

To accompany the How To Guide No. 2 Pathways to Impact (P2I) Part 2 Tips

## Tips and hints to help you write the P2I summary and statement in your RCUK application

**Impacts are the benefits that can be gained from your research. The impact summary and pathways to impact sections of the application form deal with societal and economic impacts, not academic impacts.**

### Summary section

The key questions to ask yourself when writing this section are: Aside from academics in your field, *who* might benefit from your research and *how* might they benefit? *Who* might use your research and *how* might they use it?

1. Draft the impact summary early in your preparation, to inform your research design.
2. The impact summary is meant to provide a short description of the non-academic beneficiaries and potential impacts which can be used in the public domain. This is the public-facing impact section (so do not include confidential information) and should provide a short description of *who* you think may be interested in your research (outside of the academic community, e.g. the general public, local community, school children, industry, government [including policy makers], the NHS etc.) and *how* they will benefit.
3. Ensure that the predicted impacts are specific to your research - don't write very broad statements about the value of generic research to society and the economy.
4. You are advised to not include academic impact. However, if you think that you only have limited impacts or that your only beneficiaries are academic, explain why (i.e. because of the nature or stage of the research) and refer the reviewers back to the Academic Beneficiaries section of your application (but do show that you have reflected on this section to come to this conclusion of limited potential non-academic impacts).
5. This section should not include what you will do to make impact more likely (this information on activities goes in the statement section).
6. Ensure that the impacts are specific to your research.
7. If there is more than one beneficiary, you can put them in order of priority.
8. Write simply and clearly, where possible avoid jargon - this will make it easier for reviewers from related fields to grasp the benefits of your work.

## Pathways to impact section

When writing this section the most important question to answer is “*What will you do to ensure that potential beneficiaries have the opportunity to engage with your research?*” This section should continue on from the two questions addressed in the summary (*who* will benefit from your research and *how* will they benefit).

This section is primarily for detailing the activities which will help you contribute to potential economic and social impact. Try and list as many that are realistically possible. Be creative and back up your statement with facts and figures.

### Remember that your pathways need to be specific to your project

*Therefore, do not include:*

- Generic statements such as “*The Press Office will ensure the communication of our research to the public*”.
- References to grants you will apply for in the future. The referee wants to know what you are going to do in *this* grant to make impact more likely.
- Extensive track records in impact: generic statements about how you have been successful in the past do not strengthen P2I unless it is clear that this experience will be used directly in the proposed case.
- References to academic beneficiaries, publications in high-quality journals, academic conferences – these belong in the Academic Beneficiaries section. Please note, however, that if engagement with other academics forms part of the *critical pathway to economic and societal impact*, it can be included in the pathways to impact.

Aim to make the impact activities integrated throughout the project if possible, rather than just being bolted on to the back of the project.

You can present your P2I section in ways other than text, e.g. in a table of short, medium and long-term beneficiaries.

Structure your P2I: provide information using clear headings and timescales which demonstrate the pathways towards generating potential economic and societal impacts from your research.

Be clear and precise. Identify people/organisations in advance, include names and details.

You can use these questions to help you write your P2I:

- **How** are you going to share your research with your beneficiaries? (i.e. what will the specific activities be).
- **When** are these activities going to take place? (be as specific as possible)
- **Who** from your research project is going to arrange and deliver these activities?

- **What** will your deliverables be?
- **What resources/training** will you need for these activities (include costs and justification of resources)?
- **How** will you engage end users and beneficiaries and **what** media routes will you use? Try and use new media routes to engage others.
- **How will you know** if these activities have been successful (think about ways to measure success of your activities)?

Write concisely (don't make the text too dense) and ensure that only relevant information is included – don't fill in all the available space if you don't need to and don't waffle

The following is a suggested structure to use when writing your **P2I statement** by Anthony Atkin, Research Impact Manager at Reading University, which you might find helpful:

1. **Context.** Restate the context of the grant and the proposed research. This is because the P2I statement is a separate attachment to the grant and is read separately by reviewers and panel members. The following items could be included to provide this context:
  - Grant title (1 line)
  - Funding scheme info (1 line)
  - Applicant names (1 line)
  - Summary of the proposed research and why it is important (max 5 lines)
2. **Who?** Who could adopt, be influenced by, or benefit from the proposed research? These should be non-academic individuals, groups or organisations. They should be defined in as much detail as possible (name of organisation; name of contact; position of contact – be specific).
3. **How?** How could they benefit from the proposed research? Explain how the identified individuals, groups or organisations will benefit from the research.
4. **What?** What steps will be taken to make this adoption and/or benefit more likely?
5. **Timelines.** The proposed activities to engage with non-academic individuals, groups or organisations should have associated timelines. These could be in the form of Gantt charts, tables, prose. These should include how these will be managed and who will be responsible. The timelines should take up circa half a page.
6. **Costs.** The costs should take up circa a quarter of a page. Appropriate costs associated with the activities could include travel, venue costs, promotional material, website development, publication costs. They should be realistic and appropriate.

## General

Focus on the research described within the application. All impact generating activity, including public engagement, must be linked directly to the research you apply to conduct.

Where possible, and for impact activities to be more effective, end users should be involved from the outset of the research design process to maximise the potential take-up and application of the research.

Public outreach is a popular form of impact activity. For such activities to be as effective as possible, try to think of your research in the context of a two-way engagement, not just outreach.

If you claim that you will have potential impact on policy or practice, you need to show that you understand how change is made in your area in order for policy to change.

Engagement with the general public is good, but RCUK would like to see more engagement with users of research, i.e. people who can utilise research to improve policies, services and processes.

What if you can't envisage any impact from your research at the moment? Helpful advice from the [National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement](#) is as follows: "No impact? For some 'blue skies' theoretical research it may be hard to imagine any non-academic impact within the foreseeable future. This is fine. However, before you use the option of explaining why your research won't have impact, please consider whether there are 1) ways you can engage with special interest groups through, for example, magazines, talks in societies, festivals, or through social media groups and 2) ways you can engage with other more applied disciplines who may be able to take the insights from your project further".

## Summary

<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
Set the bigger picture	Be repetitive
Say what you are going to do and list why you are doing these activities	Be vague on who you work with and how
Be clear and precise, including names and details. Identify people in advance. Be specific of individuals/organisations	Rule out potential avenues for collaboration
Back up your impact statement with facts and figures	Leave blank the P2I sections or put N/A – at least explain why not (i.e. why you think there is no societal or economic benefit)
Encourage two-way active participation with stakeholders / 'people exchange'	Make unrealistic or false statements
Use new media routes to engage others. Be innovative and creative.	Oversell it
Use creative and innovative approaches and think outside the box	Put in run of the mill activities that would happen anyway
Keep it confident	Fill in the space with waffle
Use diagrams, visuals	
Use public engagement	
Provide a summary of resources	
Put in milestones and think about your deliverables	