

Engaging publics with research



Reviewing the REF 2014 impact case studies and templates

Introduction

This report shares the results of a long process of review and reflection. The story begins in 2012 when the NCCPE was invited by HEFCE to submit a discussion paper¹ about assessing the impact of public engagement to inform the guidance for REF 2014. We were pleased to see this advice informing the guidance provided by the Main Panels.

In the run up to the REF we were able to run a number of workshops to help people develop their case studies and impact templates. After the submission process was completed, we conducted a ‘Lessons learned from the REF’ workshop in 2014.² Since the results were announced in 2015 and the case studies and templates were published online for all to browse, we have spent many fascinating hours poring over the submissions. This report shares the key findings from that analysis and reflection – findings which we have tested iteratively with the sector through a variety of workshops and events over the last 18 months.

Now is a very timely moment to be publishing this report. We were encouraged recently to see Lord Stern’s review³ of the REF calling for Public Engagement to be more firmly incentivised and embedded in the next REF and that this prompt was picked up in the HEFCE consultation on REF 2021. We hope that our report will provide useful evidence and a useful set of frameworks to progress our collective understanding of how best to plan, deliver and describe the process and outcomes of engaging the public with research.

We believe that this report provides clear evidence about why it is important to see public engagement more prominently featured in the next REF. While there was a surprising amount of public engagement featured in REF 2014 – nearly half of the case studies make some mention of it – our research reveals significant potential to scale up the quality and extent of public engagement that features.

What we hope this report provides is confidence for people to build on the ‘best’ of REF 2014 – by identifying examples which demonstrate the compelling value that public engagement with research can realise, and by identifying areas where our collective efforts can be better focused.

We look forward to your feedback and comments.

1. Discussion Paper: Assessing impacts arising from public engagement with research (2012) https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/impacts_arising_from_public_engagement_discussion_paper_0.pdf

2. After the REF - Taking Stock (2014) www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/nccpe_after_the_ref_write_up_final.pdf

3. Building on Success and Learning from Experience An Independent Review of the Research Excellence Framework (2016) www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/541338/ind-16-9-ref-stern-review.pdf

Background to the REF

The 2014 Research Excellence Framework (2014 REF) was conducted jointly by the UK HE Funding Councils to inform the selective allocation of their grant for research to institutions, with effect from 2015-16. REF assessment is intended to provide accountability for public investment in research and produce evidence of the benefits of this investment. The assessment outcomes provide benchmarking information and a reputational standard.

For the first time, the 2014 REF took research impact into consideration and assessed the impact of higher education research outside academia.¹ The assessment of impact was based on expert review of case studies and impact templates submitted by 36 Units of Assessment (listed in annex 1). Case studies could include any social, economic or cultural impact or benefit beyond academia that arose during the assessment period (1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013) and that was underpinned by excellent research produced by the submitting institution within the given timeframe.² Future and potential impact were not included. To be credited for an impact, the submitting unit had to show that it had undertaken research of a certain standard that made a distinctive contribution to achieving the claimed impact or benefit. Impact or benefits arising from engaging the public with the submitted unit's research could be included. Dissemination activity alone, without evidence of its benefits, was not considered as impact.

Submitting units were also required to submit an Impact Template, spelling out how they had supported and enabled impact during the assessment period.³ Case studies were submitted using a generic template (see annex 2), with word limits (four pages of information). This was designed to enable institutions to explain and demonstrate clearly research impact through a narrative that included indicators and evidence as appropriate to the case being made. The impact element of the REF contributed to 20% of the unit's overall REF score. The scores of individual case studies (unclassified, 1*, 2*, 3* or 4*) were not published, but the overall impact score for each unit was.

The REF impact case study database

Over 6,000 REF impact case studies have been made publicly available on a searchable web-based database.⁴ To support accessibility, the case studies are uniformly presented, while preserving original detail and text. Original files can also be downloaded. Case studies have been tagged with information about fields of research, impact types and location of activity to enable indexing and faster searching based on HEI, region or subject area, for example. The range of search options includes flexible keyword-based searching. This database provided the primary source material for this review.

1. REF (2011a). Research Excellence Framework 2014. Decisions for assessing research impact http://www.ref.ac.uk/media/ref/content/pub/decisionsonassessingresearchimpact/01_11.pdf

2. Ibid

3. REF (2011b). Research Excellence Framework 2014. Assessment framework and guidance on submissions. July 2011.

4. <http://impact.ref.ac.uk/CaseStudies/>

Our approach and methodology

Our approach has been exploratory, using a variety of methods. Our intention was to identify trends and patterns in the data which would help people understand how public engagement featured in the REF; how it was assessed; what (in our judgement, and in the judgement of the panels) appeared to be the hallmarks of quality; and to draw out implications for future activity.

To do this we:

- Used a structured approach to searching and analysing the database to identify the distribution of key terms describing types of interaction with the public within the case studies;
- In the process, identified a sample of 731 case studies which reference 'public engagement' and a further 2377 case studies featuring other descriptions of interaction with the public;
- Performed further text searches and analysis of these two samples to identify broad trends and patterns in the distribution of these terms (and others, e.g. impact types) across the 36 Units of Assessment;
- Looked at a sub-set of these 'engagement' case studies from across the four main panels to explore how they constructed effective narrative accounts, working qualitatively to develop a model of public engagement research impact;
- Identified impact templates from the highest performing Units of Assessment to explore how they framed their support for public engagement, and derived a model to describe how to create an effective environment for public engagement;
- Used the above findings to elucidate what in our opinion constitutes good practice in the creation of excellent case studies and templates;
- Developed a framework to describe the complex process of judgement which we conclude is necessary if impacts arising from engaging the public with research are to be effectively assessed, to inform future iterations of the REF.

Caveats

While the REF impact case studies provide a fascinating snapshot of public engagement with research practice in the UK, it is important to recognise that the case studies do not represent a comprehensive picture of the extent and nature of public engagement with research. In particular, it is worth noting that:

- There is anecdotal evidence that some staff were actively discouraged from submitting case studies featuring public engagement due to the perceived ambiguity of the guidance. This means that the some excellent practice in the sector was not captured by the process
- It is widely recognised that one of the most significant benefits arising from engaging the public with research is the impact realised on the research and researchers involved. However, the REF was focused on impact 'beyond academia', and so this rich seam of engagement practice rarely featured in the submitted case studies.

Acknowledgements and thanks

A large number of people have contributed their insight and expertise to this report, although any errors or omissions are fully our responsibility at the NCCPE.

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If you have comments on this report, or would like to adapt the content and re-use it, please contact the NCCPE: nccpe.enquiries@uwe.ac.uk

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This report

The report details the key findings of our analysis in five different sections, represented below.

We begin with an executive summary of the key findings revealed at each of these stages of our analysis.

1. Mining the database (p.19 – 42)

Searching the database to identify how public engagement featured – to identify broad trends and patterns

2. Interpreting the case studies (p.43 – 92)

Reading a sample of case studies in depth to interpret the different storylines and framings of public engagement, and developing a framework to capture the critical elements in an effective case study featuring public engagement

3. Reviewing 4* impact templates (p.93 – 99)

Looking in depth at the highest performing units of assessment to identify how they are supporting public engagement, as expressed in their impact templates

5. Concluding comments (p.105 - 107)

Summarising the key lessons learned and identifying action points to improve future practice

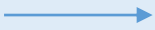
4. Reflections on the process (p.100 – 104)

Identifying what the review has told us about the challenges of describing and assessing impacts arising from public engagement

Executive summary

Key findings

1. Mining the database



Searching the database to identify how public engagement featured to identify broad trends and patterns

What do we mean by public engagement?

By 'public engagement' we mean interaction with people outside academia, in their capacity as citizens and members of communities of place or interest. We differentiate public engagement from engagement with policy making, business and the professions, but recognise that in practice they often overlap.

- **Public engagement is pervasive:** 3108 of the 6640 case studies (47%) made some reference to engaging with the public.
- **Public engagement can happen 'alone' but more often is integrated into a blend of external engagement, with policy or the professions, and very occasionally with business:** This suggests a significant virtuous circle or association: those institutions that engage well with a range of different stakeholders include 'the public' as one of those groups.
- **Public engagement appears to be more prevalent in the Arts and Humanities:** The extent of public engagement reported across the four main panels differed strikingly. There was surprisingly little public engagement reported in areas like medicine and public health, where there has been a long standing expectation that researchers should engage patients. This merits deeper analysis.
- **Different 'flavours' of public engagement feature in different discipline areas:** for instance, 'outreach' is prevalent in physics.
- **Public engagement is nearly always focussed on changes to understanding and awareness. Much more rarely is it foregrounded as a route to realising legal, technological or commercial impacts or more instrumental outcomes:** many researchers default to a paradigm of public engagement as 'dissemination', and in the process limit its potential to contribute at all stages of the research cycle. The public are most often framed as an 'audience' for research findings, rather than as experts in their own right or as active participants in the process.
- **Evidence provided of impact on public understanding and awareness is often weak:** usually, researchers limit their evidence to a list of the outlets they have used and the numbers of people engaged.
- **Public engagement is often 'mediated' through the involvement of organisations like schools, broadcasters, charities or museums:** there is significant potential to benefit from these organisations' expertise in engagement and evaluation of impact, but this is rarely made explicit in the case studies (for instance, by utilising evaluations conducted by them). The impact on these organisations as a result of their mediation is often a significant aspect of the impact, but not always made explicit
- **We didn't discover any significant difference in the scores awarded to case studies featuring mentions of public engagement compared with those that don't:** anecdotally, there was nervousness in the sector that public engagement would be valued less highly than other types of engagement. This finding challenges that assumption.

2. Interpreting the case studies

Reading a sample of case studies in depth to interpret the different storylines and framings of public engagement and develop a set of lenses for 'reading' the REF

What does an excellent case study featuring public engagement look like?

The case studies provide a rich data set to address the question: how can excellence in generating impacts from engaging the public with research best be evidenced in a case study? We approached the analysis with some assumptions: that a quality engagement process will typically involve (for instance) clarity about your purpose and sensitivity to the public(s) you intend to engage). Reading a range of case studies allowed us to finesse these assumptions. We have derived a set of prompts that make explicit our conclusions about what excellent case studies do to 'tell their story' and offer evidence of impact. Excellent case studies typically articulate the following 'links in the chain':

What?

A convincing account of the significance of the research: why it matters beyond academia. Who should care about it? What is distinctive about its potential?

Where?

An explicit, intelligent acknowledgement of the external context, and a clear grasp of the potential contribution of the research to influence thinking, practice and people's capabilities beyond academia

Who with?

A clear articulation of the key publics and partners involved and a rationale for their involvement, with clear insight and knowledge about their interests, motivations and needs in relation to the research

Why?

A confident sense of purpose animating the engagement that underpins the impact claimed

When?

An intelligent sense of timing to maximise the potential impact of the engagement activity, with activities differentiated by the phase of the research

How?

Drawing on appropriate methods, tailored to purpose, context and the publics they are seeking to engage

With what impact?

Able to talk convincingly about the difference it has helped to generate, and make credible claims for the contribution made by the research to that impact

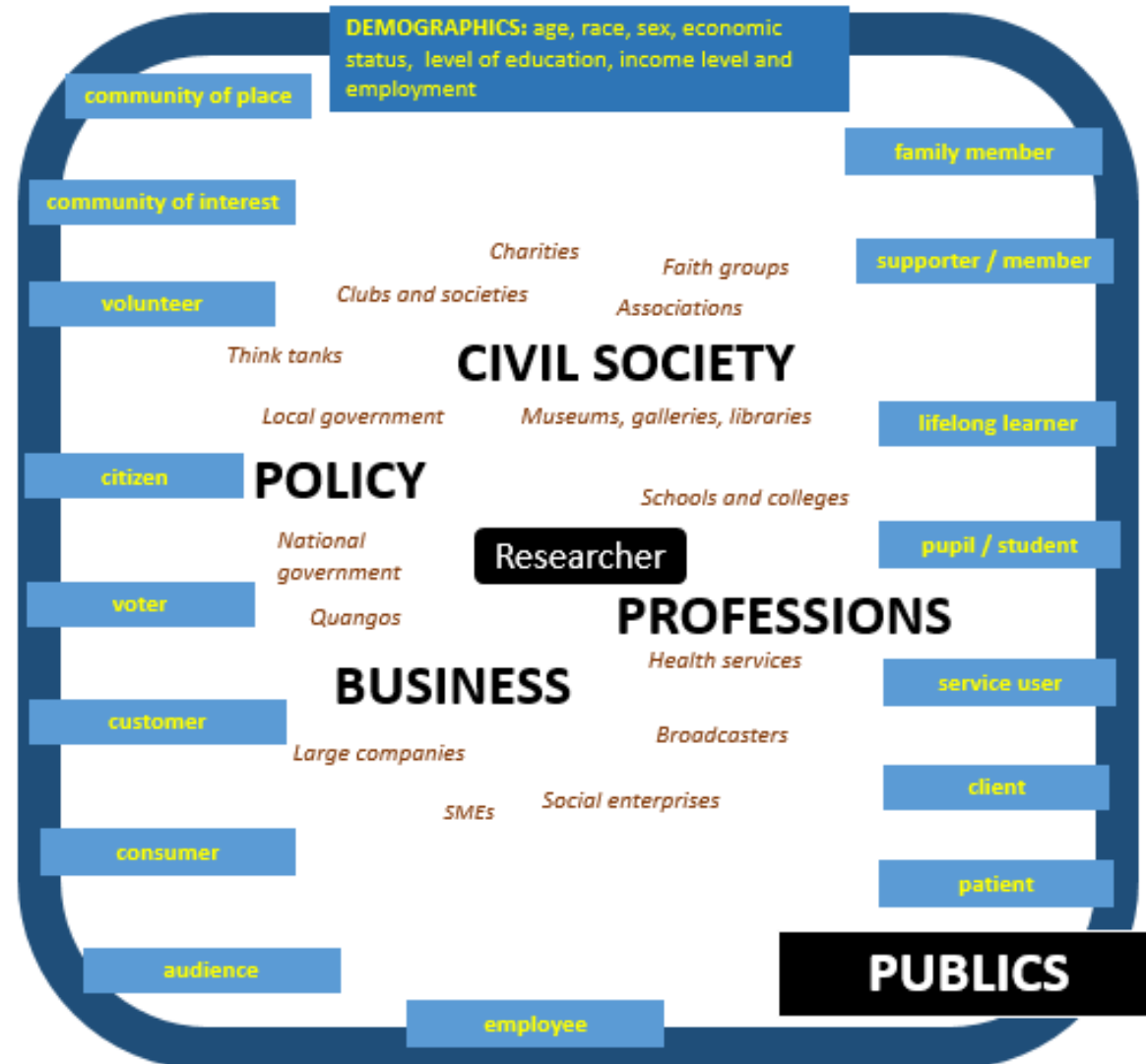
2. Interpreting the case studies

Reading a sample of case studies in depth to interpret the different storylines and framings of PE and develop a set of lenses for 'reading' the REF

Who are the public?

Making sense of the complex way in which people beyond academia engage with research is important. Many case studies just talk about 'the public' in an undifferentiated way. More clarity and precision about who was engaged is important. We derived the following 'map' from the case studies. It articulates the world 'beyond academia' as a variety of spheres: policy, professional practice, business and civil society.

In each of these spheres individual members of the public, and collectives of people, play a variety of roles – as citizens, consumers, voters etc: focusing on the active roles the public can play in the public sphere seems to us to be a helpful way of providing more specificity about the nature of the interaction between researchers and publics.



2. Interpreting the case studies

Reading a sample of case studies in depth to interpret the different storylines and framings of PE and develop a set of lenses for 'reading' the REF

How can the public engage with research?

The case studies reveal a variety of ways in which researchers typically engage the public with research:

Involve public in the design and framing of the research

There are rare examples of the public – for instance in their capacity as service users or volunteers – being involved at the formative stages of a research project.

Co-production or collaborative research are terms often used to describe this approach. Sometimes too the public are involved as members of advisory groups.

Although the impact of this way of working can be really powerful, influencing the quality and robustness of the research and ensuring its sensitivity and relevance, the impact component of the REF is not focused on how involvement of the public enhances the research.

Nevertheless, there can be significant benefits for the public in playing such active roles in the research process, for instance in terms of their skills, understanding and empowerment.

Engage public in the research process

There are some compelling examples of the public being involved in the research process itself, actively contributing to the process of investigation.

Examples include:

- Citizen science where the public are contributing data
- Co-production where the public are acting as co-investigators and contributing their expertise
- Dialogic approaches where public expertise, attitudes and values are actively sought throughout the process

This approach can also realise powerful personal outcomes for the public involved

Maximise uptake of the research by the public

The most common way in which the public are engaged is once the research is complete, or nearly complete: researchers actively seek ways to ensure the significance of their research is widely understood and shared 'beyond academia'.

Typically this activity might involve:

- Dissemination activity that seeks to target people who might benefit from the research and engage them with its findings
- Working with partner organisations to integrate the findings from the research into their public-facing products and services, networks, training or outreach activity.

The framing of the REF encourages the submission of activity which is focused in this area, which helps explain why so many case studies describe activities focused on translation and uptake.

2. Interpreting the case studies

Clarifying the kinds of impact that arise from public engagement

Our review of the case studies allowed us to develop a framework that helps to capture why public engagement with research ‘matters’ and helps to describe the types of impact that are typically generated. Adapting the ESRC’s categorisation of impacts (conceptual, instrumental and capacity building) we identified six broad outcome areas and various indicators of impact.

Type of impact	Typical outcomes arising from public engagement	What kinds of impact can be realised?
Conceptual	Enlightenment: inspiring wonder, curiosity and learning; affecting meaning- & sense-making; challenging conventional wisdom Criticism: provoking challenge, scrutiny & debate; holding to account	• Changed understandings • Enhanced learning and reflection • Increased empathy
Instrumental	Innovation: prompting new ways of thinking & acting; creating new products and knowledge; galvanising change Reflexivity: prompting dialogue & deliberation; exploring risk; informing decision making	• Changed standards / regulation • Changed accountability regimes • Products and services are influenced and changed • Changed policies • Changed planning processes • Changed / enhanced public realm and environment
Capacity building	Connectivity: building networks; encouraging participation & involvement Capability: building skills; influencing behaviours and practices; empowering; well-being	• Increased participation and progression • New skills • Changed behaviours • New or strengthened networks • Enhanced collaboration • Enhanced well-being

2. Interpreting the case studies

Reading a sample of case studies in depth to interpret the different storylines and framings of PE and develop a set of lenses for 'reading' the REF

What types of public engagement featured?

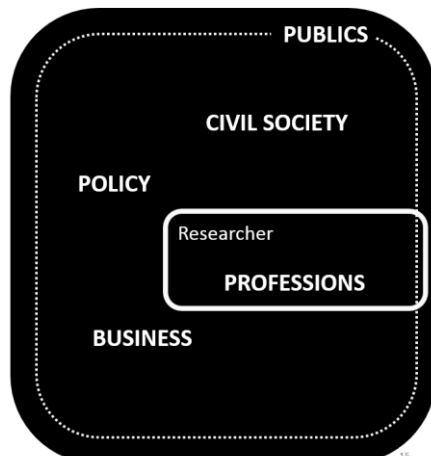
We identified five distinctively different approaches to public engagement

'Classic' public engagement



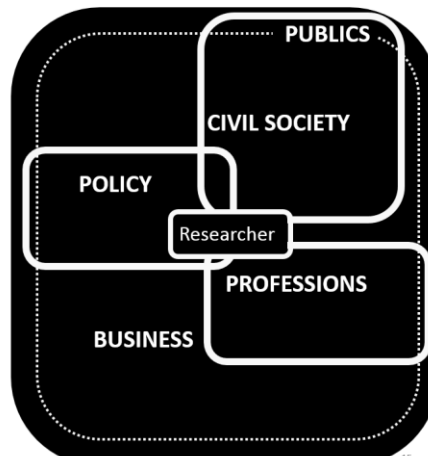
'Classic' public engagement involves researchers engaging directly with a community of place / interest – e.g. with adult learners – with this engagement forming the backbone of the case study.

'Mediated' public engagement



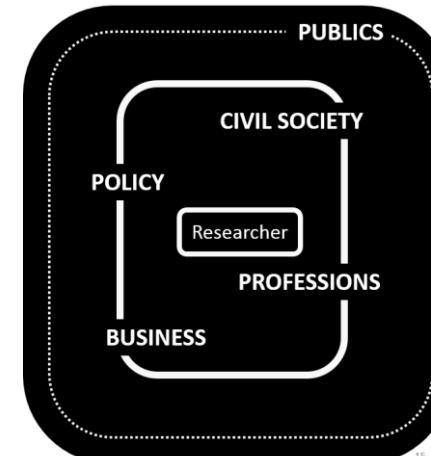
'Mediated' public engagement sees an active collaboration with intermediary organisation(s) like a charity, museum, media or school to reach their audience / public.

'Blended' public engagement



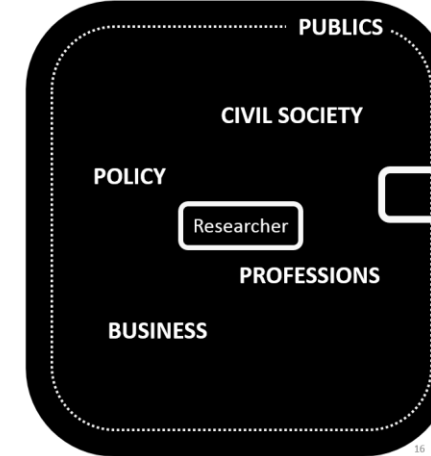
With 'blended' public engagement, the public engagement forms part of a wider knowledge exchange project – e.g. to engage policy makers, practitioners and service users around a particular health issue.

