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# Humanities Research with Impact

CHRI / RACDV workshop  
30 June 2009, 10 – 12 noon

Rebecca Blackwell  
Research Development Officer, Arts and Humanities (RACDV)  
[BlackwellRM@cf.ac.uk](mailto:BlackwellRM@cf.ac.uk) / x76377

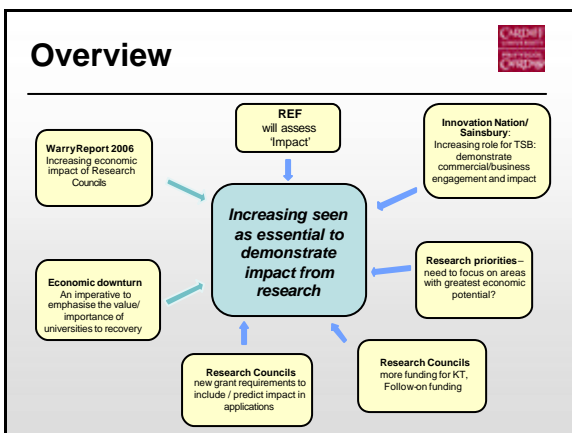
## Timetable

### Session A) Presentation (10.00 -10.35 a.m)

- Background and definitions
- Examples
- Questions / thoughts on approaches

### Session B) Group work (10.45 -12 noon)

- 1) **Methods** (ways of achieving impact)
- 2) **Recording** (ways of capturing and collating evidence of impact)
- 3) **Grant-writing** (responding to AHRC/ESRC requirements)



## REF

- REF will assess 3 elements: Outputs, Environment and **Impact**
- Weighting of 60-20-20
- Esteem 'replaced' by Impact (from 5 - 20%)
- Impact = 'benefits to economy, society, public policy, culture, health, well-being and quality of life'.
- Research with impact is seen as "research that makes a difference outside of academia, in the wider society"

## REF

- Assessed by narrative supported by portfolio of **metrics (indicators)** and **case studies**
- More **'users'** on Panels and involved in assessment;
- Challenges: time-lag, attribution, corroboration (evidence)

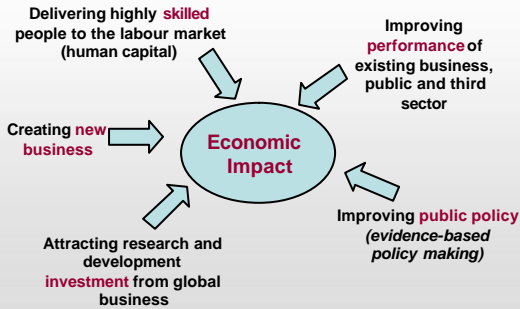
The schedule for the development of the REF is as follows:

- June 2009 – report the outcomes of the bibliometrics pilot and finalise proposals for discussion with DIUS, Treasury and Ministers;
- Autumn 2009 – Consult with the sector
- January 2010 – Publish guidelines
- 2013 – run REF to inform funding from 2014

## Key phrases (routes)

- **DIUS (BIS)** – **Economic Impact** (skills, business, performance, global R&D)
- **RCUK** – "**Excellence with Impact**" (awareness, partnerships / collaboration, *active* engagement, publish, exploit, skills development, curation)
- **AHRC** – "**Making a difference, influence or effect on...**" (social, intellectual and civic capital, social networking, community identity, learning, skills and quality of life).
- **ESRC** – "**One of 3 i s: with innovation and interdisciplinarity**" (skilled people; world-class infrastructure (data, methods); international leadership and partnerships)

## DIUS Economic Impact



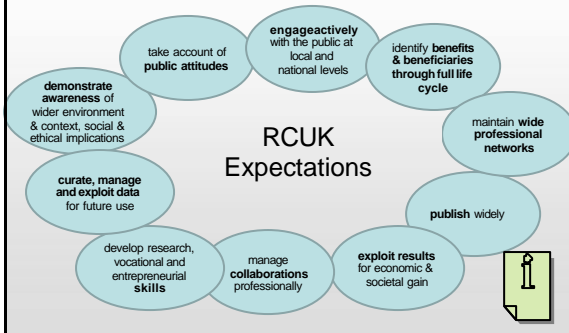
## RCUK Societal and Economic Impact



### Mission (Royal Charter)

- To advance knowledge, understanding and technology (including the promotion and support of the exploitation of research outcomes), and provide trained researchers;
- To build **partnerships** to enhance take-up and impact, thereby contributing to the:
  - **economic competitiveness** of the United Kingdom
  - effectiveness of **public services and policy**, and
  - enhancement of the **quality of life and creative output** of the nation.

