where the beneficiaries may include individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours, creative practices and other activity have been influenced

C Impacts on creativity, culture and society: Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or communities whose knowledge, behaviours, practices, rights or duties have been influenced

D Civil society Influencing the form and content of associations between people or groups to illuminate and challenge cultural values and social assumptions.

D Public discourse Extending the range and improving the quality of evidence, argument and expression to enhance public understanding of the major issues and challenges faced by individuals and society.

D Cultural life Creating and interpreting cultural capital in all of its forms to enrich and expand the lives, imaginations and sensibilities of individuals and groups.

Economic and commercial

B Economic impacts Impacts where the beneficiaries may include businesses, either new or established, or other types of organisation which undertake activity that may create wealth

A Commercial impacts: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually companies, either new or established, or other types of organisation which undertake activity that creates wealth

D Economic prosperity Applying and transferring the insights and knowledge gained from research to create wealth in the manufacturing, service, creative and cultural sectors.

A Economic impacts: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually the NHS or private health care or agricultural activity

C Economic, commercial, organisational impacts: Impacts where the beneficiaries may include new or established businesses, or other types of organisation undertaking activities which create wealth

Health and welfare

A Health and welfare impacts: Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals and groups (both human and animals) whose quality of life has been enhanced (or potential harm mitigated)

C Health and welfare impacts: Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals and groups (human or animal) whose quality of life has been enhanced (or harm mitigated) or whose rights or interests have been protected or advocated

B Health impacts Impacts where the beneficiaries may include individuals (including groups of individuals) whose health outcomes have been improved or whose quality of life has been enhanced (or potential harm mitigated) through the application of enhanced healthcare for individuals or public health activities

Public policy and services

D Public services Contributing to the development and delivery of public services or legislation to support the welfare, education, understanding or empowerment of diverse individuals and groups in society, including the disadvantaged or marginalised.

A Impacts on public policy and services: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually government, public sector, and charity organisations and societies, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society, through the implementation of policies

B Impacts on public policy and services Impacts where the beneficiaries may include government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charities and public sector organisations and society, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society

D Policy making Influencing policy debate and practice through informed interventions relating to any aspect of human or animal well-being

D Education Influencing the form or the content of the education of any age group in any part of the world where they extend significantly beyond the submitting HEI.

C Impacts on public policy, law and services: Impacts where the beneficiaries are usually government, public sector and charity organisations and societies, either as a whole or groups of individuals in society through the implementation or non-implementation of policies, systems or reforms

Environment

B Impacts on the environment Impacts where the key beneficiaries are the natural environment and/or the built environment, together with societies, individuals or groups of individuals who benefit as a result

A Impacts on the environment: Impacts where the key beneficiary is the natural or built environment

C Impacts on the environment: Impacts where the key beneficiaries are the natural, historic and/or built environment, together with societies, individuals or groups of individuals who benefit as a result

A Impacts on international development: Impacts where the beneficiaries are international bodies, countries, governments or communities

KEY

Panel A | Panel B | Panel C | Panel D

Practitioners and services

C Impacts on practitioners and professional services: Impacts where the beneficiaries may include organisations or individuals involved in the development and/or delivery of professional services and ethics

B Impacts on practitioners and professional services Impacts where beneficiaries may include organisations or individuals involved in the development of and delivery of professional services

A Impacts on practitioners and services: Impacts where beneficiaries are organisations or individuals, including service users involved in the development of and delivery of professional services

A Production impacts: Impacts where the beneficiaries are individuals (including groups of individuals) whose production has been enhanced

There are many ways in which research may have underpinned impact….

….for example, impacts on public awareness, attitudes, understanding or behaviour that arose from engaging the public with research.

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…In these cases, the submitting unit must show that the engagement activity was, at least in part, based on the submitted unit's research and drew materially and distinctly upon it.

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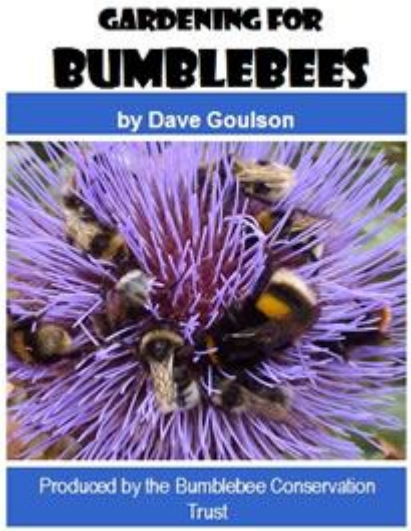
COUNTRYFILE


GARDENING FOR
BUMBLEBEES
by Dave Goulson
Produced by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust

Assessing reach

Assessing significance

Assessing reach

- How many people were involved?
- How diverse or varied were the audiences reached?
- Was there a secondary reach achieved from media coverage?
- Is there evidence of sales / downloads / access to web content?