'Behind the scenes' public engagement



'Behind the scenes' PE sees no direct engagement with publics – all the effort is put into improving the quality of PE undertaken by intermediary organisations, by influencing their practice or making new resources available.

'Bolt on' public engagement



With 'bolt on' public engagement there is a cursory role for public engagement (for instance, some media coverage was achieved) but it is peripheral to the main engagement activity being undertaken.

Key findings

2. Interpreting the case studies

What's the 'point' of public engagement? We identified three stylised 'storylines' which recurred throughout the sample

Research generates powerful new knowledge and meanings.

Public engagement brings that knowledge into the public sphere to animate conversation, inspiring learning, reflection and empathy: circulating new ways of making sense of a complex, ever-changing world.

Enlightenment and empathy

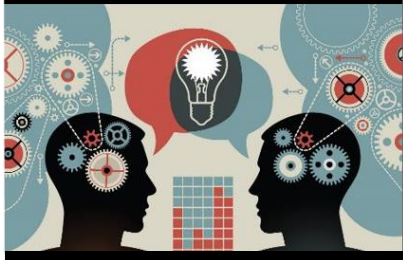
Storyline 1: Enlightenment and empathy



Involving the public as partners in research brings their insight and expertise to bear on how 'the world works'. It helps to generate innovation, enhance quality of life, and improve accountability and decision making.

Social innovation

Storyline 2: Social innovation



Involving the public in research can help people to develop their skills and capabilities, and to 'live' and 'work' better. Involving them in critiquing and influencing the practices of key agencies – like government or the public sector – enhances the capacity, capability and equity of society

Social action

Storyline 3: Social action



What's the motivation?

Making the research:

- **Meaningful**
- **Persuasive**

by

- Stimulating learning
- Influencing public debate
- Changing understandings
- Challenging conventional wisdom
- Fostering empathy

Which methods?

- Media
- Websites
- Debates
- Archives;
- Social media
- Publications
- Performances
- Exhibitions
- Presentations
- Festivals etc.

With what pay off?

- Enlightenment:** inspiring wonder, curiosity and learning; meaning- & sense-making; empathy
- Criticism:** provoking challenge, scrutiny & debate; holding to account

What's the motivation?

Making the research:

- **Relevant**
- **Practical**

by

- Changing standards / regulations
- Influencing new products and services
- Changing policies / planning
- Influencing decision making
- Influencing the public realm

Which methods?

- Consultation
- Dialogues
- Co-production
- Advisory groups etc.

With what pay off?

- Innovation:** new ideas and ways of acting; new products and knowledge; creating; galvanising change
- Reflexivity:** prompting dialogue & deliberation; exploring risk; informing decision making

What's the motivation?

Making the research:

- **Motivating**
- **Useful**

by

- Inspiring participation and progression
- Teaching new skills
- Changing behaviours
- Influencing practitioner and policy makers' behaviour /practice / standards
- Fostering collaboration

Which methods?

- Outreach
- Education
- Lifelong learning
- Network-building
- Training and development

With what pay off?

- Connectivity:** building networks; encouraging participation & involvement
- Capability:** building skills; influencing behaviours and practices; empowering

Looking in depth at the impact templates produced by the highest performing units of assessment to identify how they are supporting public engagement

The Impact Templates submitted by the highest performing Units of Assessment reveal that successful departments pay attention to the following:

- Treating public engagement as an integral part of their impact strategy
- Clearly articulating who their 'publics' are
- Expressing an explicit rationale for their public engagement activity
- Having an authentic flavour to their public engagement, sensitive to their discipline, context and values
- Investing in building sustained partnerships and collaborations with external intermediary organisations
- Deploying appropriate methods of engagement, and investing resources and effort to develop their expertise in engagement
- Investing in the creation of a culture in which researchers are supported and incentivised to engage with the public

Key findings



4. Reflections on the process

Stepping back to identify the key lessons learned and implications for the next REF

Whilst public engagement is pervasive, and there is some coherence across the sector in the types of approaches being deployed, there is a lack of clarity in our collective thinking about how best to assess the societal impact of such activity. There are two critical challenges to address:

Being more robust and realistic in how we make expert judgements about the impacts that can arise from public engagement (and other forms of engagement)

- Social impact is not a stand alone effect that can easily be isolated & measured. Aspects of impact can certainly be quantified, but ultimately we are involved in a process of **peer judgement** (just as we are when we judge the excellence of research). It is vital that a narrative format & a peer review process are retained.
- We need to be more explicit about the assumptions that we use collectively to 'weigh up' claims of impact. Key to those judgements are considerations of how **context, approach** and **method** inform the credibility of the claims being made for the impact and value of the work being described (just as they are to judgements about research excellence).
- In preparing for the next REF, teasing out the relationship between 'measurement' and 'judgement' of impact will be important. We have provided a **framework** to make explicit some of the critical focal points which we think inform rigorous, robust judgements of excellence in public engagement, to underpin assessment of the impacts claimed to have arisen from such activity. This framework is shown on the next page.

Being more creative and ambitious in how we deploy public engagement to generate public benefit

- Although a significant amount of public engagement features in the case studies, it is in many cases under-developed: done with good intentions, but rarely demonstrating excellence and innovation. There is little room for complacency and much work still to be done to build on the foundations laid in REF 2014. We offer the following challenges as areas where we think there is significant opportunity to improve our collective practice:
 - We tend to use public engagement as a way of disseminating research, and miss the opportunity to involve people more actively in contributing their expertise to the research process
 - We fall back on the comfort zone of 'enriching public understanding' and underexploit the potential of public engagement to lead to impact in other areas of public life, for instance enhancing the environment, or influencing the practices of policy makers, business and the professions.
 - When we do seek to animate public understanding we struggle to find convincing ways to describe the significance of what is achieved.
 - We are not interested enough in method: there are pockets of excellence in how people are engaging, rich; long-standing traditions being drawn on; and innovative new methodologies in development. We need to recognise that engaging with the public is a highly skilled and professional practice and work harder to realise excellence in, and assessment of, that practice.
 - We should learn from beyond academia: there is significant expertise beyond higher education and we shouldn't assume we can do this on our own.

Judging the excellence of impacts arising from research: a framework

Underpinning research

- Is the significance of the research within its social context convincingly explained?

Societal context 'beyond academia'

- Is the engagement activity intelligently 'tuned' to its context and stakeholders?
- Are the researchers aware of / alert to cutting edge thinking and practice in each area?

The approach

- Are the researchers clear about what they are trying to achieve through their engagement, and is their activity animated by a clear sense of purpose?

The methods deployed

- Is the engagement being executed in ways that are appropriate to context and purpose?

The impacts claimed

- What difference is it actually making? What changes has it contributed to? How convincingly are these described and evidenced?
- How significant is its contribution to the field it works within?

Research activity

Which aspect of public life is it seeking to investigate and explore?

Social context

Meaningfully engaged with existing knowledge and practice, and with public and professional interests

The intellectual landscape

What is its potential contribution to thinking and sense-making outside academia?

The practice landscape

Which areas of policy and practice does it contribute to?

The people landscape

Who has a stake in this work, why might it matter to them, how might they benefit?

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Approach

Purposefully seeking to realise public benefit from the products and processes of research, for instance through:

Enlightenment and empathy

Enlightenment: inspiring wonder, curiosity & learning; meaning- & sense-making; empathy
Criticism: provoking challenge, scrutiny & debate; holding to account

Social innovation

Innovation: new ideas and ways of acting; new products and knowledge; creating; galvanising change
Reflexivity: prompting dialogue & deliberation; exploring risk; informing decision making

Social action

Connectivity: building networks; encouraging participation & involvement
Capability: building skills; influencing behaviours and practices; empowering

Method

Deploying methods that are appropriate to their context and aims

The methods deployed

Are the methods appropriate to the context and purposes?

The 'blend' of engagement

Is it involving the right people in a purposeful and intelligent way?

The timing of the engagement

Is the timing well judged to maximise its potential impact?

Peer review

Have they secured feedback and challenge from peers?

Societal impact

The impacts arising

What is the reach and significance of its impact 'beyond academia'? How are they evidenced? Is the evidence provided proportionate to the impacts claimed?

Conceptual

Ways of thinking and making sense

Instrumental

Products & services; ways of doing things

Capacity building

Skills, behaviour and collaboration



5. Action

What next? What other areas should we focus on to build on the lessons learned from REF 2014?

The review has identified four other areas where we think attention could usefully be applied:

Getting better at understanding conceptual impact

The bulk of public engagement reported in the REF is focussed on conceptual impact – the sharing and nurturing of meaning. We need to invest effort to better understand how such impact can be realised, and how it can be both described and assessed. Projects like AHRC's Cultural Value project provide a really useful basis for deepening our understanding of such processes and how they can be described and assessed.

Understanding a range of impacts

Whilst we need to get better at facilitating and evaluating conceptual impact, we also need to look to other forms of impact that can be generated through engaging the public with research. For instance, public engagement has significant potential to realise instrumental impact: to change the infrastructure of the public realm and the practices of policy makers, business and the professions. We rarely realise its potential to contribute to the shaping of research questions; to ensure research is focused on areas of real resonance and relevance to the public; to feed public expertise into the sense making process of the research; to challenge the ethics and values of our practice; to involve the public as partners and collaborators in making sense of the world and helping to change it in practical ways. The guidance for future REF exercises could broaden and deepen its framing of impact to encourage more of this type of activity.

Focusing on method

Our analysis of the case studies has provided a useful set of insights and 'building blocks' to equip researchers to plan, deliver and evaluate excellent public engagement with research that leads to impact. We need to invest in people's knowledge and skills so that they can use such tools intelligently and judiciously to improve their practice. We should make sure that we benefit from the expertise of partners and collaborators from outside higher education in developing our collective expertise.

Thinking beyond the REF

While the REF provides a welcome opportunity to secure funding and recognition for excellent public engagement, it should not become the exclusive frame of reference for university public engagement. Many forms of valuable engagement cannot be captured by the REF, but they are still important and require investment and evaluation.

1. Mining the database

The process we followed

Searching for public engagement

We interrogated the database of 6640 case studies to explore how frequently public engagement featured across the sample of case studies.

Searching for the term 'public engagement' identified 731 case studies. But widening out the search revealed many more case studies which refer to a variety of ways of involving the public in the research.

This created a sample of 3108 case studies.

Analysing the sample

We then interrogated the larger sample for the broad trends it revealed. We developed four lines of enquiry, detailed in the boxes to the right. These provided particularly useful ways of interpreting the data.

Some significant headlines emerged:

- Some reference to engaging with the public features in nearly half of the case studies
- Panel D (Arts and Humanities) dominates, with public engagement featuring in nearly 80% of the submitted case studies
- Frequently, that engagement involves communicating research findings to the public
- More rarely does it involve the public in more active ways
- The engagement is often undertaken with intermediary organisations, like schools, museums or the media
- There were some consistent ways in which people attempted to frame and account for the impacts arising from public engagement. We drew on these common approaches to develop a draft framework which we share later.

How PE distributes across disciplines

'Varieties' of PE within different disciplines

Comparing PE across impact types

4* performance

How many of the impact case studies
feature engagement with the public?

This chapter summarises the findings from an analysis of the 6640 case studies collected on the REF Impact Case study database. The analysis focussed on making sense of the whole sample and the ways in which engagement with the public is featured across the case studies.

REF2014 impact case studies

Search again: Search a case study... Search

REF impact found 6640 Case Studies

Currently displayed text from case study: Summary of the impact Refresh

[Abdulrazak Gurnah: Influencing policymakers, cultural providers, curricula, and the reading public worldwide via new imaginings of empire and postcoloniality](#)

Summary of the impact

Abdulrazak Gurnah's research, mediated through his novels and short stories, enriches and reshapes public understandings of empire and its consequences on an international scale. By challenging previous assumptions about empire, colonialism, migration, and diaspora, Gurnah's writing has influenced educators, educational policymakers, and the reading public worldwide.

Read More

Submitting Institution	Unit of Assessment	Summary Impact Type
University of Kent	English Language and Literature	Societal

Research Subject Area(s)

Language, Communication and Culture; Cultural Studies; Literary Studies
History and Archaeology; Historical Studies

[A Behaviour Change DVD to Increase Physical Activity in Deprived Neighbourhoods - From Concept to Community](#)

Summary of the impact

This case study describes the research pathway and impact of a behaviour change DVD designed to increase physical activity in sedentary individuals in deprived communities. Developed as part of a randomised controlled trial with the National Institute for Health Research's Health Technology Assessment programme (HTA), together with supporting...

Read More

Submitting Institution	Unit of Assessment	Summary Impact Type
Sheffield Hallam University	Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism	Health

Research Subject Area(s)

Medical and Health Sciences; Public Health and Health Services

Filter Impact Case Studies

Submitting Institution: All Institutions (6640)

Show only Joint Submissions

Unit of Assessment: All Units of Assessment (6640)

Summary Impact Type: All Impact Types (6640)

Research Subject Area: All Subject Areas (6640)

Show only Interdisciplinary Case Studies

Impact Global Location: All countries (6640)

Impact UK Location: All places (6640)

Project Funders: No funder selected (6640)

Clear Filters

Download Impact Case Studies

File format: Excel

Sections to include in download: None selected

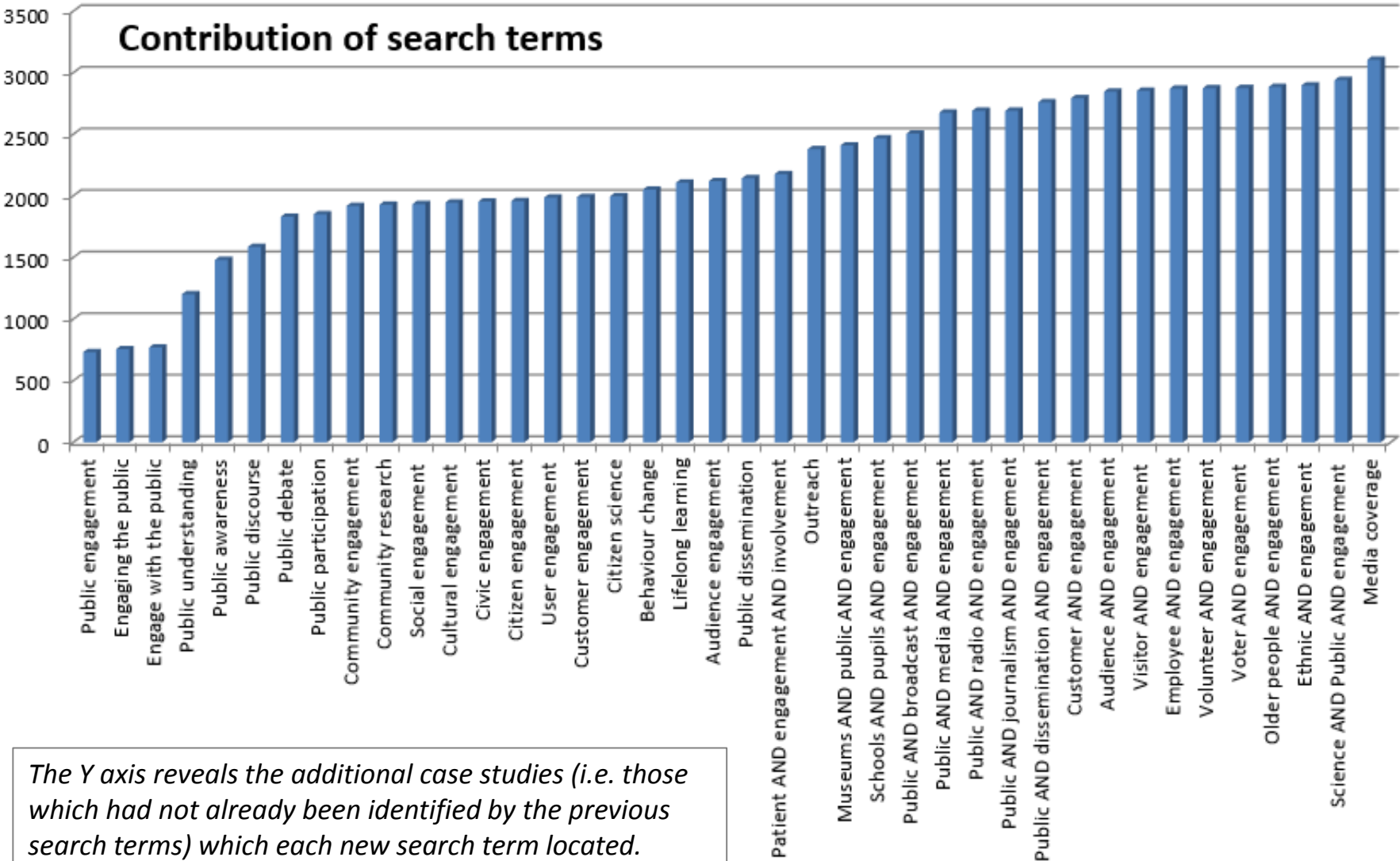
The REF impact case study database

Headline findings

- Searching for “public engagement” revealed 731 case studies which use the term at least once.
- These were much more common in Panel D (arts and humanities) where 24% of the submitted case studies mentioned public engagement. Only 6% or 7% of the case studies in the other three panels used the term.
- When we extended the range of search terms to capture other ways of describing engagement with the public, we identified 3108 case studies – 47% of the total. The distribution of these across the four main panels was quite different.

How we extended our search for engagement with the public

We extended the sample by employing a range of search terms which would locate case studies which might not use the term ‘public engagement’, but which would nonetheless describe interaction with the public. If these revealed case studies which had previously been missed, we added them to the sample.



The Y axis reveals the additional case studies (i.e. those which had not already been identified by the previous search terms) which each new search term located.

We looked for other phrases which describe engagement with publics
For instance, “engage with the public”, “community engagement”, “social engagement”, “cultural engagement”, “citizen science”.

We looked for descriptions of impact in the public sphere
For instance, “public understanding”, “public discourse”, “public awareness”

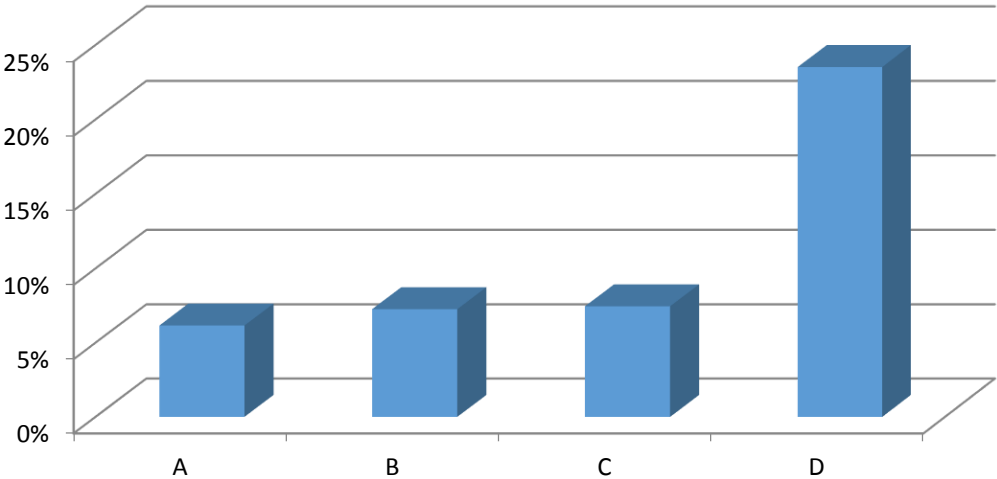
We looked for the involvement of intermediary organisations
We chose not to search for separate occurrences of ‘public’ AND ‘engagement’ (this would have thrown up a huge number of examples) but we were aware that a number of case studies which involved intermediaries (like museums, schools or the media) had not been captured using the previous search terms. We therefore searched for case studies which featured the type of intermediary (e.g. museum); AND the term ‘engagement’; AND the word ‘public’.

Each search term located new case studies to add to the sample
For instance, “media coverage” (the last term on the x axis) identified 164 case studies in which none of the other search terms featured.