## RCUK Societal and Economic Impact



## What is new from RCUK?



All research councils introduced from April 09:

- 'Academic beneficiaries section' (4,000 char)
- 'Impact summary' (4,000 char)
- Impact Plan (2-page attachment)

[further detail refer to JeS and each Council's FAQs.]

Will also result in:

- Changes to Peer Review: "appropriate and justified"
- Longer-term monitoring of outputs and outcomes by RCs ('evaluation')
- More and more and more case studies...**

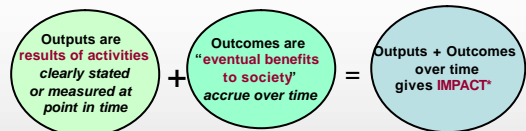
## Definitions...



OK – but what does 'impact' actually mean?

... and how is this different from public engagement, knowledge transfer, dissemination, consultancy, public relations...?

## AHRC Impact Strategy (2008?)



Impact = the fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organisations, communities or systems as a result of a programme of activities

(AHRC, Logic Models for Programme Planning and Evaluation, p. 1)

**Identify and describe** impact first and then only measure and value where this is possible...

(AHRC Impact Strategy – core principles)

## AHRC Impact publication (Jun09)



### Chapters:

- Why is arts and humanities research important?
- Why should the tax payer pay for it?
- Why fund it through the AHRC?

Arises from AHRC Impact Task force (2008)

Two **new conceptual models** for considering impact of A&H research:

- i) A&H fundamental to UK's '**Culture ecosystem**'
- ii) A&H contribution to growth and maintenance of '**Civic Capital**' and '**Economic Capital**'.

## FAQs (key messages?)



**Excellent research without obvious or immediate societal or economic impact will not be disadvantaged**

"Potential pathways" to impact:

- can arise, and should be taken up, at any stage
- can be, and should allow for, the unexpected
- part of a wider agenda of impact, innovation and interdisciplinarity (ESRC only)
- should include and encourage international audiences and collaborations (AHRC only)

## Definitions...



How is 'Impact' different from public engagement, knowledge transfer, dissemination, consultancy, public relations...?

Examples and case studies...

## Obvious pathways



- Partnerships / collaborations, CASE/CDAs
- Skills training (career tracking)
- Secondments, placements
- Knowledge transfer schemes
- Public / community activities
- Consultancy / services
- More & better PR / communication

## Examples: A&H pathways...

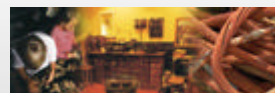


- Exeter: KT funding with Museums (Interdisciplinary School-led collaboration...)
- UCL Humanities for Business ('Strategic' exploitation of Humanities expertise at Faculty-level...)
- Glasgow: Network Theory (Individual *communicating* how research connects to current issues...)
- PhD: Output, outcome, impact? (Unintended impacts with intrinsic effect...)
- Bristol: Interdisciplinary research: (within academic, with wider-reaching knockon impact)

## Knowledge Transfer



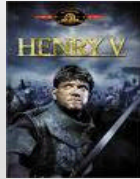
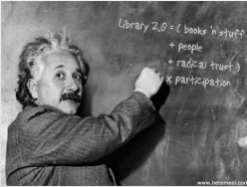
- £1M (majority from AHRC) in the last 12 months
- 5 projects - all partnerships with four regional museums
- 3 CDAs, 1 KTP, 2 KTFs, 1 major research grant



# Humanities for Business



- Seminars provide **new thinking technologies**
- Aimed at senior industry and business professionals
- Income generating (profitable)
- Delivered by senior scholars from across the humanities
- Provides novel ways of thinking about current challenges