Assessing significance

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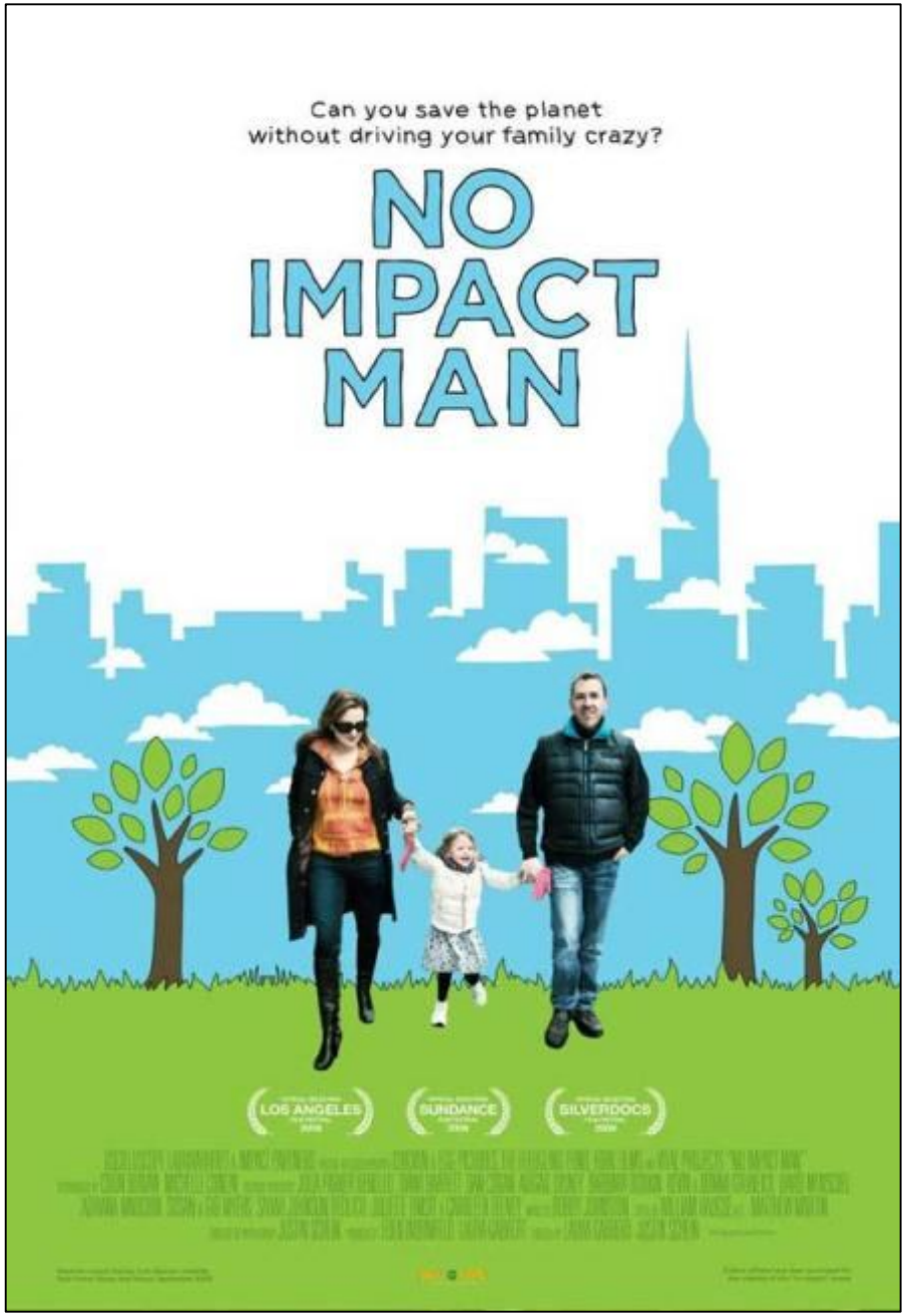
Assessing significance

- Significance of the research content
- Evaluation data
- User feedback / testimony
- Reviews and commentary
- Third party impact or involvement
- Evidence of sustainability


Can you save the planet
without driving your family crazy?
NO IMPACT MAN
LOS ANGELES
SUNDANCE
SILVERDOCS

Perils and traps on the impact journey…

Perils and traps on the impact journey…

ATTRIBUTION: How to determine what specific research result led to what specific impact

TIME LAGS: Impact can take a long time to show – many years in some cases

CHANGE OVER TIME: the nature of impact changes over time

DIFFUSION: the impact of the research becomes more diffuse over time as it permeates into society

ADDITIONALITY: what would have happened anyway if this specific research was not carried out?

DISENTANGLEMENT: how to be clear about the impact of your research, rather than your existing expertise or knowledge

DEPENDENCIES: many other activities, not derived from the research, are required for the research to make an impact

NON-POSITIVE IMPACTS are possible (but rarely considered) and any risks of achieving impact are not either

EXOGENOUS FACTORS: High quality and highly relevant research may not make an impact for reasons beyond the researcher's control

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Are you new to this?

Easy ways to get started with public engagement

How to engage

We've created a toolkit for people who want to engage the public.

Ways we can help

- Join our public engagers' network
- Ask us for advice

Universities already signed up include:

University of the West of England BRISTOL

The NCCPE is part of the Beacons for Public Engagement

We also run vinspired students.

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nccpe.enquiries@uwe.ac.uk

The End