Searching for ‘public engagement’ reveals 731 case studies

Searching for ‘Public Engagement’ returned 731 case studies. Looking at the totals by main panel reveals a dominance in Panel D

‘PE only’ case studies as a percentage of total submitted case studies

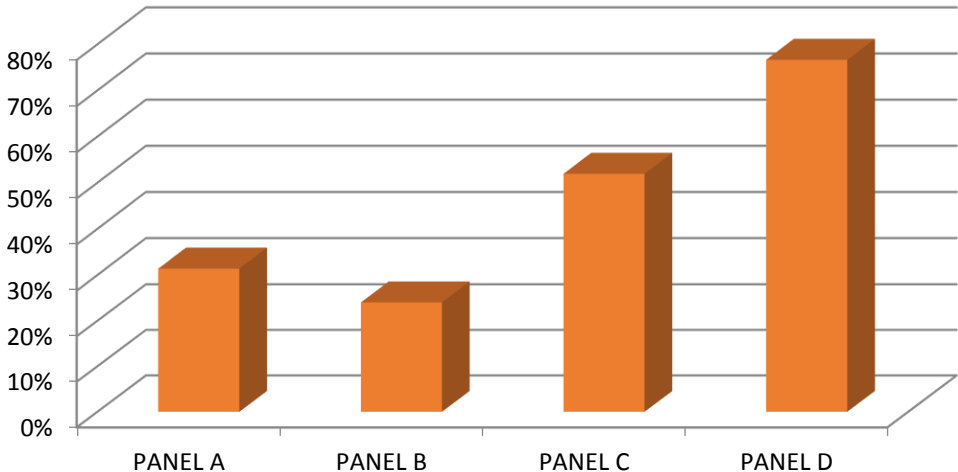


Panel	Total case studies	Total ‘PE only’ case studies	% of submitted case studies
A	1591	98	6%
B	1474	107	7%
C	1959	146	7%
D	1616	380	24%

Extending the search terms reveals a further 2377 case studies

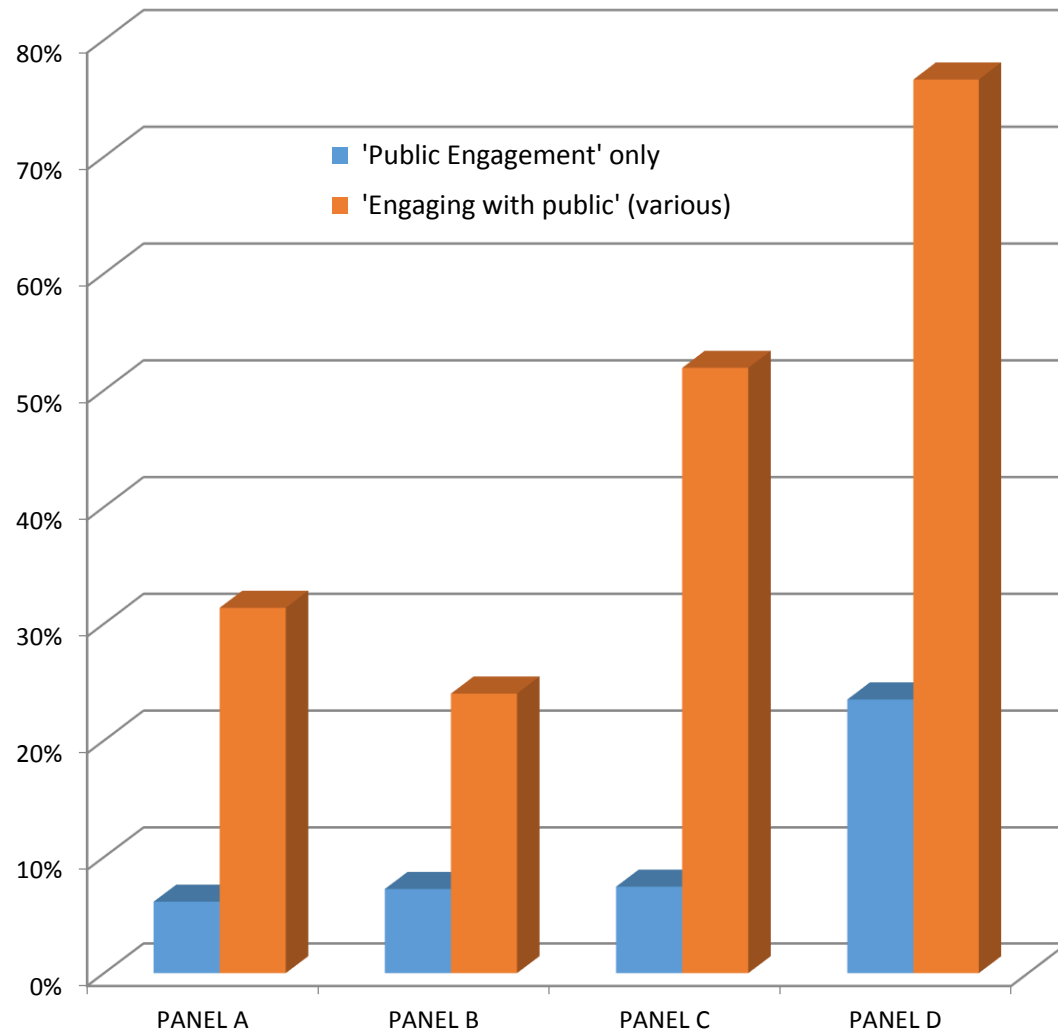
This chart shows the relative contribution of the wider sample –with Panel C ‘closing the gap’ a little on Panel D, and Panel B dropping back a little proportionally

‘Engaging with public’ sample as percentage of total



Panel	Total case studies	Total ‘engaging with public’ case studies	% of submitted case studies
A	1591	499	31%
B	1474	354	24%
C	1959	1017	52%
D	1616	1238	77%

This chart compares the two samples – and makes the difference very clear



The broader sample makes a dramatic difference in all cases – but especially in panels A and C

Panel A sees a 5 fold increase

Panel B sees a 3 fold increase

Panel C sees a 7 fold increase

Panel D sees a 3 fold increase

The findings reveal that the term 'public engagement' fails to capture the full breadth of ways in which researchers are interacting with the wider public, or creating some kind of effect or impact in the public sphere.

Several reasons could account for this:

- The case study authors use an alternative description of the activity (e.g. 'outreach' or 'public debate', rather than 'public engagement')
- They have chosen to focus on the outcomes rather than the approach (e.g. 'public understanding', rather than 'public engagement')
- They have chosen to focus on the medium rather than the method (e.g. 'media coverage' rather than 'public engagement')

The particularly dramatic difference seen in Panels A and C suggests that these differences could also be at least in part traced back to the different disciplinary cultures. The term 'public engagement' and the associated policy and funding drivers have perhaps been more widely adopted in the physical sciences and the arts and humanities.

Searching for public
engagement



Analysing the sample

The case study findings

This initial systematic search of the database provided rich food for thought. We identified the following discussion points from the analysis, and developed a simple 'logical framework' to describe how the case studies typically described the role of engagement as a route to achieving impact

Key findings from the initial review

While the search term ‘public engagement’ returns 731 case studies, it fails to capture nearly 2400 case studies which involve some kind of engagement with the public

The most common phrases which capture other examples of engagement with the public cluster into four broad areas:

- Terms which capture the ways in which research has stimulated public awareness, understanding and debate.
- Terms which describe ways in which media have been used to influence public discourse.
- Terms describing other approaches to engagement, including lifelong learning, behaviour change and outreach
- Terms which capture how researchers have worked with intermediary organisations like schools or museums to engage with pupils, audiences, visitors etc

Engagement with the public features in nearly half of the case studies.

- 47%, or 3108, of the case studies feature some kind of engagement with the public.
- As a caveat to the above, it is important to point out that just under a third of these case studies (1024) only use one of our chosen search terms (for instance, ‘media coverage’ is used on its own 150 times, suggesting a very cursory attempt to disseminate the results). In these case studies, engagement with the public plays a minor role in the pursuit of impact

Some ‘publics’ dominate the case studies

- The most commonly cited ‘publics’ include pupils, audiences, visitors.
- Certain groups – for instance older people or BME (Black and Minority Ethnic groups) – form a significant part of the sample.
- Other groupings are surprisingly under-represented, for instance ‘customers’ and ‘patients’

Viewed holistically, this public engagement activity paints a rich picture of the potential of public engagement to build value in wider society. There are vivid examples of researchers’ engaging with the public to:

- Stimulate public imagination / curiosity / aspiration / learning. This engagement could be characterised as **‘enlightening’**, seeking to animate the public sphere with explanation, knowledge and learning.
- Capture public experience / expertise and use this to influence decision making and activity in wider society. This engagement could be characterised as **‘responsive’**: ensuring that research captures evidence of public views and expertise and uses this to influence products and services, the environment and public realm etc. This is much less common.

Challenges and issues

Our review also identified various challenges or issues worthy of more careful analysis

- Public engagement takes different forms **in different discipline areas** – with distinct flavours and opportunities. These need to be more clearly understood, and appropriately nurtured.
- The case studies reveal a rich harvest of terms to describe the various roles people beyond academia play in the realisation of impact, including: public; audience; patient; child; parent; family; people; community; victim; visitor; tourist; voter; donor; user; player; women; ethnic; refugee; worker; employee. But in many cases, the authors fall back on generic and homogenous terms like ‘the general public’. We need a more **sophisticated and differentiated grasp of who our different ‘publics’ are** and how best to engage meaningfully and purposefully with them.
- While there are many examples of sophisticated engagement approaches, which realise exceptional value on many levels, these are still the exception rather than the rule. Much of the public engagement featured is restricted to rather basic dissemination and **fails to realise the potential of deeper involvement** and therefore deeper impact.
- Linked to the above, the case studies reveal a very mixed picture in terms of the confidence and clarity with which the authors can explain how and why they followed the impact pathways they did. There is an urgent need to accelerate **the sharing of expertise** between different specialists in various forms of research-user engagement, including knowledge exchange, public engagement and innovation.
- **Intermediaries** (like museums) often play a critical role in supporting the generation of impact. The different roles such intermediaries play should be examined in more depth.
- Public engagement is often woven or blended with other forms of engagement. We need to better understand the distinctive contribution that public engagement can make to realising the public benefits arising **from complex ‘weaves’ of policy and practice engagement**, and better support researchers to embed appropriate techniques to do this well.
- The public engagement featured often happens after the research has been completed. Examining **the timing and different purposes** served by public engagement would provide valuable insight.
- **Impacts arising from public engagement are hard to capture.** Some case studies make very convincing accounts of the value and significance arising from the engagement, but many are less convincing. Identifying excellent examples and their underlying qualities would help accelerate good practice. The chart on the next slide captures some of the concrete ways in which case study authors have chosen to describe their purposes, activities, outcomes and impacts.

‘Logical framework’ to capture how case studies typically describe the contribution of public engagement to impact

Intention of Engagement	Types of engagement employed	Possible outcomes	Evidencing the changes achieved, and the significance of these changes	Evidencing reach
ENLIGHTENING <i>Working directly or indirectly with publics to share products and processes of research</i>	- Offering consultancy and advice - Outreach / events - Lifelong learning - Engaging through media / social media - Exhibitions - Reports / publications - Training / CPD	Impact on individuals - Changing understandings - Stimulating learning and reflection - Influencing public behaviours / participation / involvement Impact on society - Challenging conventional wisdom - Influencing public debate - Addressing inequality and injustice - Enhancing intermediary organisations - Generating economic returns - Impact of changed individual behaviours / understandings on wider society – e.g. on environment; increasing participation of marginalised groups etc.	- Providing evidence of how people have engaged with these new insights and how these have led to a shift in their understanding / behaviours / motivation - Tracing penetration of concepts into non-academic, public discourse (e.g. discussed in media) and articulating the public benefit of this change - Explaining other social benefits achieved and providing evidence of these	- Numbers and characteristics of people engaged / involved in a meaningful way in the process - Number / characteristics of people benefiting from the legacy of the activity
RESPONSIVE <i>Feeding public views and expertise into research, through their active engagement in the research process, and using the outcomes from this to influence wider society</i>	- Co-production of research - Public serving on advisory groups - Consultation processes ‘Enlightenment’ activity to disseminate results	Impact on individuals and society As above	As above	- Numbers / characteristics of people influenced in a meaningful way by the research process - Numbers / characteristics of people benefiting from the subsequent outputs
		Enhanced public scrutiny - Enhanced accountability / monitoring of the public sphere - Increased political / civic engagement - Enhanced trust	- Evidence of how PE influenced research - Evidence of how the research insights changed accountability practice / policy - Evidence of how this change in policy then affected the delivery of products / services - How this contributed to wider social benefit	
		More responsive professional practice Changing professional standards / processes / systems / practices / capabilities	- Evidence of how PE influenced research - Evidence of how the research insights changed standards / processes - Evidence of how this change then affected the delivery of processes / services and contributed to social benefit	
		Responsible Innovation Generating new products and services that are sensitive to public views and deliver social benefit	- Evidence of how PE influenced research - Evidence of how the research influenced the development of new products and services - Uptake and social benefits arising from these	
		Improved public realm Enhancing the public realm	- Evidence of how PE influenced research - Impacts on infrastructure - Impacts on biodiversity	

Searching for public
engagement



Analysing the sample

How PE distributes
across disciplines

Digging deeper: other key findings

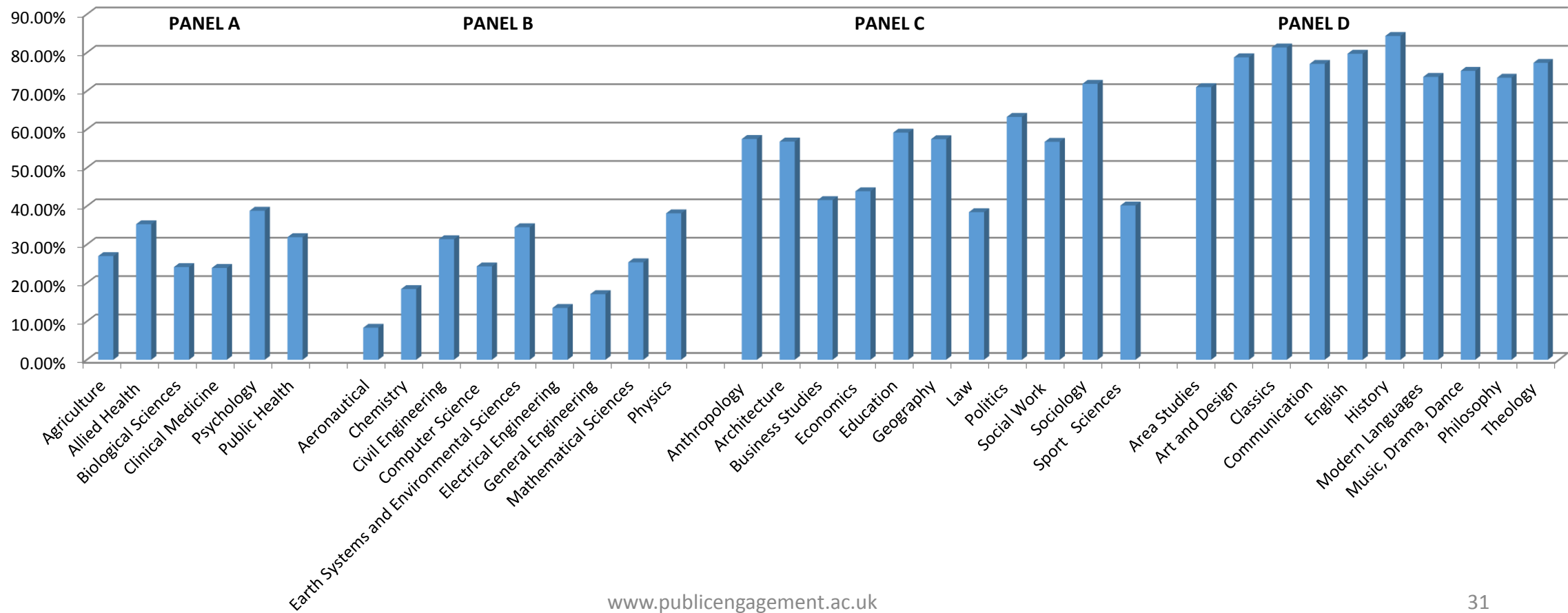
The data also allowed us to pursue other lines of enquiry – including an investigation of how engaging with the public featured in specific disciplines (rather than just looking at the trends across the four main panels). To do this, we looked at the distribution of case studies featuring engagement with the public within the 36 Units of Assessment, and mapped the distribution.

Disciplinary differences

The extent and nature of engagement with the public differs significantly between the four main panels, and within them

- Panel D dominates the overall sample of 3108 engagement case studies
- There is significant variety of engagement with the public reported in the other panels
- The Units of Assessment in Panel B show the greatest variation in the extent to which they featured PE

‘Engaging the public’ case studies as a proportion of total submitted case studies %



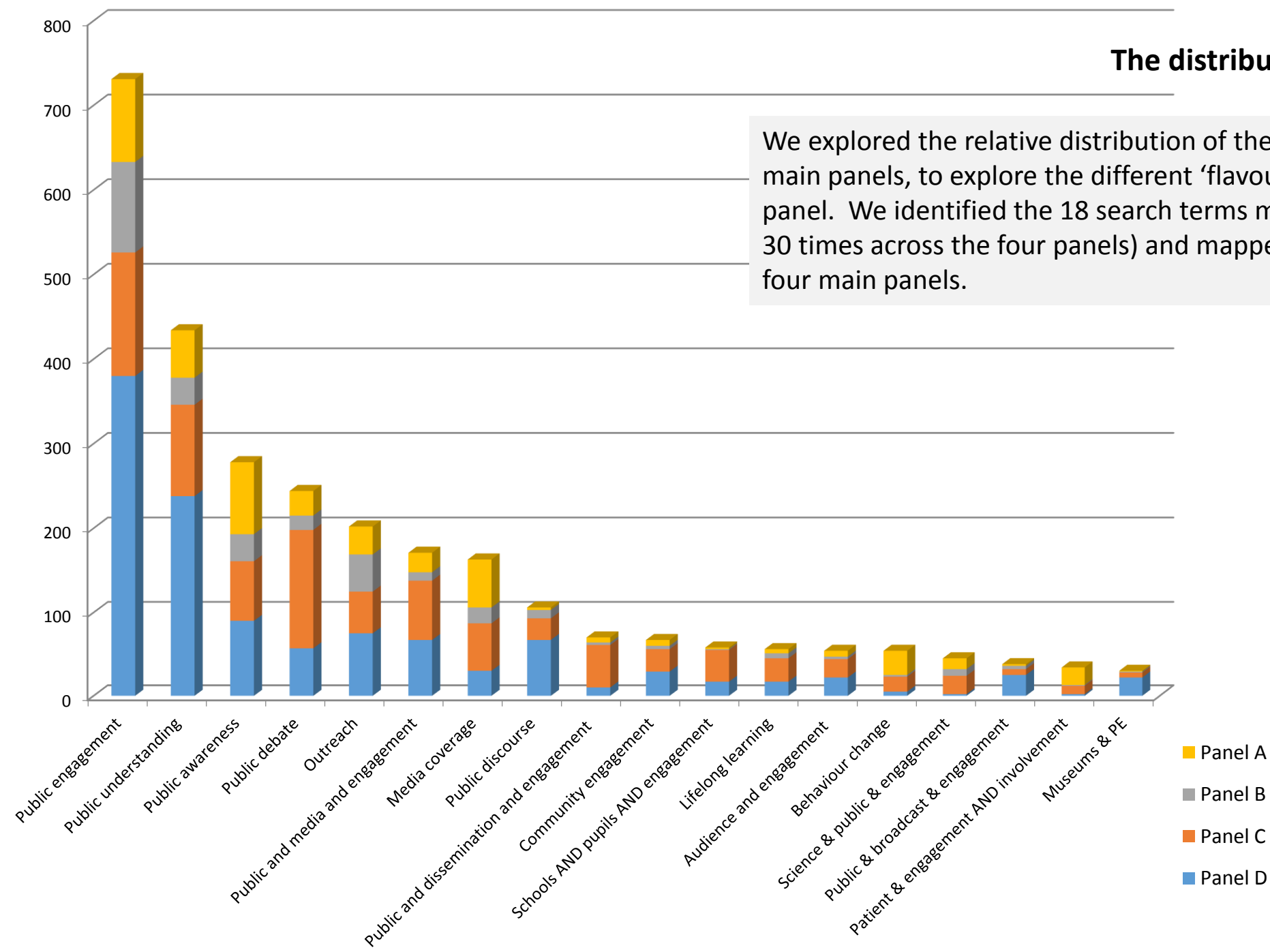


Search terms by panel

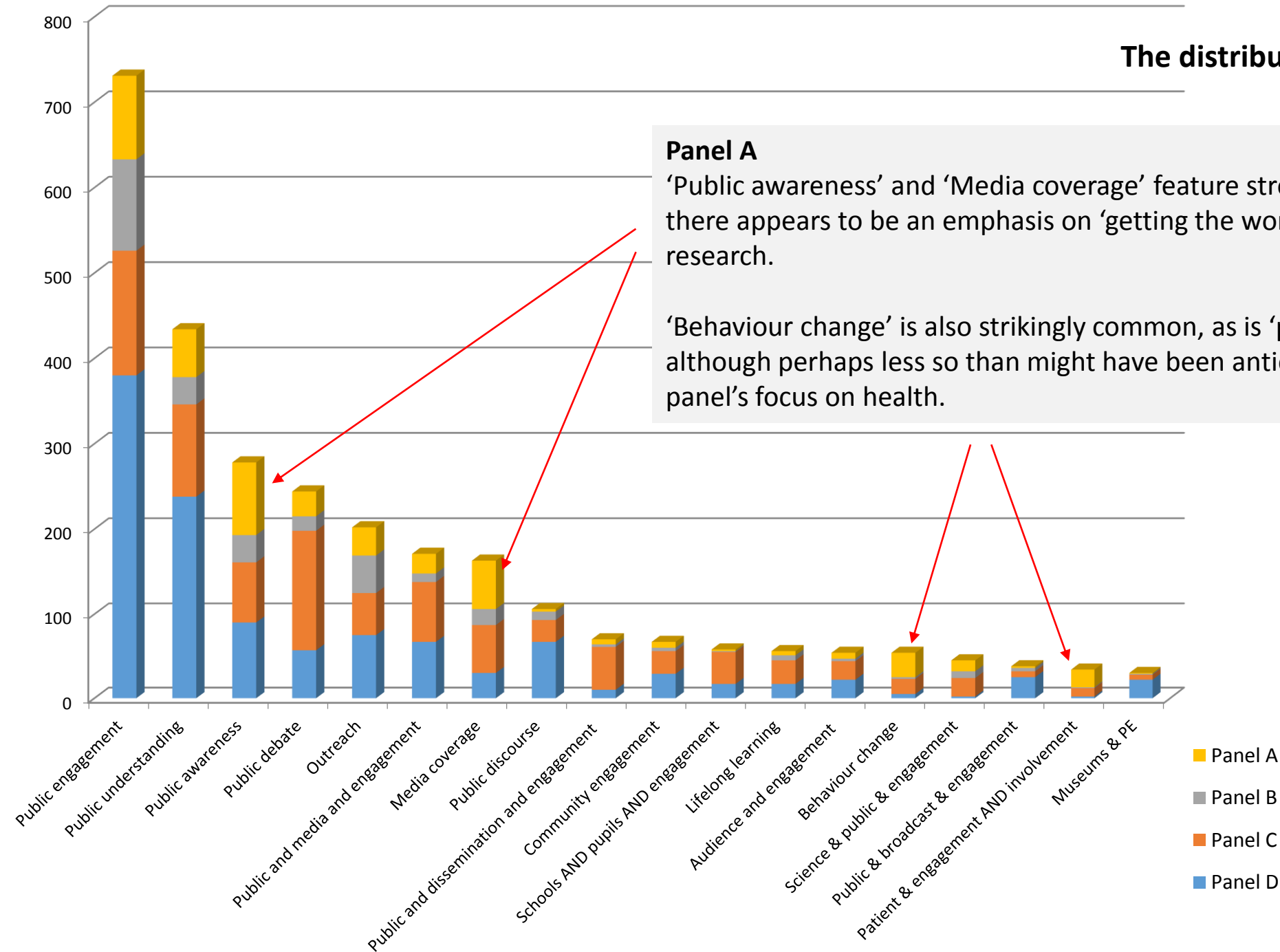
We also mapped the relative distribution of the search terms across the four main panels, to explore the different 'flavours' of engagement in each panel