# Religion and Network Theory



**Dr Andrew Roach**  
SL, Medieval History



- Network theory & religious allegiance (in 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century - KTF with Volterra Consulting)
- **Terrorism**: spread & elimination of dissent (in 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century)
- The Global Economy & **Creative Industries** (Bogomil monks as a creative industry)

# Unintended outcomes



**Chris Smith:**

- PhD on Coleridge and Wordsworth at Cambridge
- > Cabinet Member, first Secretary of State at DCMS (1997)
- > Tax rebate for free admission to museums (2000)
- > Founded Clore Leadership Programme (2005)

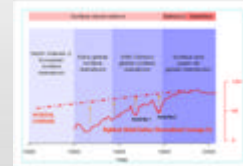
AHRC publication - *'On the Right Track'* (pp.12)

[A study conducted by DTZ Consulting and Research (in association with Swift Research) to understand the career progression, employment patterns and skills of AHRC-funded postgraduates, and to examine their likely impacts in academia and beyond.]

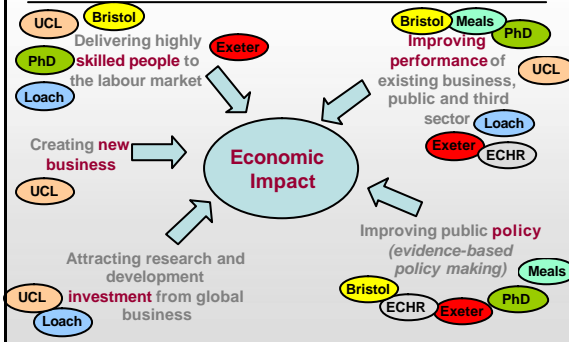
# Interdisciplinary 'knock-on'



- Prof R Bickers: Dept of Historical Studies  
*'Identification of historic meteorological records to support research into climate change'*
- AHRC Knowledge Catalyst
- 19<sup>th</sup> c. East and SE Asia -> Met office -> international collaboration.



# DIUS Economic Impact



# Approaches?



So how do we **identify and encourage** 'potential pathways to impact'?

- Partnerships and collaborations are key (find the 'mavens' in organisations?)
- KT / PE / I&E funding and support are 'enablers' or 'pathways' to impact (APPLY!)
- Time is always a limiting factor (so delegate / teach / inspire?)

## Approaches?



- Impact arises and changes over time, and can rarely be predicted
- A&H (and SS) present “difficult questions” on how to measure, quantify and describe impact
- Explore models that work with ‘tacit’ knowledge or ‘know-how’ (“...people exchange?”)

*“Insofar as individual researchers are a key element in this, it is their brains and imagination that one is accessing, rather than a product or process that can be pinned down in papers and patents. You get it on the day and the hour that you access it, but you cannot bottle it or patent it, and if you access it again the next day it might be different.” (Crossick, 2006:18)*

- Challenge basic v applied research – (there is only ‘applied’ and ‘not yet applied?’)

## Case studies



How do we **capture and communicate** outcomes and impact, not just outputs?

- Track backwards as well as forwards
- Impact is not just about growth – it can also be about prevention of loss.
- Greatest impact is often associated with world-class research – (so focus on international reach?)

## Case studies



- BIS, REF, Research Councils and Funding Councils will drive evaluation (metrics, indicators, narratives, case studies ...)

**BUT...**

*“This is a mind-set and approach... describing impact is about communication; this is impact in its own right.” (BBSRC FAQ§)*

- What role do Humanities methods have in informing this process?

*(Narratives, discourse analysis, media studies, audience studies, trends and associations rather than cause and effect, consumer cultures, use of metaphors and language, digital story-telling)*



## Thank you!

Copies of this presentation will be available on the CHRI website shortly.

[www.cf.ac.uk/chri](http://www.cf.ac.uk/chri)

Rebecca Blackwell  
Research Development Officer, Arts and Humanities (RACDV)  
[BlackwellRM@cf.ac.uk](mailto:BlackwellRM@cf.ac.uk) / x76377