**Research impact** is the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy – communities *beyond academia.*

Research impact must represent an evidenced, measurable **effect,** **change or benefit to:**

* activities, attitudes, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding;
* an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals outwith the institution
* in any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.

Impact is the change that happens beyond the KE activity—your research (or expertise) helps drive it, but it happens through **external** groups or communities using it. This exercise is to consider the specific areas of your research of most interest to others, which organisations or groups may benefit (e.g. industry, practitioners, public), how they benefit (R&D, understanding, practice guidelines, policy direction), and the approaches you might take to reach and engage with them. Even with fundamental research, impact can be achieved through other research groups directly using materials and methods you have created.

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| **1. Briefly summarise your core research focus**  *Try to be specific about your key research problem or a strand that you feel has potential for direct application or use by others (including other researchers).* |  |
| In the next few questions, start to consider what aspects of your research might be interesting or useful to others. Don’t limit yourself to what you might eventually discover, but consider also that others may be interested in your overarching theories; in the methods you use or develop and the materials you produce, and the contexts in which you use them. Consider that those interested may be specialist practitioners, or researchers/technologists in industrial settings. | |
| **2. Ask yourself what is happening now (or not happening) that you think your research may change.**  *Is there a gap in knowledge and understanding:*   * *among the public, specific user groups, or practitioners?* * *about an issue, action, process, or technology?*   *Is there a gap in diagnosis, awareness, or treating a problem?*  *Is there a demand in the market that your findings could help address? Or policy or practice that is non-existent or not fit for purpose?* |  |
| **3. List anyone you think will be interested in, affected by, or involved in delivering the change that may happen as a result of your findings.**  *Which groups of people will be most directly affected by a change? Are there professional groups helped by the research (GPs or other medics, vets, farmers, policymakers)? Is there third sector involvement supporting or advocating for any of these groups? E.g. patient charities?*  *Could pharma, biotech, informatics companies use it?*  **4. How will you reach and engage with these user communities you’ve identified?**  *Think about the most effective and appropriate ways to reach each user group (consider that this may be via existing academic or non-academic partners and their channels).*  *Think two-way engagement rather than one-way dissemination — always build in mechanisms for people to engage at a deeper level (to provide views, ask questions or supply additional information), this can benefit your research, and bolster evidence of impact.* | ***Scoping potential routes to impact***  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **Existing routes to impact**  **Collaborative research**  **Industry**  **Public/user engagement**    ***General advice of finding and engaging with stakeholders***  *Aim to attend at least one conference per year aimed at application — attended by potential users (both academic and non-academic) or with the wider open data/methods/transparency community.*  *A stakeholder workshop may also help to identify wider stakeholder groups, communications channels and feedback about research, i.e. ask stakeholders their opinion on how your ideas could be shaped to make it even more relevant. Workshops could be one-on-one, small group, online, in-person.*  ***How to begin?*** *It’s worth having a read of this useful guide on* [*stakeholder analysis*](https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/post/2019/03/11/how-to-do-stakeholder-analysis) *– it gets you to consider which influential stakeholders to focus your energy on, and how to go about it.*  *Also consider:*   * *who will be responsible for each key activity (or programme of interaction)? Can you involve a postdoc/collaborator?* * *when will you hold them? What are the existing timelines for stakeholder meetings, guideline development, policy engagement?* * *If you can collaborate with an existing academic partner, industry workshop or patient/user group to create a larger event, then do it.*   *- Join external organizations*  *- Clinical associations*  *- Trade associations (e.g. Scottish Life Science Association)  - Knowledge Transfer Networks*  *- Board Membership (Scientific Advisory Board)  - Attend conference attendance aimed at application. i.e. not a science conference - Individual cold call contact  - Peer networking; linked-in  - Invite stakeholders to write or talk about their involvement on your website* |
| **5. How will you demonstrate/ evidence any change *and* the link back to your research?**  *Return to Q.1, think about what change you are delivering. This will dictate how you measure the nature, scale and success of that change. Evidence will vary depending on type of impact (e.g. a new diagnostic might include licensing agreements, testimony from industrial partners about distribution or internal impact etc. Policy impacts could be evidenced by invitations to give expert testimony to government bodies or to serve on advisory committees, etc.)* | ***General advice:***  *Key materials such as this document, testimonials, patents, WHO reports involving your work, clinical guidelines that reference your work etc can be stored in the University Impact Repository (Find out more:* [*http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/rsio/knowledgeexchange/capture/*](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/rsio/knowledgeexchange/capture/)*).*  ***Tip****: It’s useful to agree at the outset of a relationships, that you would like to be able to contact them at a later date to request how a piece of research and/or collaboration has made a material and distinct change or benefit to [the partner’s] business (work processes or product development), which would otherwise not have been possible (or would have been much diminished).*  **Key forms of evidence:**   * Workshops: Keeping a report of stakeholder workshops such meetings is useful, including purpose and aims of the engagement, the methods used, the participants, a summary of noted stakeholder concerns, expectations and perceptions, a summary of discussions, and a robust list of outputs (decisions, actions, proposals, and recommendations). * Contracts or agreements with external stakeholders * Statements from industry representatives that verify the unique contribution made by UofG research/ers to product development, clinical trials, and/or in obtaining regulatory approval or licensing extensions. This may include requesting volumes of sales and/or how widely sold (number of countries) * Product documentation or medical device licensing application that cites your work * Briefing reports/consultancy documents produced for national government or government agencies; * Policy documents detailing their adoption (preferably with accreditation of the research—if not, then backed by accompanying testimonial) * Any published clinical guidelines or policy documents that reflect changes based on your research should be stored. The strongest evidence is when key statements are directly underpinned by your research. * In the absence of direct citation of your work, you should collect a testimonial from a key individual able to substantiate your contribution. A testimonial should be explicit in mentioning the key research used and what specifically it helped to underpin. * Data on guideline/resource downloads (e.g. total number; proportion by region or country — often available via publisher’s site) * Evaluations — any reports reviewing implementation of guidelines/recommendations where they have been enacted (may include government reports, or industry reports published by medical associations etc.) * Testimonials are useful where no reports exist to provide specific information on the ongoing change or benefit to stakeholder business/practice arising from your research. Testimonies may be as simple as emails that reflect a key milestone (which should be saved). Or they may be more formal, substantiating the end of a longer-term implementation of your research findings. Keeping track of key contacts within the stakeholder organisations will be necessary, and testimony secured from such contacts if it becomes apparent they are due to leave their organisations.   + An easy way to handle this informally (while also sharing the interaction you’ve had with them) is to invite stakeholders to write or talk about their involvement on your website/blog.   **Industry**:   * Documentation related to regulatory applications (FDA; EMA) * Documentation of changes to drug licences (e.g. packaging inserts; information sheets for patients and healthcare providers) * Statements from industry representatives that verify the unique contribution made by UofG research/ers to product development, clinical trials, and/or in obtaining regulatory approval or licensing extensions. This may include requesting volumes of sales and/or how widely sold (number of countries).   ***Tip****: Keeping tabs on the ‘buzz’ around research: Register for an* [*Altmetric account*](https://www.altmetric.com)*: use this to compile (quality) news outlets or key stakeholders engaging with the work. Keep a record of the names of science writers/reporters who do a good job reporting your research—or similar research by others—so that you can target them directly ahead of a new paper…with plenty of notice (more information on* [*working with the media*](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/rsio/researcherdevelopment/rescomms/#/workingwiththemedia)*). Likewise, if key stakeholders are engaging with the work, delegate someone to follow up with them, ask whether they find it useful/interesting.* |