The distribution of search terms by panel

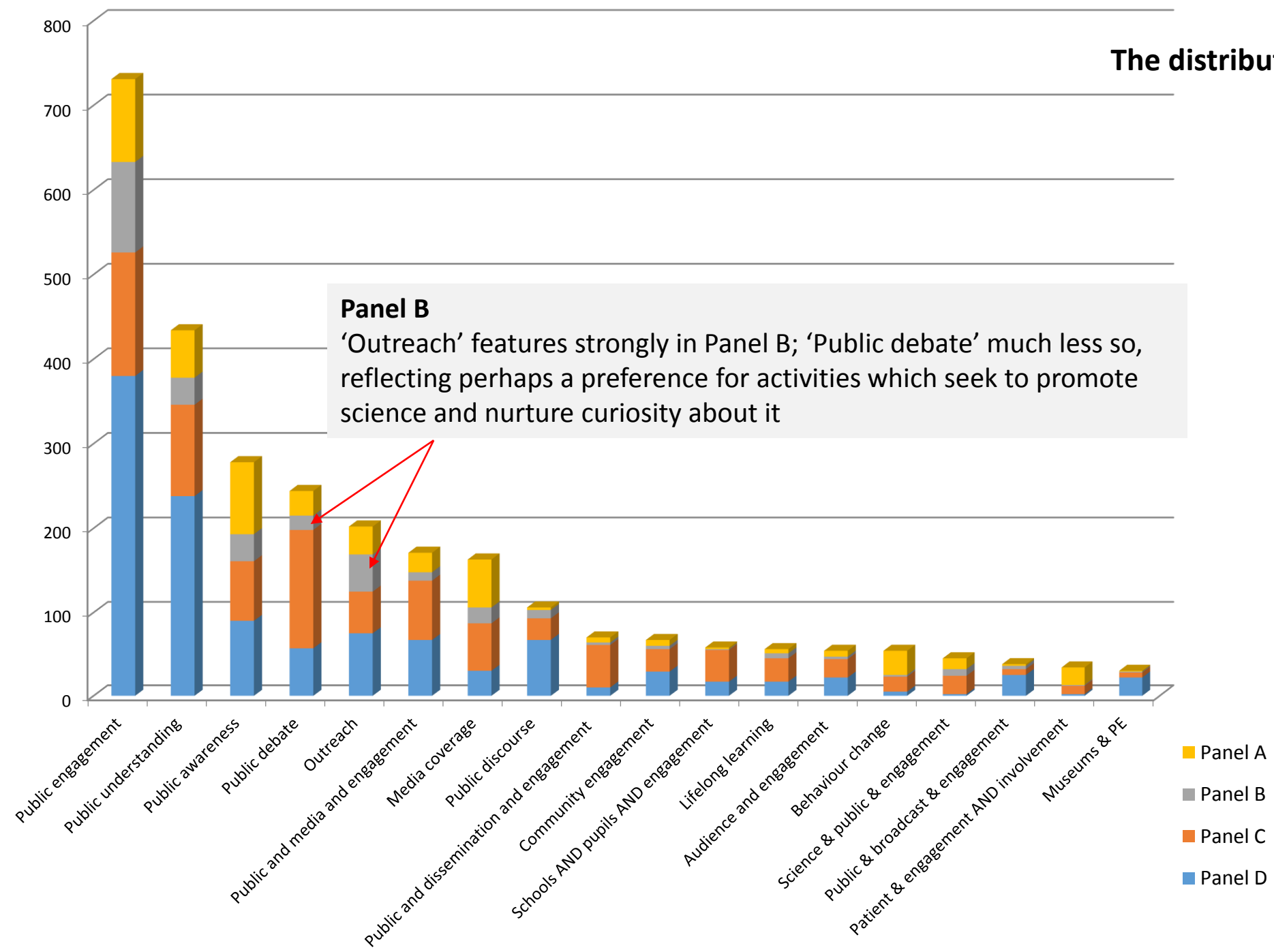
We explored the relative distribution of the search terms across the four main panels, to explore the different ‘flavours’ of engagement in each panel. We identified the 18 search terms most frequently returned (at least 30 times across the four panels) and mapped their distribution across the four main panels.



The distribution of search terms by panel



The distribution of search terms by panel

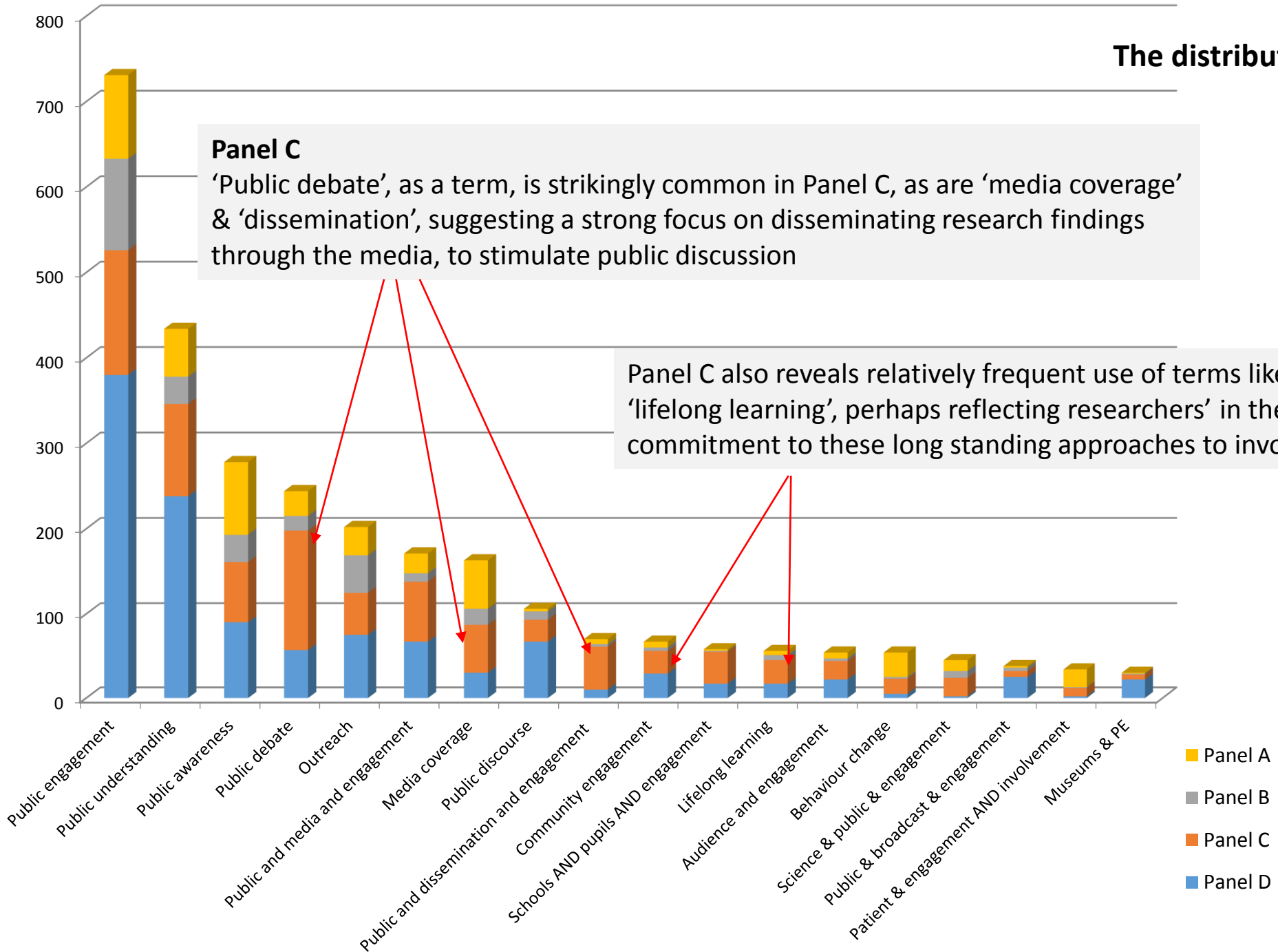


The distribution of search terms by panel

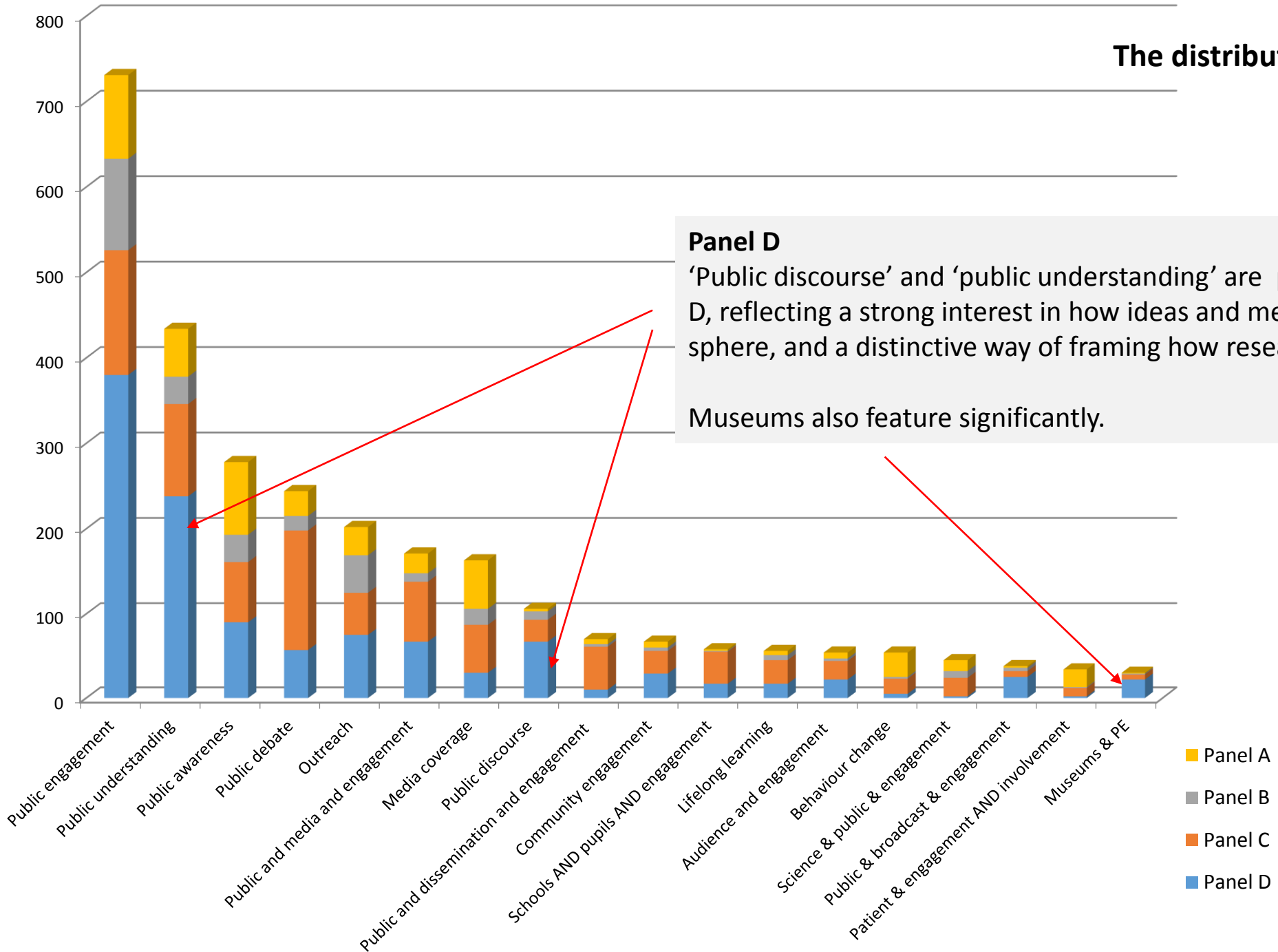
Panel C

'Public debate', as a term, is strikingly common in Panel C, as are 'media coverage' & 'dissemination', suggesting a strong focus on disseminating research findings through the media, to stimulate public discussion

Panel C also reveals relatively frequent use of terms like 'community engagement' and 'lifelong learning', perhaps reflecting researchers' in the social sciences familiarity and commitment to these long standing approaches to involving the public



The distribution of search terms by panel



Panel D

‘Public discourse’ and ‘public understanding’ are particularly common in Panel D, reflecting a strong interest in how ideas and meanings animate the public sphere, and a distinctive way of framing how research can generate impact.

Museums also feature significantly.



Exploring case studies by impact type

So what kinds of impacts do case studies featuring public engagement most commonly realise?

Exploring the case studies by impact type

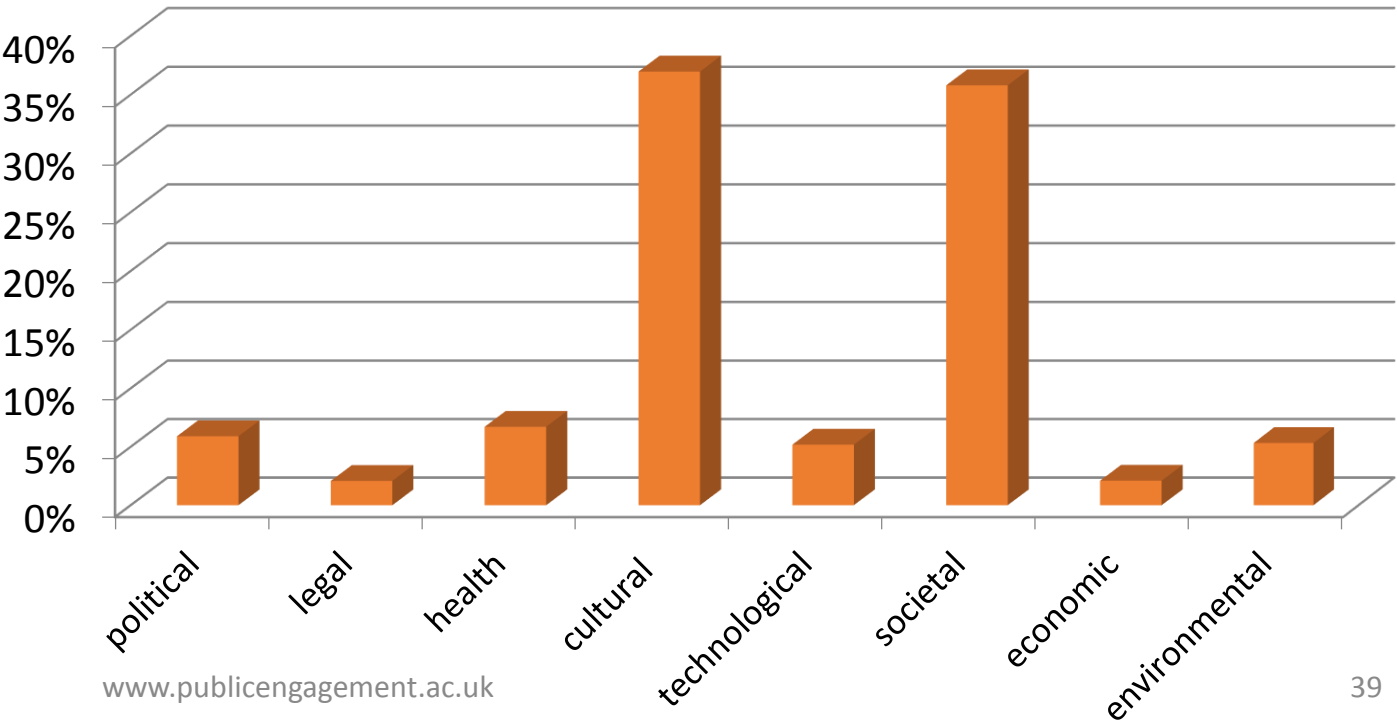
We wanted to explore what patterns if any we could discern by looking at ‘impact types’. The team who were commissioned to build the database chose to categorise all of the case studies into one of eight impact types:

- societal
 - cultural
 - health
 - political
- technological
 - environmental
 - economic
 - legal

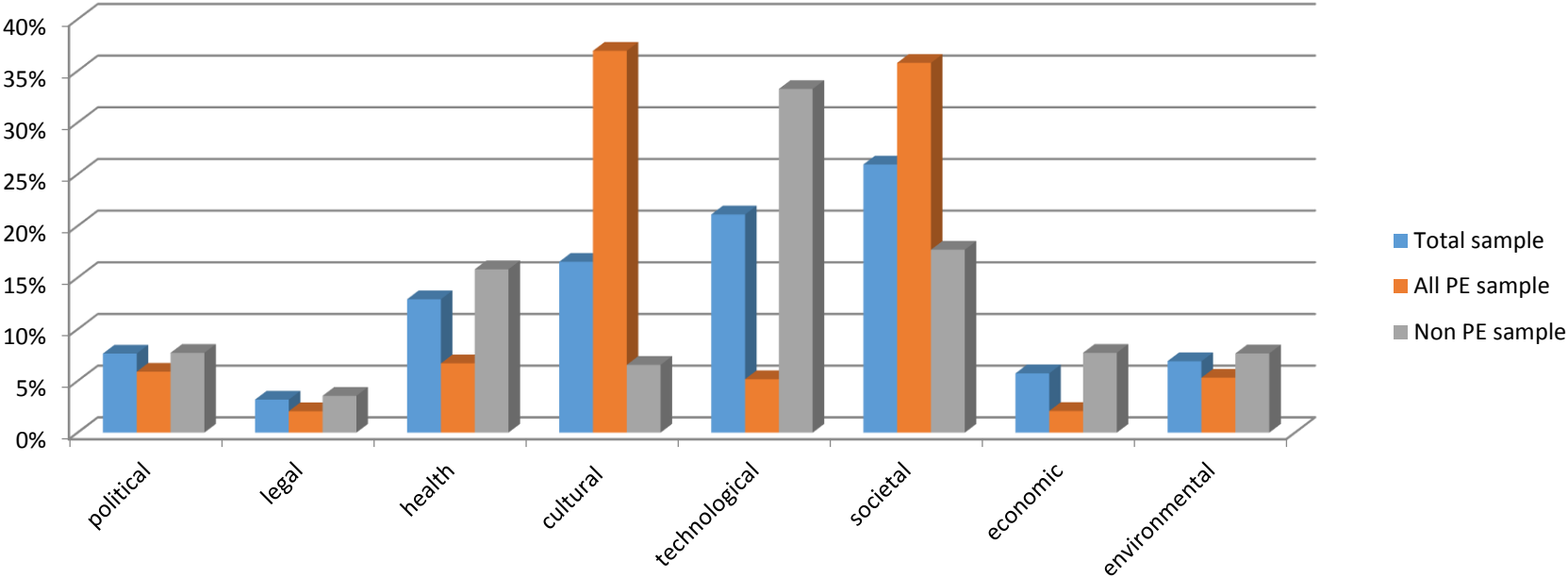
This chart aggregates the % frequency of the 8 impact categories across the whole PE sample of 3108 case studies. Perhaps unsurprisingly, case studies coded as having **cultural** and **societal** impacts dominated the sample.

The next slide compares this distribution with that of the total case study sample. There are very significant differences.

Frequency of Impact Types in the PE sample

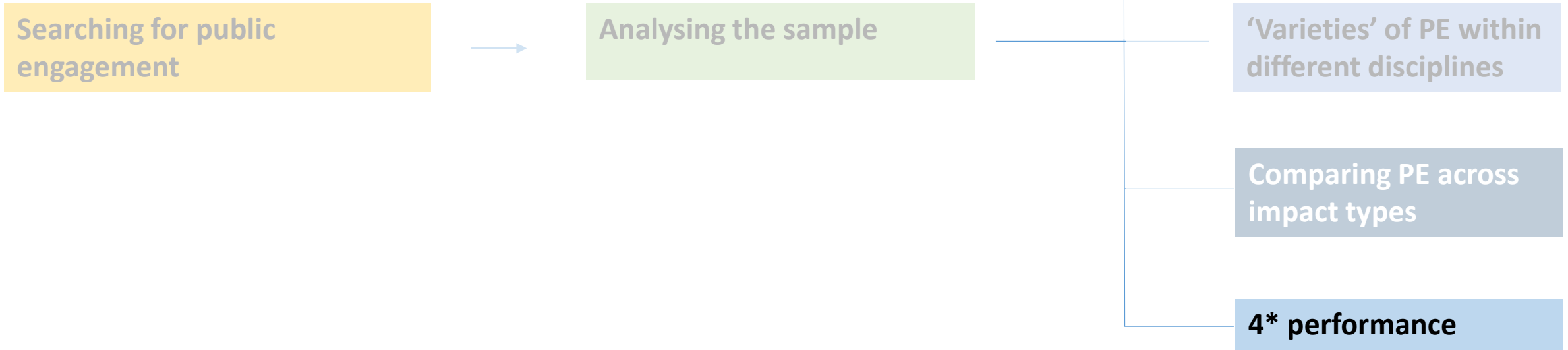


Comparing frequency of impact types



- It is striking how frequently the ‘all PE’ sample (orange) were categorised as delivering cultural and societal impacts (remembering that case studies were only allocated one impact type, even if they delivered several).
- Those case studies which did not mention engagement with the public (‘non-PE sample’, grey) were much more likely to be categorised as realising technological and health impacts.
- It is surprising how relatively few of the ‘all PE’ sample are categorised as being primarily focused on health impacts: one might have expected a much higher proportion given the trend to involve publics in health research.
- More generally, the contribution of public engagement to political, legal, economic and environmental case studies is less pervasive than might be expected, given the critical role of publics in these domains (as citizens, service users, customers, clients etc.) This reveals a significant opportunity. Can researchers be encouraged to think more expansively about how public engagement might contribute to societal change?

Impact types	Total sample	Total sample	PE sample	Non PE sample
Political	508	8%	6%	8%
Legal	212	3%	2%	4%
Health	857	13%	7%	16%
Cultural	1098	17%	37%	7%
Technological	1402	21%	5%	33%
Societal	1723	26%	36%	18%
Economic	381	6%	2%	8%
Environmental	459	7%	5%	8%



3* and 4* performance

Anecdotal, there was nervousness in the sector that public engagement would be valued less highly than other types of engagement. We set out to investigate whether there was any evidence to support this.

How did 'engaging the public' case studies score?

- The scores for individual case studies were not published. However, Units of Assessment each had their impact profile reported in the published results. From these it is possible to identify UoAs which scored 4* for their impact, and therefore to identify case studies which we can be sure scored 4*.

2014 Research Excellence Framework Results

Quality profiles for all submissions

Note: In this table, joint submissions are shown split by their constituent institutions.

				Profile	FourStar	ThreeStar	TwoStar	OneStar	Unclassified
					Percentage of the submission meeting the standard for:				
Institution code (UKPRN)	Institution name	Main panel	Unit of assessment name	Profile	4*	3*	2*	1*	unclassified
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University	A	Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, N Impact		20.0	80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10000291	Anglia Ruskin University	D	Music, Drama, Dance and Performing A Impact		40.0	60.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10007152	University of Bedfordshire	D	English Language and Literature	Impact	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10007140	Birmingham City Universit	C	Education	Impact	0.0	0.0	70.0	30.0	0.0



All the case studies from the English Language UOA at Bedfordshire were 4*; all those in Music at Anglia Ruskin scored 3* or 4*

- We wondered whether there would be any significant difference in the proportion of 3* and 4* case studies which featured public engagement, compared with the sample as a whole. We chose to look only at those case studies which featured at least 3 of the various search terms to exclude those which only made passing reference to engaging with the public.
- In fact, the proportion was very similar. 35% of the whole case study sample were assessed as 3* and 4*, and 32% of the case studies featuring at least 3 mentions of engaging with the public. We also wondered whether case studies featuring public engagement would be more likely to have been awarded 2* status or below. In fact, 2.5% of the whole case study sample can be pinpointed as being 2* or below, compared with 2.6% of the 'engaging with the public' case studies.
- The results suggest that there is no significant difference in how case studies mentioning public engagement as a route to impact are scored compared with those that don't.

2. Interpreting the case studies

Exploring how excellent case studies were constructed

Links in the chain

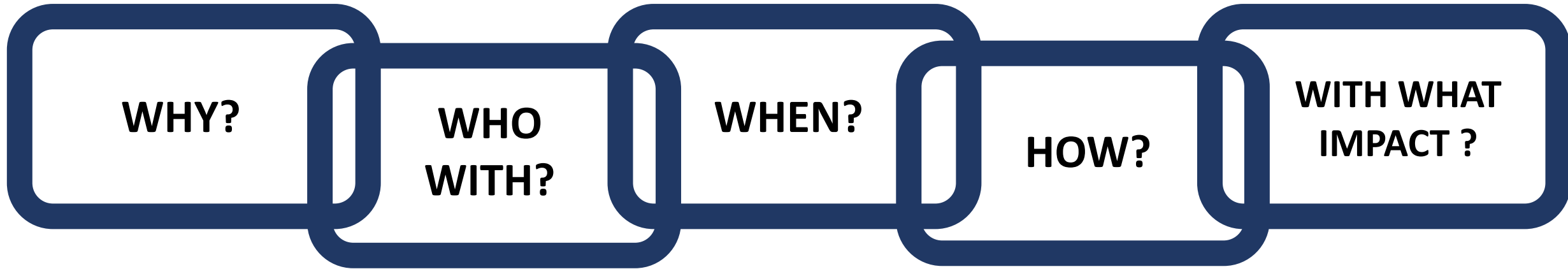
The statistical analysis provided a number of useful insights into the distribution of public engagement across the sample, and the different 'flavours' of engagement across the four main panels. It raised a lot of questions and issues (see slide 26) which we felt merited deeper analysis.

Building on the statistical analysis, we wanted to explore whether we could derive a useful framework that would help people both plan and assess the contribution of public engagement to impact in future iterations of the REF. To do this we read a sample of case studies from the four main panels which featured 'public engagement' or at least three of the additional search terms.

Using our own experience of public engagement, we sought to identify how the sampled case studies typically 'made their case', and what the common components were which (in our judgement) contributed to a convincing articulation of the claimed impact. Anecdotally, many panel assessors reflected how good case studies made explicit the 'links in the chain': presenting a convincing account of the process whereby the claimed impacts had been realised. From our sample, we identified five such links, which an excellent case study typically addresses. For each, we also identified a variety of different types of approach, reflecting the significant breadth of purposes and approaches that animate public engagement across the four panels.



Links in the chain



- The purpose of the engagement

- Publics and stakeholders

- The timing of the engagement

- The pathways to impact
- The engagement 'mix'

- The type of impact achieved
- The outcomes realised

How researchers communicate WHY they are engaging the public – from simply disseminating research findings to actively involving the public in the process of research

How researchers find meaningful ways to describe who they are engaging with – and go beyond the generic catch-all term the 'general public'

Recognising the crucial importance of timing: engagement can help 'tune' and 'test' research and not just 'translate' it – if you don't leave it till the end of the process.

www.publicengagement.ac.uk

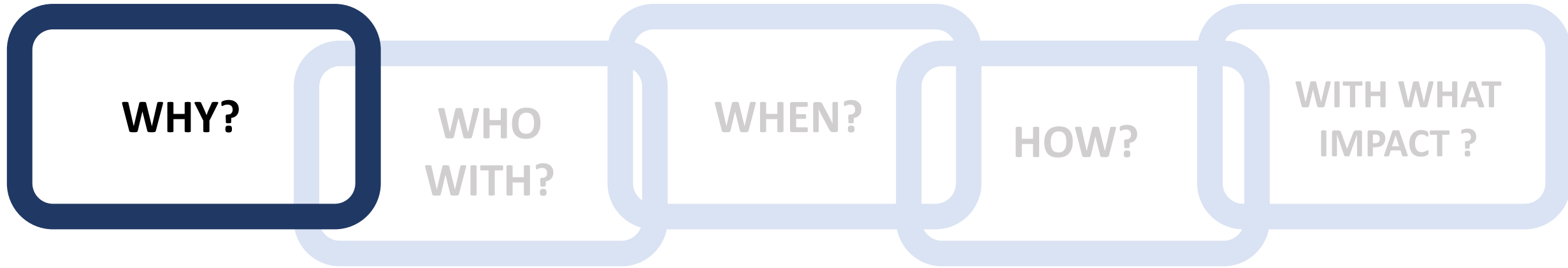
How public engagement is shown to be working alongside other approaches to external engagement

Public engagement can be the sole focus of a case study – or just one element in a broader programme of external engagement

So what is the point of public engagement? What does it mobilise and generate that is valuable?

What does it realise, in terms of demonstrable changes beyond academia? How can these be convincingly described?

Links in the chain



- The purpose of the engagement

- Publics and stakeholders

- The timing of the engagement

- The pathways to impact
- The engagement 'mix'

- The type of impact achieved
- The outcomes realised

How researchers communicate WHY they are engaging the public – from simply disseminating research findings to actively involving the public in the process of research

We identified three broad purposes which public engagement typically serves in the case studies, detailed on the next slide, which is followed by some examples of each of the three purposes.

A confident sense of purpose should animate the engagement. If it does, it makes the impacts being claimed appear more convincing.

WHY engage with the public?

To help design and frame the research

There are rare examples of the public – for instance in their capacity as service users or volunteers – being involved at the formative stages of a research project.

Co-production or collaborative research are terms often used to describe this approach. Sometimes too the public are involved as members of advisory groups.

Although the impact of this way of working can be really powerful, influencing the quality and robustness of the research and ensuring its sensitivity and relevance, the impact component of the REF is not focused on how involvement of the public enhances the research.

Nevertheless, there can be significant benefits for the public in playing such active roles in the research process, for instance in terms of their skills, understanding and empowerment.

To contribute to the research process

There are some compelling examples of the public being involved in the research process itself, actively contributing to the process of investigation.

Examples include:

- Citizen science where the public are contributing data
- Co-production where the public are acting as co-investigators and contributing their expertise
- Dialogic approaches where public expertise, attitudes and values are actively sought throughout the process

This approach can also realise powerful personal outcomes for the public involved

To maximise uptake of the research by the public

The most common way in which the public are engaged is once the research is complete, or nearly complete: researchers actively seek ways to ensure the significance of their research is widely understood and shared ‘beyond academia’.

Typically this activity might involve:

- Dissemination activity that seeks to target people who might benefit from the research and engage them with its findings
- Working with partner organisations to integrate the findings from the research into their public-facing products and services, networks, training or outreach activity.

The framing of the REF encourages the submission of activity which is focused in this area, which helps explain why so many case studies describe activities focused on translation and uptake.

WHY engage with the public? Some examples

To help design and frame the research

The inclusive research approach in learning disability, pioneered and developed at the OU, is part of the wider advocacy and resistance movement in learning disability. By working with people with learning disabilities as 'expert witnesses' and co-producers of knowledge, we have enabled the development of new skills that are transferable beyond the research context for building independence and self-esteem. In this way, our research has not only empowered people with learning disabilities to own and control their stories, but it has enabled them to make changes in their lives. *(Learning disability: making a difference to policy, practice and experience)*

To contribute to the research process

The OPAL Water Centre at UCL, funded to a total of £732k, developed an innovative educational national water survey programme accessible to people of all ages and abilities, promoted especially within disadvantaged communities. The Survey encouraged greater understanding of the aquatic environment through public participation in water quality and aquatic biodiversity assessment and used high-quality research to link the community, voluntary and statutory sectors (34991)

To maximise uptake of the research by the public

Hancock and Frowd received EPSRC public engagement funding to build an EvoFIT installation at the Sensation Science Centre in Dundee. Visitors are able to interact with EvoFIT at a specially designed station, where they can try evolving a composite for themselves, while another station explains the science behind the exhibit. The centre attracts over 70,000 visitors per year, representing a significant impact on public understanding of the science of face identification (44434)

Through the dissemination of her research, which focuses on the political, cultural and economic interactions, co-operation and conflict between Muslim and Christian communities in the early modern Mediterranean world, Dr Claire Norton seeks to create impact by challenging current negative media stereotypes of Muslims and Islamic cultures. (44518)

Links in the chain



- The purpose of the engagement

- Publics and stakeholders

- The timing of the engagement

- The pathways to impact
- The engagement 'mix'

- The type of impact achieved
- The outcomes realised

How researchers find meaningful ways to describe who they are engaging with – and go beyond the generic catch-all term the 'general public'

Excellent case studies which feature public engagement clearly and precisely articulate which publics and partners are involved. They provide a rationale for their involvement.

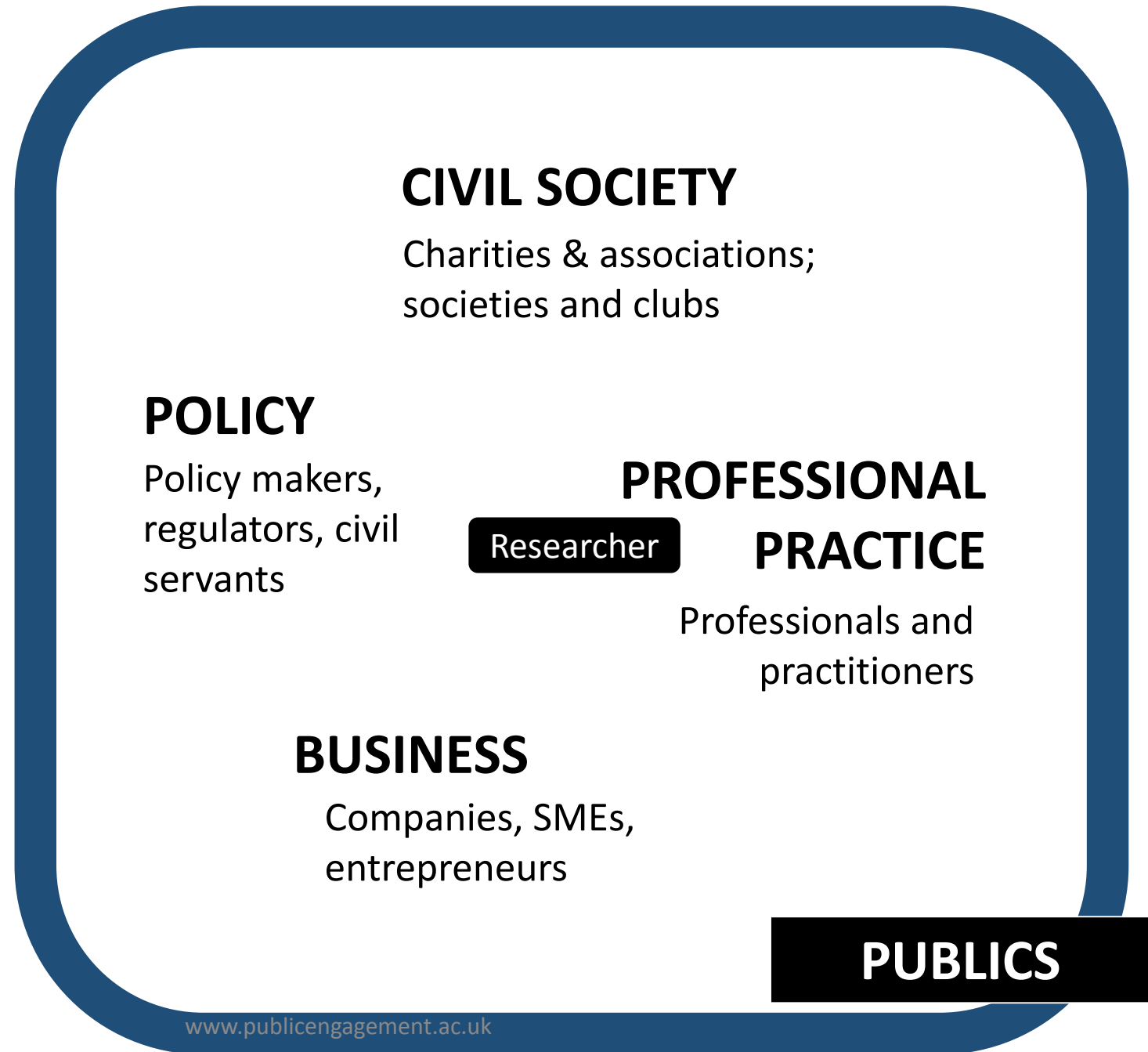
Often, they also provide convincing detail about the publics' interests, motivations and needs in relation to the research.

WHO are researchers engaging with?

We have identified five broad 'domains' in the public sphere where researchers engage, illustrated in this diagram.

We provide examples of how each featured in case studies in the next four slides.

Later, we show how 'publics' typically feature.



WHO are researchers engaging with?

This example is of research influencing professional practice in the area of live art

‘Professor Lois Weaver joined QMUL Drama in 1997. Her research-led practice as artist, curator and activist has had substantial impact within the cultural world of live art where she has influenced the practice of both emerging and established artists, and the programming and curation of performance. She has facilitated, mentored and directed a range of **artists**; opened up new spaces for performance’s production and presentation; and actively supported other **curators** in the expansion of live art programming, especially in London’ (19055)

One domain can be defined as **‘professional practice’**: organisations operating in different domains to provide products and services.

EDUCATION

Schools and colleges

CULTURE AND INFORMAL LEARNING

publishers

Broadcasters

Visitor attractions

*Museums, galleries,
libraries, archives*

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Health services

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Professionals and
practitioners

PUBLICS

WHO are researchers engaging with?

This example is of research influencing civil society

Spaces of the news

'Research by members of the Department of Media and Communications on news and journalism in the digital age has been critical in three main areas of impact. Most importantly, it has been used to develop **civil society engagement** and high-level recommendations to media policy-makers and politicians, on media reform and the Leveson Inquiry. Secondly, this research has been used by the news industry itself in developing its practice for the digital age. Thirdly, recommendations made in the research on collaborative relationships between news organizations and **civil society associations** have been implemented across the country by the Media Trust' (42765)

CIVIL SOCIETY

Charities & associations;
societies and clubs

'**civil society**' – describes the informal associations and voluntary networks which co-exist with charities and other grass roots activist groups.

Charities
Faith groups
Clubs and societies
Associations

PUBLICS

WHO are researchers engaging with?

Improving understanding, implementation and uptake of advance care planning for end of life care

‘The research played a significant role in guiding **policy** by informing the development of the Department of Health’s End of Life Care Strategy, launched in 2008 and led by the National End of Life Care Programme’ (27188)

Cultural Policy and Practice Exchanges between Britain and Brazil

‘Through practice-based projects, his research continues to deepen and extend the understanding of innovative Brazilian arts practices in Britain. Heritage has forged new opportunities for UK arts practitioners to develop their work in Brazil and shaped new **policy exchanges** between ministerial/governmental and non-governmental organisations’ (19052)

GOVERNMENT

Quangos

National government

Local government

Think tanks

POLICY

Policy makers,
regulators and
civil servants

Another domain is ‘**policy**’: these people create the regulations and laws within which the professions work and which influence all of our lives. They also influence investment / budgets.

PUBLICS

WHO are researchers engaging with?

Cultural Policy and Practice Exchanges between Britain and Brazil

'Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg invited Heritage to join a delegation of political, **business** and cultural leaders to Brazil in June 2011. Heritage briefed Jeremy Hunt (then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport) on key aspects of Brazilian cultural policy and practices in advance of a signing of a Cultural Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Brazil during the ministerial visit' (19052)

BUSINESS

Large companies

Social enterprises

SMEs

We have separated out 'business' as a fourth domain. There has been a long tradition in HE policy of policies / funding aimed at this particular sector, resulting in a different set of drivers to the other domains

BUSINESS

Companies, SMEs,
entrepreneurs

PUBLICS

Publics?

So where do the public fit into this landscape?

Conventionally, they might be defined by demographics: the study of a population based on factors such as age, race, sex, economic status, level of education, income level and employment, among others. Many case studies include such demographic information – an example is provided below.

‘The OPAL Water Centre at UCL, funded to a total of £732k, developed an innovative educational national water survey programme accessible to people of all ages and abilities, promoted especially within disadvantaged communities. Of the more than 45,000 participants, 17% were from 'hard to reach' communities’. (34991)

DEMOGRAPHICS: age, race, sex, economic status, level of education, income level and employment



PUBLICS

Publics?

But it is also helpful to think about ‘publics’ in terms of the different roles they play in the public sphere. Many case studies also provided detail of the roles and motivations of the specific groups they chose to engage with.

An example might be engaging with publics in the role of ‘**customers**’ of a particular product of service’; or ‘**users**’ of specific services; or ‘**audiences**’ of a media platform. Individuals play multiple roles in their day-to-day lives.

Examples of terms used and extracts from case studies are provided in the following slides – starting with publics typically described in case studies involving engagement with business.

DEMOGRAPHICS: age, race, sex, economic status, level of education, income level and employment

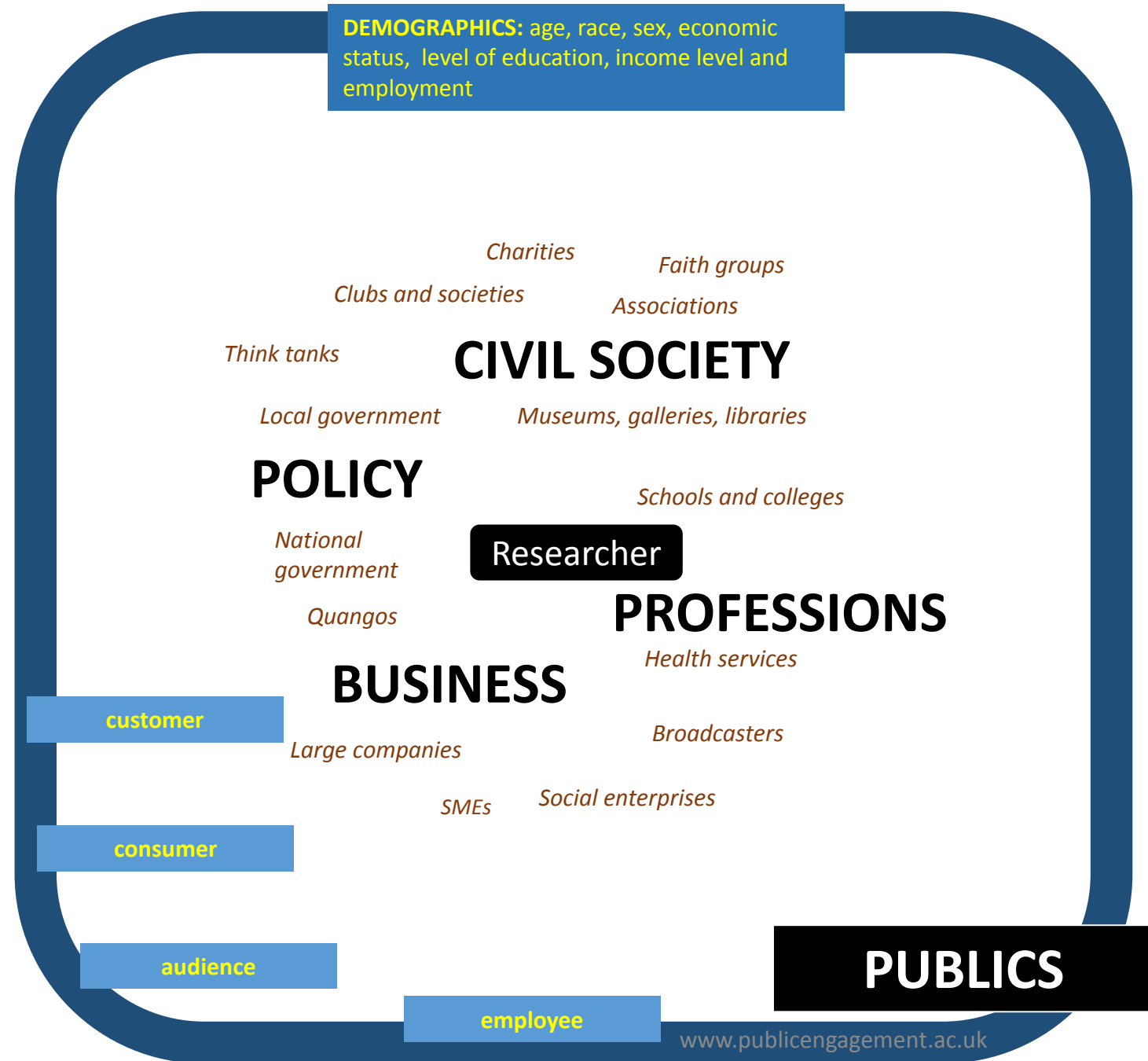


Publics?

Engagement in the business domain will typically describe the public as 'customers', 'consumers', 'employees and sometimes 'audiences'.

This example cites engagement with **consumers** of tourism and hospitality

'Dr Walmsley has worked on numerous studies relating to the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) relating to the tourism and hospitality sector. The purpose of the research was **to inform consumers** about the impacts of tourism, influence their selection of hotel groups and investigate different corporate policies and practices' (36501)

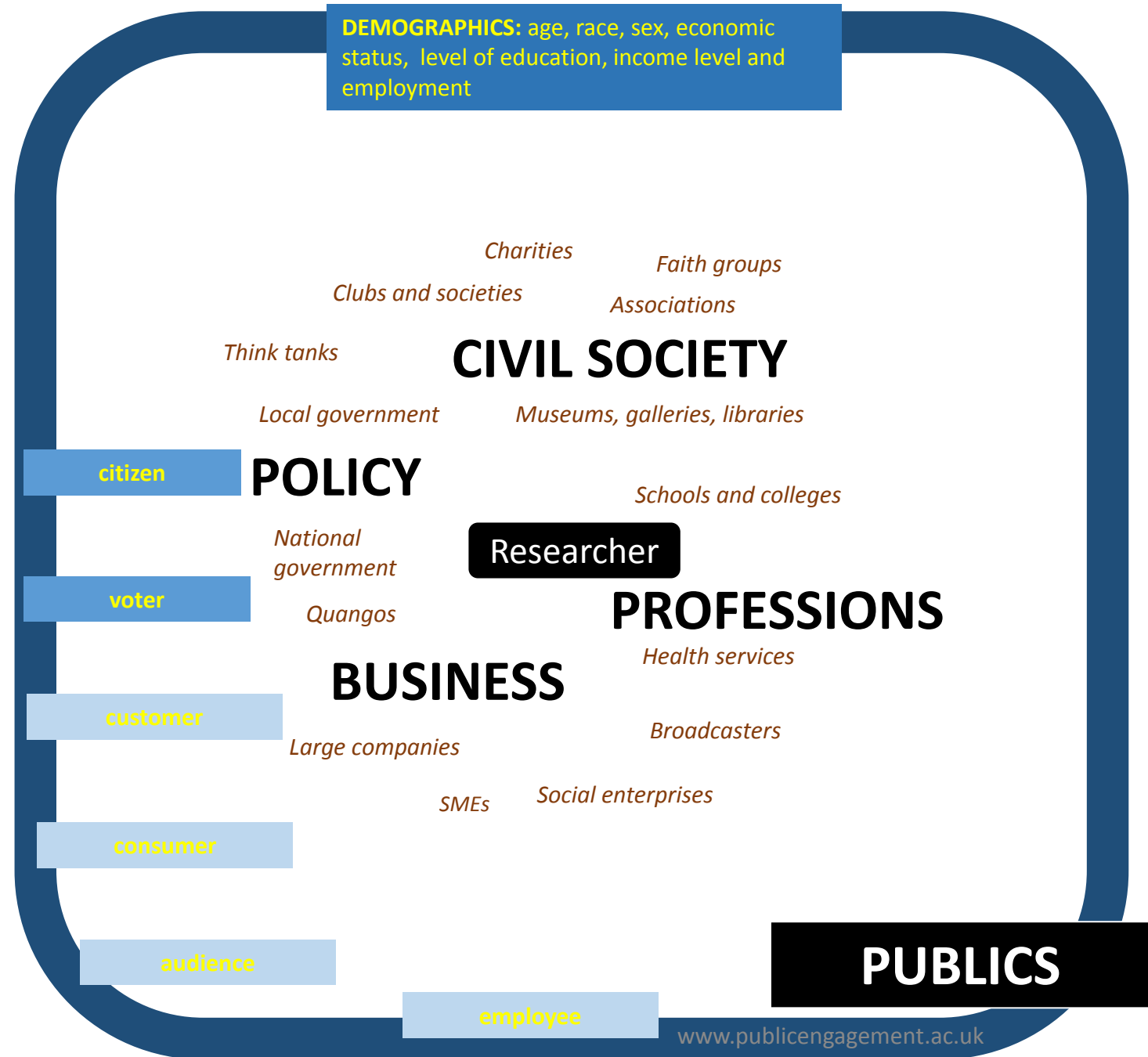


Publics?

These examples cite engagement with **'citizens'**. Engagement in the policy domain will also often engage **'voters'**

'Southampton research and leadership has led to the UK Public Data Principles, which were enshrined in the UK Government Open Data White Paper, and has led to data.gov.uk, which provides access to 10,000 government datasets. The open datasets are proving means for strong **citizen engagement**' (44160)

'The research agenda examined what **citizenship** means to young people; considered how to increase young people's participation in politics; assessed how citizenship can be promoted through community and political engagement and led a consultation with young people on whether the voting age should be lowered to 16. Of 17 policy recommendations arising from the research, 16 were approved by the government, improving opportunities for young people to volunteer, become politically engaged and receive better citizenship education'. (7314)



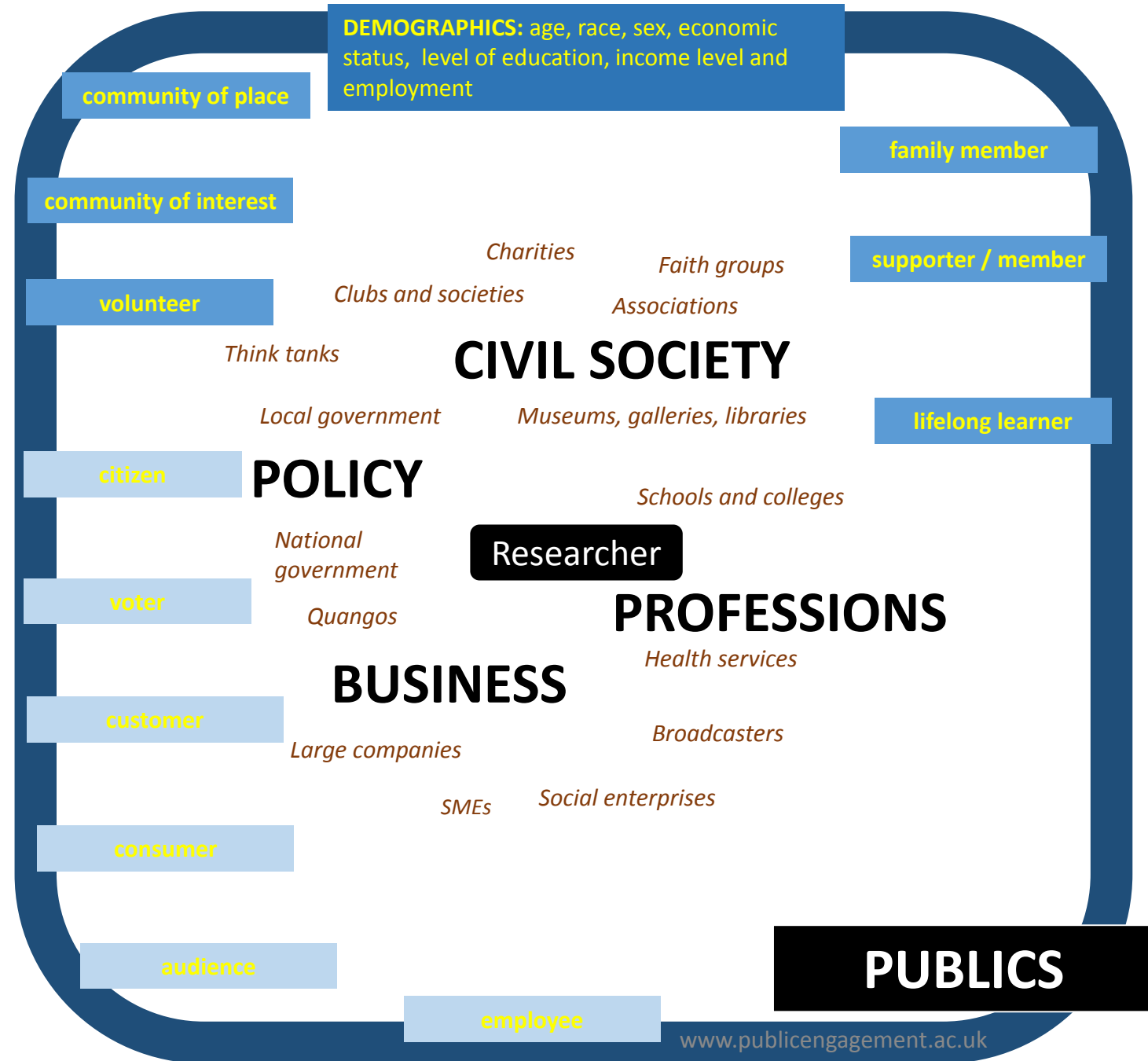
Publics?

There is a diversity of terms used to describe roles played by the public in civil society. Some examples are provided below.

‘UPSI's work has provided an evidence base about how to engage effectively with **communities** so that policing interventions target those issues influencing how people think, feel and act about their safety’. (3484)

‘Galaxy Zoo (GZ) is among the most successful online citizen science project ever undertaken, relying on hundreds of thousands of **volunteers** to classify galaxy images’. (4141)

‘An 11-year programme of translational research carried out at the University of Southampton into the decision making of bereaved **family members** regarding organ and tissue donation has led to direct impacts on health care policy and practices’. (43852)

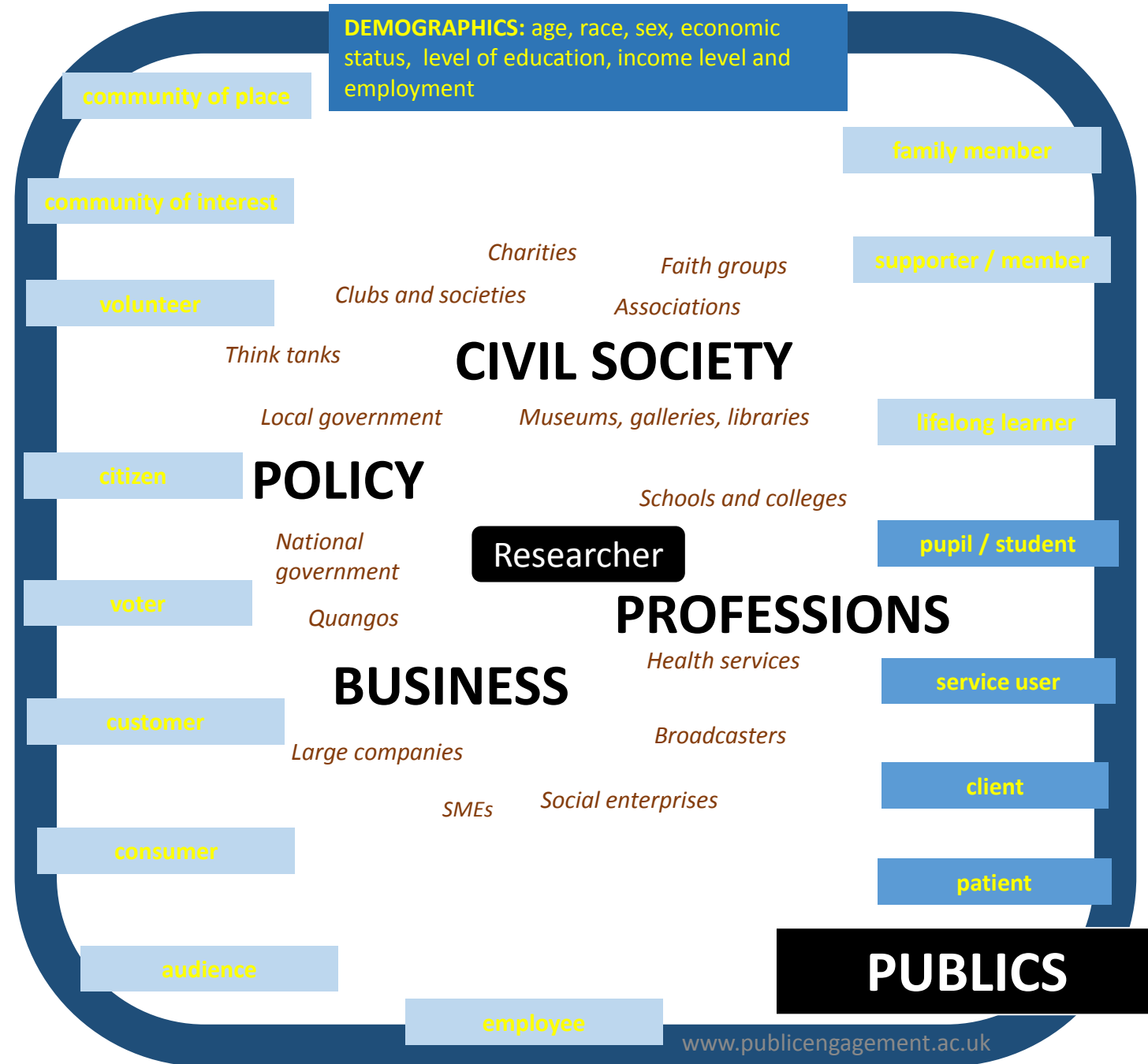


Publics?

Finally, roles played by the public as users and clients of the professions.

‘This case study focuses on the research conducted by members of the UoA examining the services offered to **service users and carers** in secure settings. It has had a significant impact on the development of professional practice in secure settings based on the views, experiences, and needs of service users and carers. It has established service user and carer engagement in research conducted in secure settings. It has also informed service and policy developments in the United Kingdom and internationally’. (40586)

‘Researchers at the University of Leeds have designed and developed new approaches and technologies for **cancer patients** to self-assess their symptoms and quality of life’. (6424)

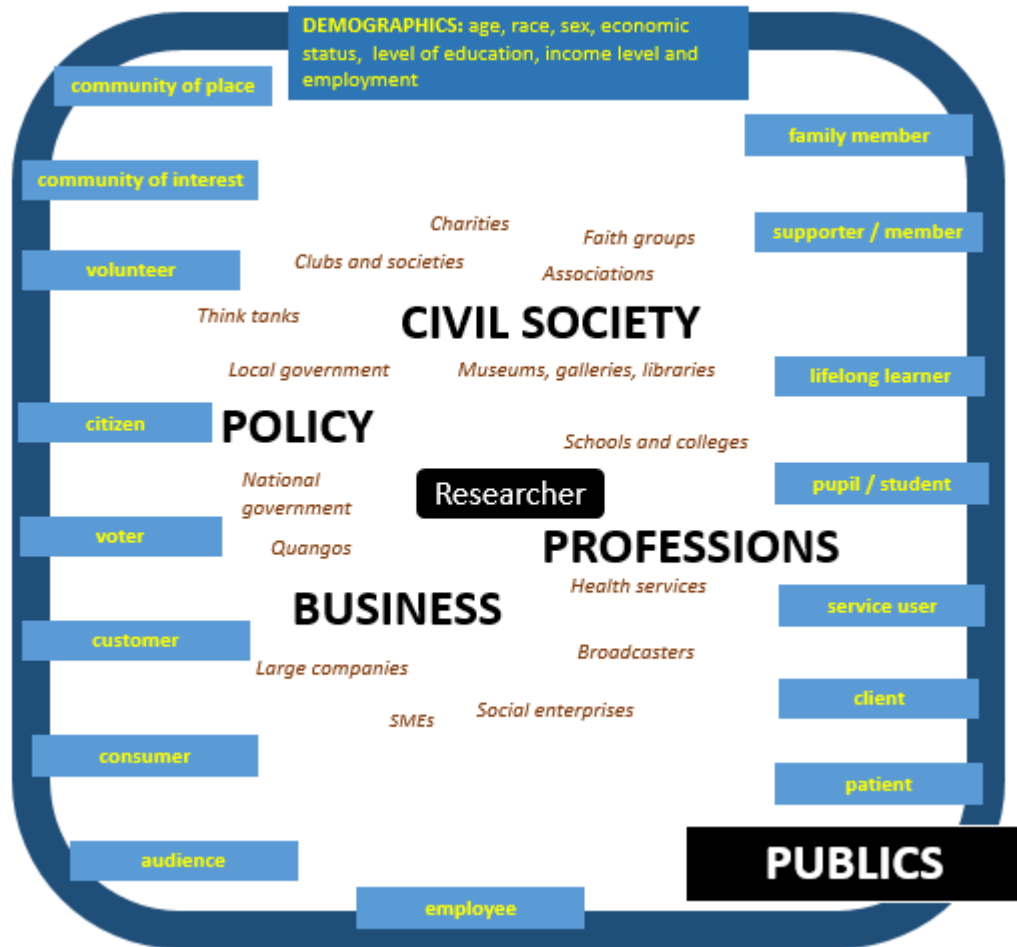


WHO WITH?

Summary

Precision about the publics engaged – their demography and motivation – helps ‘ground’ a case study and make its claims more credible.

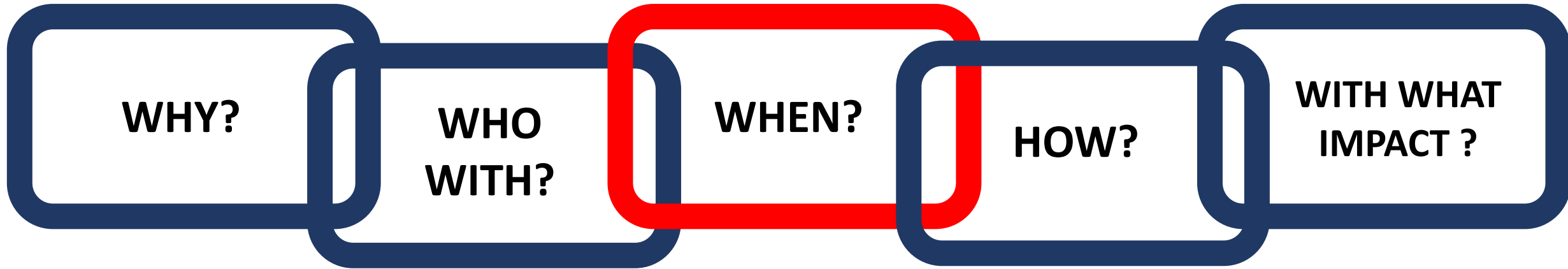
We include one final example which demonstrates how case studies can helpfully offer precise detail about who they engaged with, often spanning more than one domain.



Beneficiaries of the activities include:

- 1) school children and teachers involved in the Shahnameh Project;
- 2) BBC Radio 3 listeners;
- 3) musicians, including those whose work has been promoted through the underpinning research and activities listed;
- 4) readers of magazines and books directed at lay audiences;
- 5) publishers, record companies and others benefiting economically from audio and other media outputs;
- 6) purchasers of music CDs;
- 7) audiences attending public lectures and film screenings;
- 8) film-makers: Sogand Bahram, Andrew Smith and those whose work was screened at the 2012 film festival; and
- 9) Iranians in the UK, through better public understanding of their music and culture. (44392)

Links in the chain



- The purpose of the engagement

- Publics and stakeholders

- The timing of the engagement

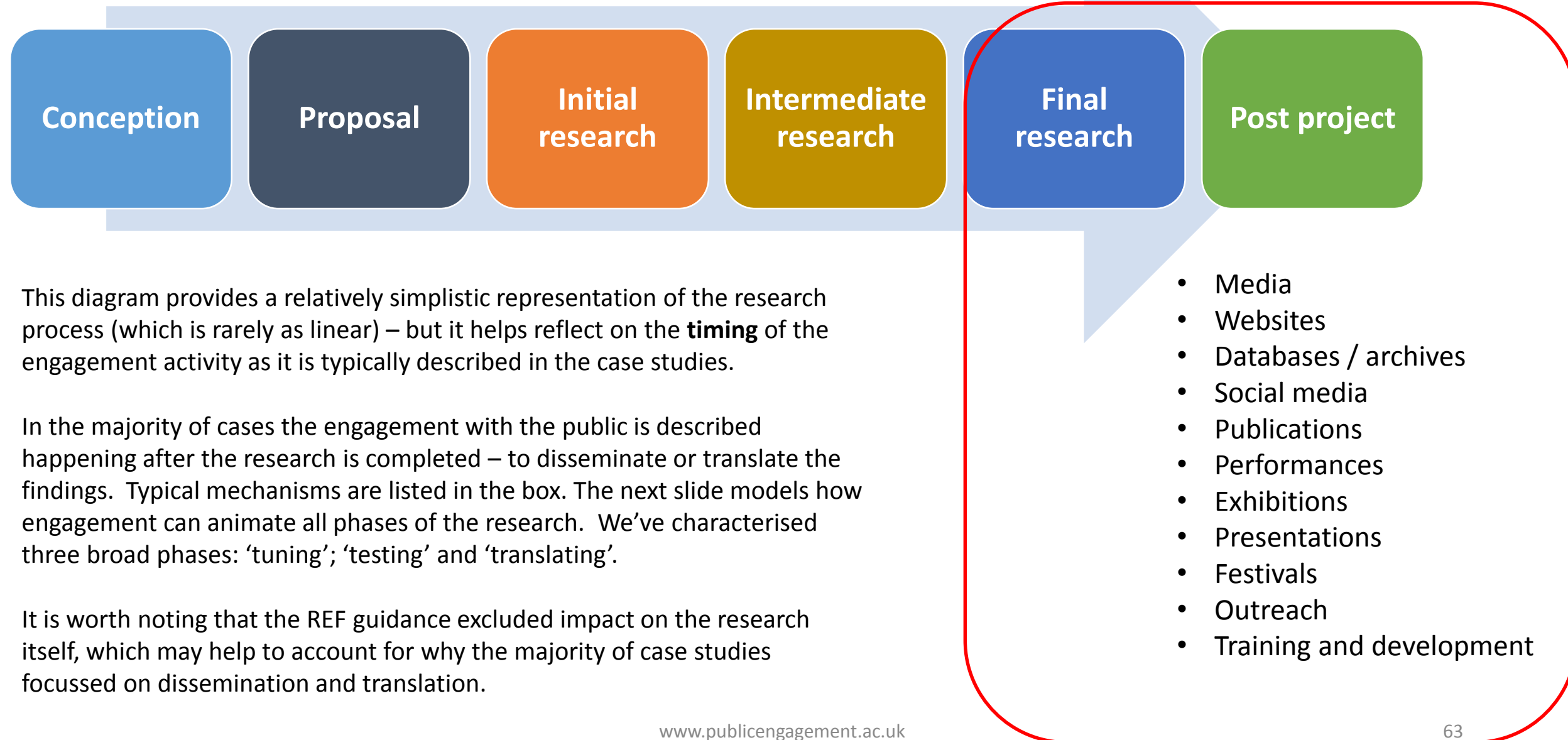
- The pathways to impact
- The engagement 'mix'

- The type of impact achieved
- The outcomes realised

Recognising the crucial importance of timing: engagement can help 'tune' and 'test' research and not just 'translate' it – if you don't leave it till the end of the process.

Excellent case studies typically evidence an intelligent sense of timing. Activities are differentiated by the phase of the research in which they fall, helping to maximise the potential impact of the engagement activity.

WHEN are researchers choosing to engage with the public?



WHEN are researchers choosing to engage with the public?

Conception

Proposal

Initial research

Intermediate research

Final research

Post project

Tuning

Before

‘Tuning’ the research to address issues of public concern (e.g. refining the research question) – making sure it is socially and ethically informed. A case study which includes evidence of ‘tuning’ helps to make the claimed impacts appear both more likely, and more likely to be sustained; provides motivation and credibility; and clarifies the significance of the impact and its origins in a definite ‘need’.

Typical methods include:

- Focus groups
- Advisory groups
- Co-design processes
- Network-building

Testing

During

‘Testing’ typically involves the emerging findings being shared and critiqued by the public. It involves concerted efforts to feed in critical insight and intelligence / expertise from the public. Again, this helps to provide motivation and credibility and helps to clarify the significance of the impact and its alignment with a definite ‘need’.

Typical methods include:

- Consultation
- Co-production
- Collaborative practice

Translating

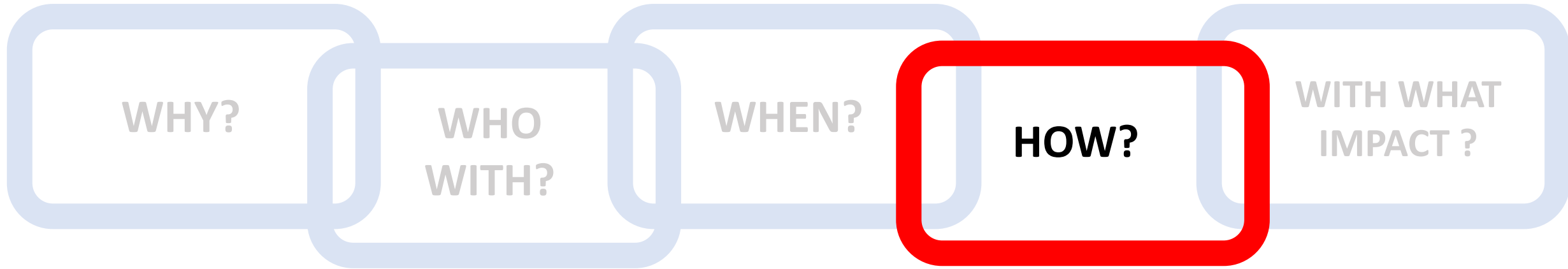
After

‘Translating’ involves taking the research outcomes into the public sphere to realise traction and impact. It helps to ensure that people with a potential stake in the research findings are given opportunities to find out about it / engage with it so that they deepen their stake in it.

Typical methods include:

- Media
- Websites
- Databases / archives
- Social media
- Publications
- Performances
- Exhibitions
- Presentations
- Festivals
- Outreach
- Training and development

Links in the chain



- The purpose of the engagement

- Publics and stakeholders

- The timing of the engagement

- The pathways to impact
- The engagement 'mix'

- The type of impact achieved
- The outcomes realised

Public engagement can happen 'alone' but more often is integrated into a blend of external engagement, with policy or the professions, very occasionally with business. This suggests a significant virtuous circle or association: those institutions that engage well with a range of different stakeholders include 'the public' as one of those groups

www.publicengagement.ac.uk

How public engagement is shown to be working alongside other approaches to external engagement

Public engagement can be the sole focus of a case study – or just one element in a broader programme of external engagement .

HOW are researchers choosing to engage with the public?

The case studies reveal some distinctively different approaches to public engagement. In some cases, the case study is exclusively focused on public engagement (we've termed this 'classic' public engagement); but more often, the public engagement sits alongside other types of external engagement.

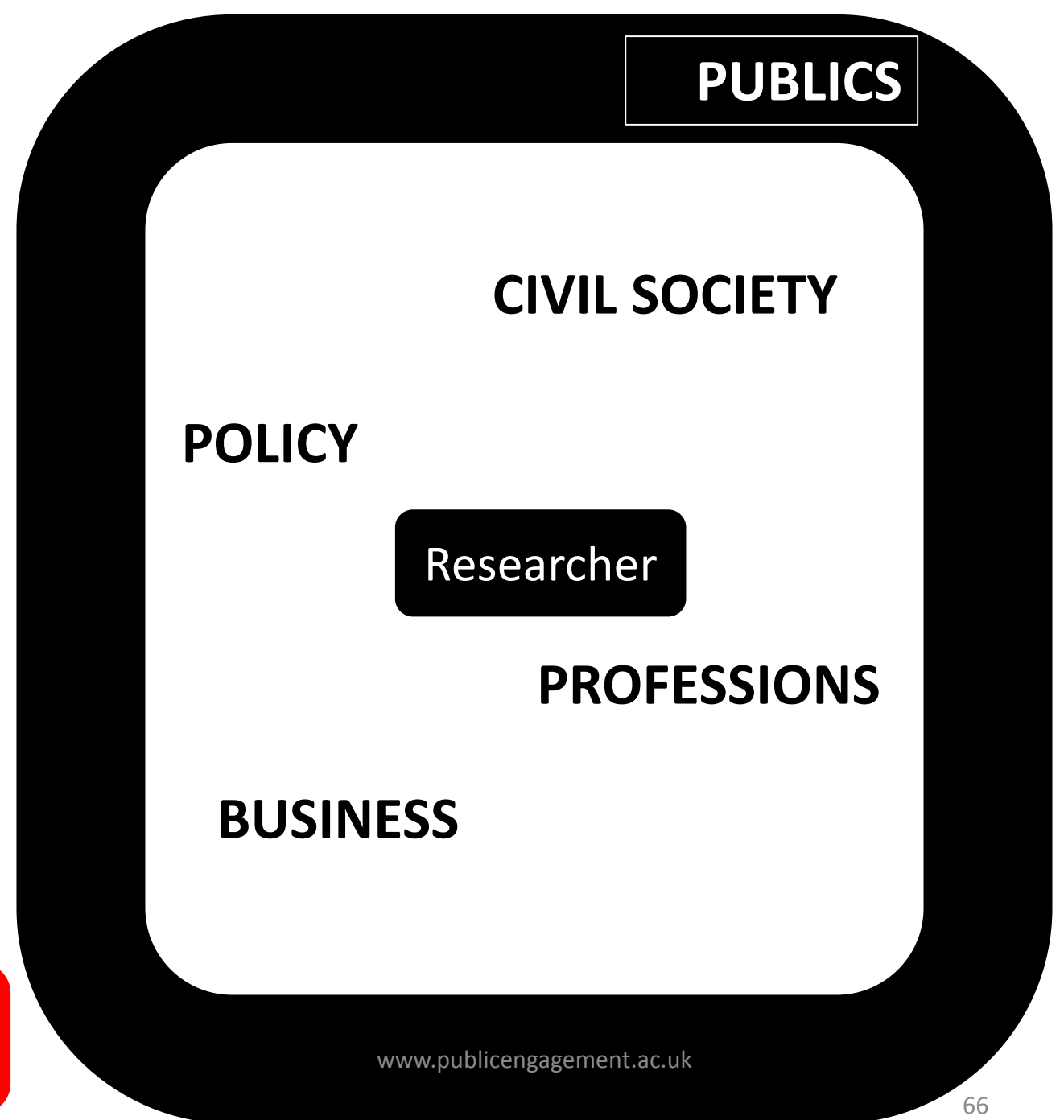
'Classic' public engagement

'Mediated' public engagement'

'Blended' public engagement'

'Behind the scenes' public engagement'

'Bolt on' public engagement'



'Classic' public engagement

'Classic' public engagement involves researchers engaging directly with a community of place / interest – e.g. with adult learners – with this engagement forming the backbone of the case study.

Explore the Deep: Public Engagement with Deep-Ocean Research

By putting public engagement at the heart of our deep-sea research, we have delivered benefits to society of generating inspiration and curiosity about science, raising public awareness of our research insights and their context, and providing cultural enrichment by supporting lifelong learning. We have achieved these impacts through: interactions with print, online, and broadcast media that have brought our research to millions; series of talks and events that have inspired specific audiences of tens of thousands; and a network of interactive online resources that has enabled people worldwide to share in our exploration of deep-ocean environments and their biodiversity (42992)



'Mediated' public engagement'

'Mediated' public engagement sees an active collaboration with an intermediary organisation(s) like a charity, museum, media or school to reach their audience / public.

'Reading the riots' & increasing public understanding

The Unit's Criminal Justice group has carried out a significant body of research relating to youth disaffection, anti-social behaviour and policing. This led to Professor Tim Newburn being approached by *The Guardian* to establish a joint research project following the 2011 riots in England. The ensuing research achieved very wide reach via conventional print and other media, informing public understanding of the riots and challenging conventional wisdom about their causes. A wide range of public figures reacted to the research and the Home Secretary's response included the announcement of a formal review of police 'stop and search' practice. (40381)

PUBLICS

CIVIL SOCIETY

POLICY

Researcher

PROFESSIONS

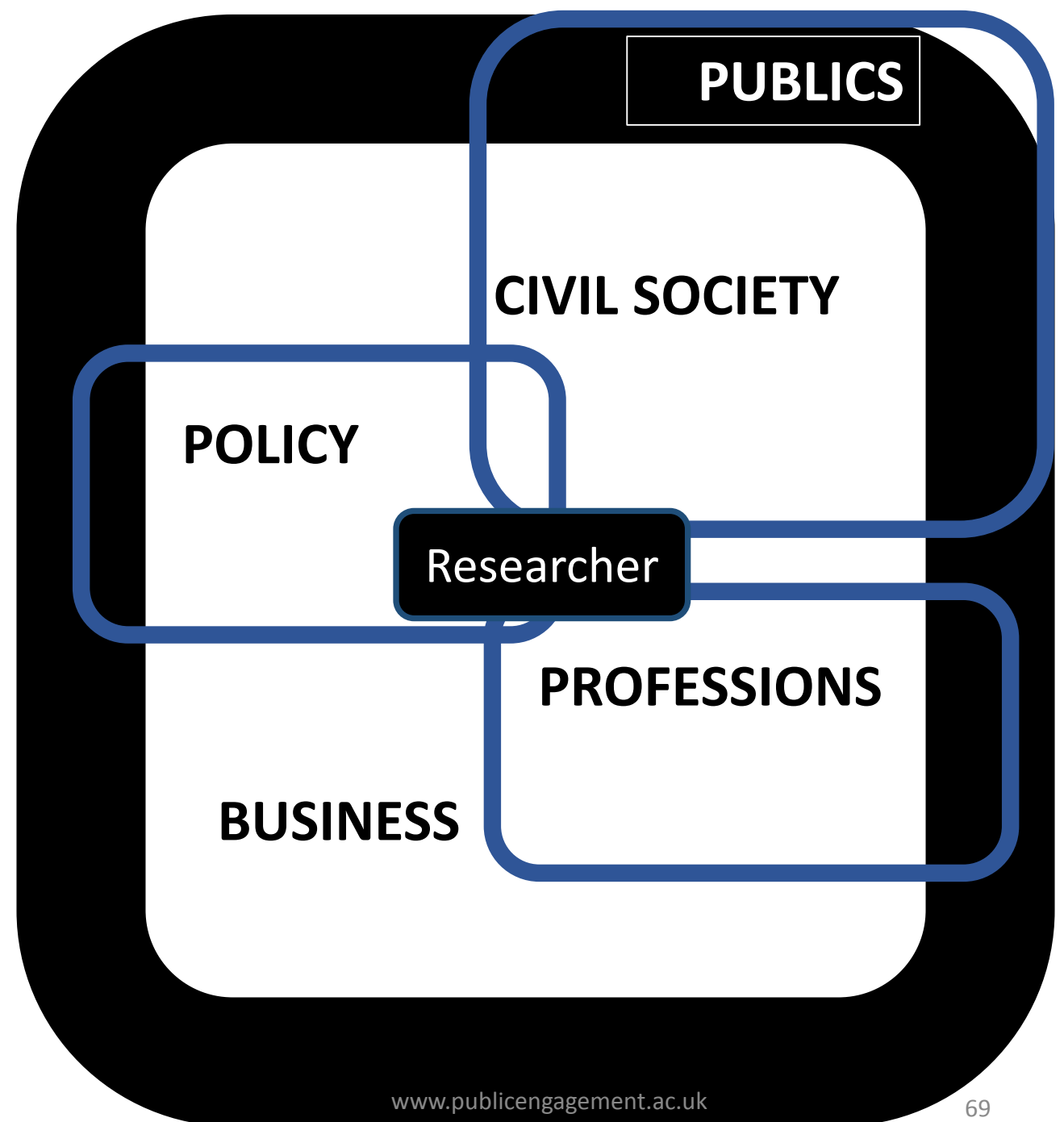
BUSINESS

'Blended' public engagement'

With 'blended' public engagement, the public engagement forms part of a wider knowledge exchange project – e.g. to engage policy makers, practitioners and service users around a particular health issue.

Improving understanding, implementation and uptake of advance care planning for end of life care

'The University of Nottingham's Sue Ryder Care Centre for the Study of Supportive, Palliative and End of Life Care has enhanced the understanding, implementation and uptake of advance care planning for end of life care. Its work has shaped **public policy** and influenced national initiatives that have improved quality of life and reduced the number of deaths in hospitals. The research has been cited as an exemplar by the World Health Organisation and has helped inform **policymaking** at European level. It has **guided professional practice**, educated care staff and contributed to a more positive **public attitude** towards talking about end of life issues' (27118)

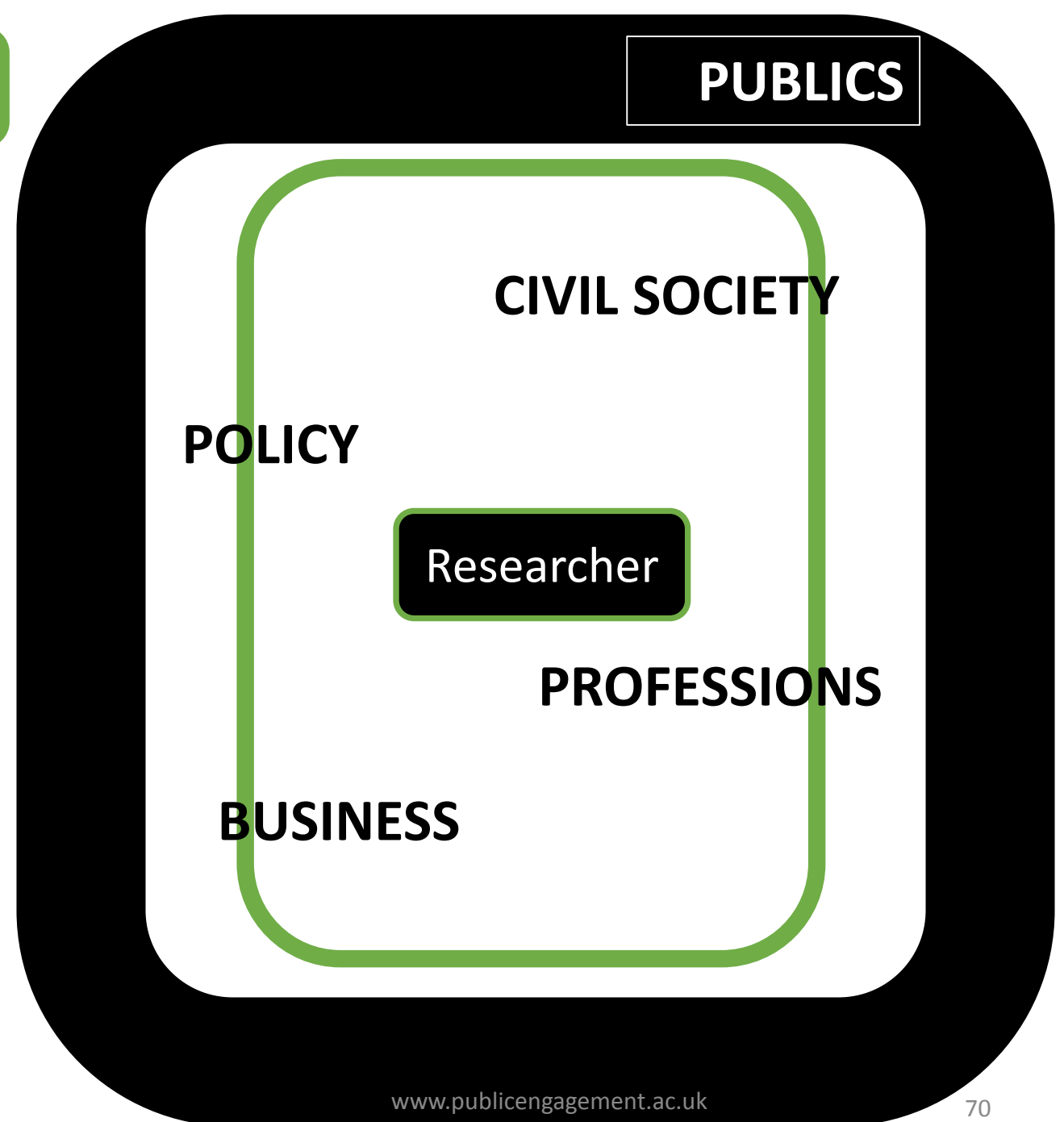


‘Behind the scenes’ public engagement’

Here there is no direct engagement with publics – all the effort is put into improving the quality of public engagement being undertaken by intermediary organisations, by influencing their practice or making new resources available.

Improving the quality of news coverage across the BBC in a devolved UK

‘Political power in the UK has been significantly devolved since 1999, transforming the policy landscape. Our research in 2007 found that broadcast news failed to reflect this new landscape, and that citizens were routinely being misinformed about major areas of policy such as health and education - a lack of information and understanding that is a potential barrier to democratic engagement. Our research was used to inform the King Report, as well as being published by the BBC Trust as part of that report, and our recommendations were adopted by the BBC which took action based on our findings to improve news coverage across all its outlets. Our follow-up study, conducted a year after this intervention, found that BBC news coverage had changed to become more accurate, and better reflected post-devolution politics in the UK’. (17644)



'Bolt on' public engagement

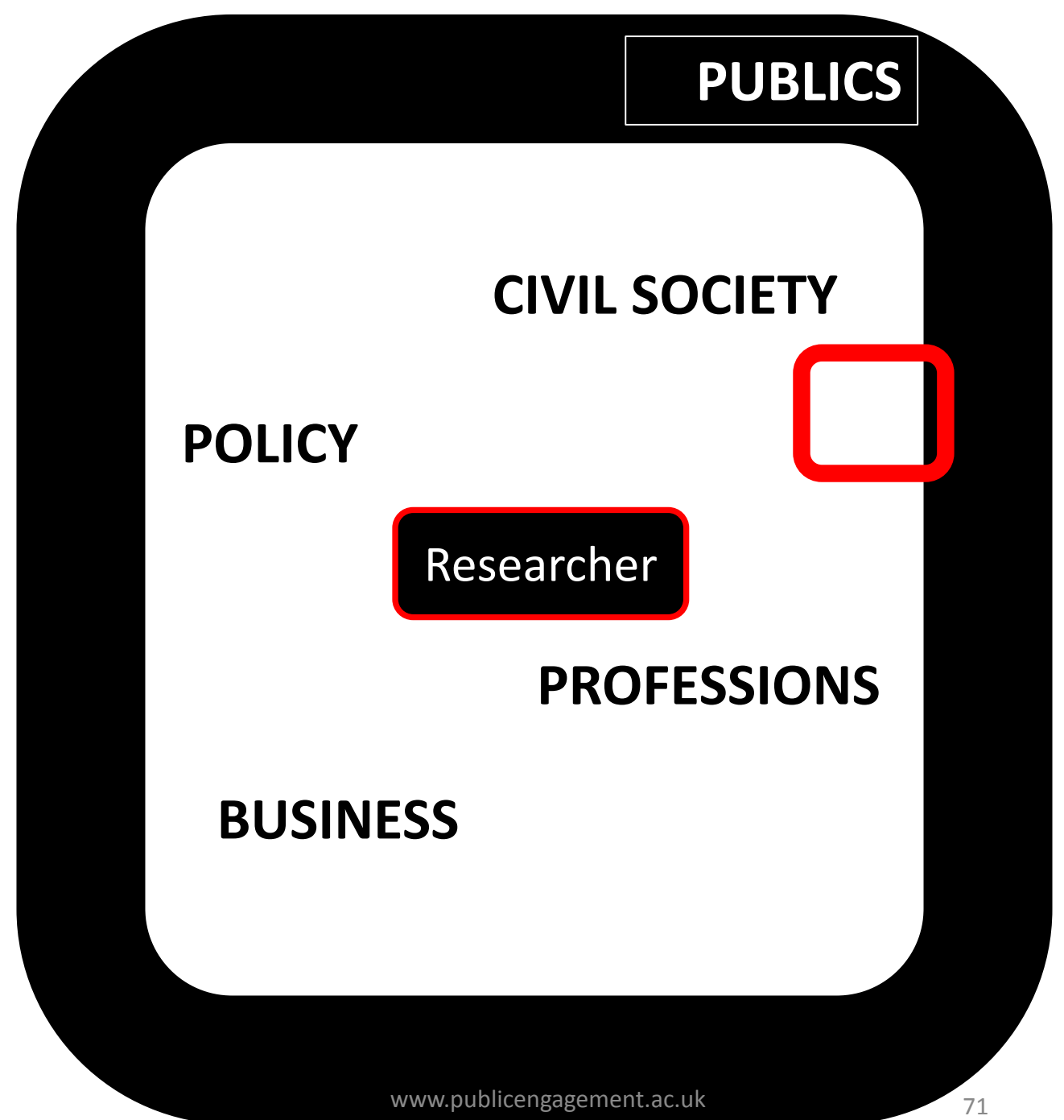
Here there is a cursory role for public engagement (for instance, some media coverage was achieved) but it is peripheral to the main engagement activity being undertaken.

EASYLINE+: Low Cost Advanced White Goods for a Longer Independent Life of Elderly People

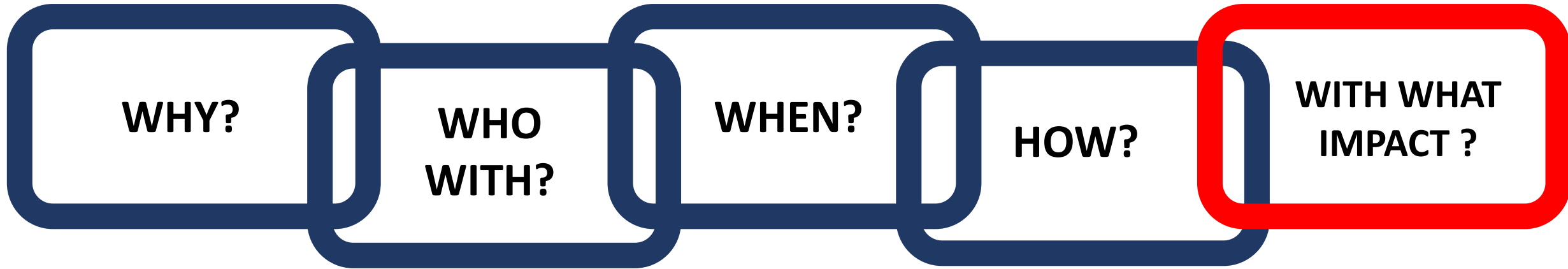
A BBC television news story enabled widespread public awareness of the user interface concept developed by the researchers and the achievements of the research. (14888)

Influence on UK Government's Nuclear R&D Programmes and Policy

The Committee on Radioactive Waste management also does a significant amount of public engagement and this has led to several radio appearances and work with public and other stakeholders in the UK and abroad (e.g. Bure, France). Grimes' high media profile and TV/radio appearances during the Fukushima accident were responsible for the UK public remaining positive about the nuclear option (42173)



Links in the chain



- The purpose of the engagement

- Publics and stakeholders

- The timing of the engagement

- The pathways to impact
- The engagement 'mix'

- The type of impact achieved
- The outcomes realised

The last link in the chain is focussed on **impact**. We reviewed how case study authors sought to articulate the impacts arising from public engagement with research. Drawing on the ESRC's work in particular, we developed a framework to describe the typical ways in which case study authors categorised that impact – using three broad headings: '**conceptual**', '**instrumental**' and '**capacity building**' types of impact. For each, we also identified concrete examples of the typical outcomes being claimed (e.g. in terms of 'knowledge and understanding', or 'skills').

Having created and tested this framework, we then stepped back to think about the 'big picture': what value is PE generating – and developed three 'storylines' which we think capture the potential of PE to realise significant impact. This section outlines the impact framework and the three storylines.

So what is the point of public engagement? What does it mobilise and generate that is valuable?

What does it realise, in terms of demonstrable changes beyond academia? How can these be convincingly described?

Thinking about impact

The ESRC has produced an extensive body of work over many years to develop and consolidate understanding of the process of generating impact from research, and assessing that impact.

They describe how the impact of research can include three broad types of influence:

Instrumental: influencing the development of policy, practice or service provision, shaping legislation.

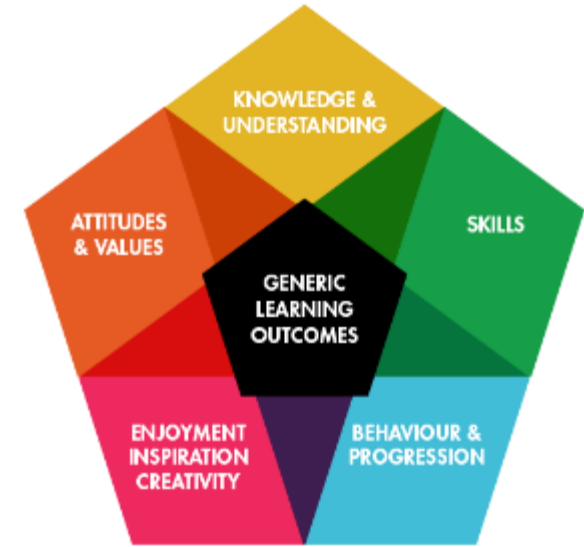
Conceptual: contributing to the understanding of policy issues, re-framing debates

Capacity building: through technical and personal skill development

There has been extensive work in other sectors to develop frameworks and methods for capturing impact. A host of different impact and outcome frameworks exist, which we also reviewed to help develop a robust approach to categorising the impacts being claimed in the REF.

One particularly useful framework was the one created by the Museums, Libraries and Archive Council to provide a common outcomes framework for the cultural sector.

The 'Generic Learning Outcomes' identifies five broad outcome areas (e.g. 'knowledge and understanding') to help capture the types of impact (for instance) a museum visit can have on an individual.



Each outcome area is broken down further to provide specific indicators of change, for instance for knowledge and understanding:

- Knowing what or about something
- Learning facts or information
- Making sense of something
- Deepening understanding
- How arts and cultural organisations operate
- Making links and relationships between things

These act as prompts to allow a variety of sources of data to be collected.

Developing an impact framework

Conceptual



***Communicating the meaning
of research beyond academia***

This slide describes the three broad categories of impact which we identified in the various impact case studies

Instrumental



***Influencing policies, products
and services to better reflect
public interests***

Capacity building



***Influencing individual and
collective behaviour and skills
to realise public benefit***

Developing an impact framework

Conceptual



- Challenge conventional wisdom
- Challenge professional orthodoxies
- Change understandings
- Stimulate learning and reflection
- Influence public debate

These bullets describe the typical goals or purposes which case study authors claim to have animated their engagement activity

Instrumental



- Change standards / regulation
- Change accountability regimes
- Influence new products and services
- Change policies
- Change planning processes
- Influence the public realm

Capacity building



- Inspire participation and progression
- Teach new skills
- Change behaviours, including participation and involvement
- Influence practitioner and policy makers' behaviour /practice / standards
- Foster collaboration / networks / associations

Developing an impact framework

Conceptual



- Challenge conventional wisdom
- Challenge professional orthodoxies
- Change understandings
- Stimulate learning and reflection
- Influence public debate

Instrumental

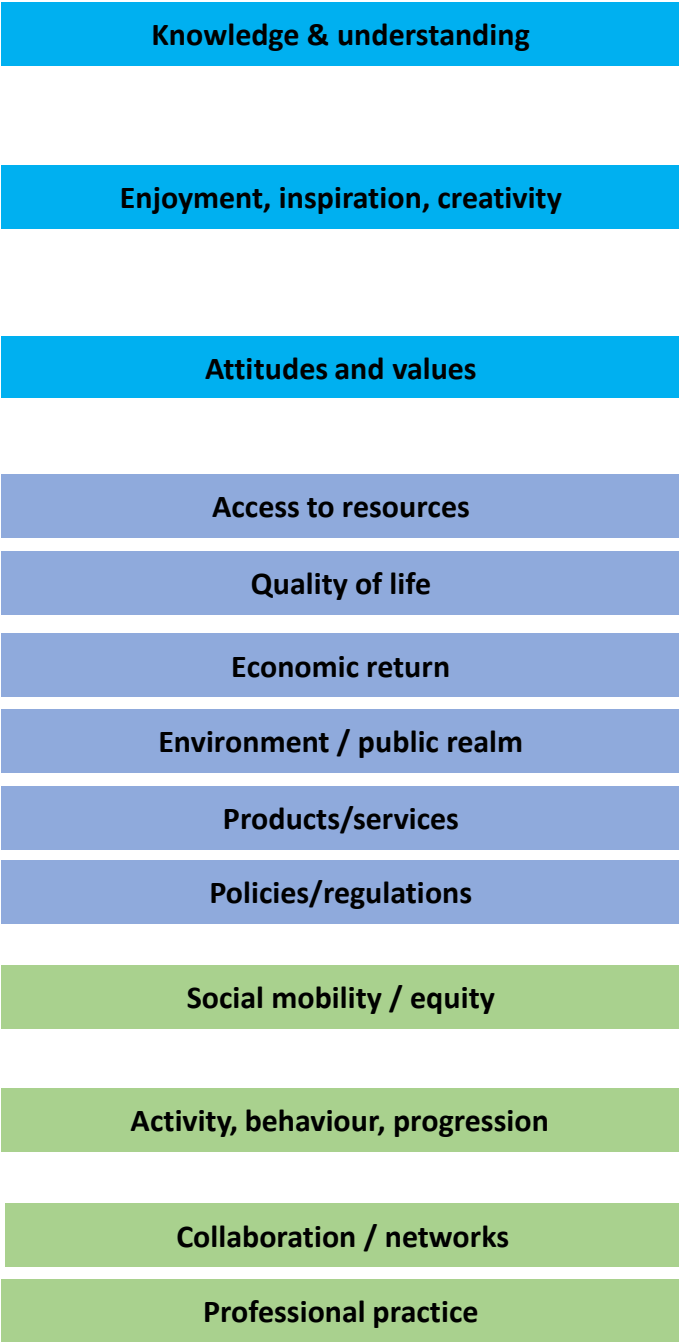


- Change standards / regulation
- Change accountability regimes
- Influence new products and services
- Change policies
- Change planning processes
- Influence the public realm

Capacity building



- Inspire participation and progression
- Teach new skills
- Change behaviours, including participation and involvement
- Influence practitioner and policy makers' behaviour /practice / standards
- Foster collaboration / networks / associations



These headings were developed (drawing on existing outcomes frameworks) to capture the broad types of impact typically being claimed for public engagement in each of the three broad areas.

The next slide provides prompts to capture what might be claimed to have changed or been influenced as a result of the engagement.

Developing an impact framework

Conceptual



- Challenge conventional wisdom
- Challenge professional orthodoxies
- Change understandings
- Stimulate learning and reflection
- Influence public debate

Instrumental



- Change standards / regulation
- Change accountability regimes
- Influence new products and services
- Change policies
- Change planning processes
- Influence the public realm

Capacity building



- Inspire participation and progression
- Teach new skills
- Change behaviours, including participation and involvement
- Influence practitioner and policy makers' behaviour /practice / standards
- Foster collaboration / networks / associations

Knowledge & understanding

- Circulate new ideas
- Deepen understanding
- Promote learning
- Enrich research

Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity

- Fun
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Being inspired
- Experimenting

Attitudes and values

- Self-reflection
- Motivation
- Empathy and tolerance

Access to resources

- New / Enhanced

Quality of life

- Health / Education / Leisure / Economic / Rights / Safety and cohesion

Economic return

- Commercial return / New funding / Efficiency / Employment

Environment / public realm

- Public realm / Biodiversity

Products/services

- New / Enhanced / Changed / Stopped

Policies/regulations

- New / Sustained / Shaped / Removed

Social mobility / equity

- School readiness / School attainment / Part. in educ'n / Part. in empl'nt / access to prof.s / Access to services

Activity, behaviour, progression

- What people do
- Intention to act
- New skills
- Change in how manage lives

Collaboration / networks

- New / enhanced

Professional practice

- New frameworks / Changed practices

Conceptual

The next three slides provide quotes from various case studies to exemplify how this framework can help to provide concrete instances of impacts arising from public engagement



Knowledge & understanding

- Circulate new ideas
- Deepen understanding
- Promote learning
- Enrich research

- In 2012 Sir Mike Richards, then NHS Impact case study (REF3b) Page 3 England's National Clinical Director for End of Life Care, noted the "marked contrast" brought about by Dying Matters, observing: "Dying Matters continues to make major strides **towards engaging the public** and tackling the taboo of discussing death and dying" (27118)
- Sir Andrew Burns, former UK Ambassador to Israel and now Britain's Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues, says the IOE is "at the leading edge" of Holocaust education internationally. "The IOE's approach marks a shift away from simple 'lessons of the Holocaust' to genuine engagement with the complexity of the past, and deep learning about one of the most traumatic events in human history," he says. "What is remarkable is the extent to which such complexity can be made accessible to pupils." (44312)
- Societal impact: evidenced in that almost half of OPAL's participants when questioned, said that taking part had **changed the way they thought** about the environment. Over one third of participants said that they would improve their behaviour towards the environment – confirming more positive environmental attitudes among society as a direct result of this project's impact. (2788)

Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity

- Fun
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Being inspired
- Experimenting

- *Feedback from audiences confirms that her Q&As have genuinely enhanced their appreciation of the films.* Joana Granero, Director, London Spanish Film Festival. (19049)
- Engagement and outreach: it was found that being able to contribute to a national research programme was a key motivating factor for many participants; public involvement created a greater sense of connection and ownership of local spaces (2788)
- The school science coordinator said the pupils "were truly enthralled and excited to be taking part in a real scientific investigation" (34991)

Attitudes and values

- Self-reflection
- Motivation
- Empathy and tolerance

- A follow-up evaluation of the 2010 event showed all respondents would recommend a similar event to someone else and that around a third **felt more comfortable** about discussing death and dying (27118)
- Her pupils said that the resulting classroom work was "the most memorable study they had done and the one that had the biggest impact on them emotionally and intellectually". Inspectors noted: "The engagement of students, their understanding, empathy is quite unique – a truly holistic and powerful learning experience. It is hard to judge this against various criteria as we have never seen anything quite like this. Extraordinary." (44312)

Instrumental



Access to resources

- New / Enhanced

- Some 1,200 individuals requested copies of the original version, which an Institute of Healthcare Management evaluation found was used by a wide range of healthcare professionals and accessed by service users directly [d]. Users reported that it helped facilitate otherwise “difficult” conversations. (27118)
- in 2013 a film she championed for *Sight & Sound*’s ‘Hidden Gems’ feature (Aug. 2007), *Cría cuervos/Raise Ravens*, was re-released by the BFI (19049)

Quality of life

- Health / Education / Leisure / Economic / Rights / Safety and cohesion

- Data published in 2012’s Fourth Annual Report revealed the Strategy’s effect on reducing the number of people dying in hospital: between 2008 and 2011 around 30,000 more were able to pass away in their usual place of residence (i.e. home or care home) (27118)

Economic return

- Commercial return / New funding / Efficiency / Employment

- From 2008-12, Delgado worked as an advisor to the BFI London Film Festival, programming 67 Spanish-language films attracting audiences of 21,856 and generating £193,525.50 from ticket sales. Of these films, 9 have secured UK releases, generating cinematic box-office and DVD sales (19049)
- The use of materials from the Seven Stories archive, publicly demonstrated at the conference, ‘was one of the factors which persuaded the daughter of writer Geoffrey Trease to transform the long term loan of his archive into a donation’ (as a result of attending the event) (21722)

Environment / public realm

- Public realm / Biodiversity

- More than 25,000 sites across England have been studied by local people; ii) 230,000 field packs were distributed to schools and community groups; iii) over 1,000 training courses were delivered; iv) the public surveyed over 25,000 sites across England and entered the information into the OPAL national database; v) communities contributed data to local research studies; (2788)

Products/services

- New / Enhanced / Changed / Stopped

- *Delgado’s publications have been hugely influential in shaping my programming.* Joana Granero, Director, London Spanish Film Festival (19049)
- ‘Reynolds’s expert advice in almost all areas of modern and contemporary children’s literature has been instrumental in many of the most significant acquisitions to the Collection’ (21722)
- *The results of this research have the potential to change the whole adviser training approach”* (43471)

Policies/regulations

- New / Sustained / Shaped / Removed

- The research also informed professional practice at a high level. The Royal College of Physicians’ 2009 evidence-based guidelines for ACP cited the Centre’s work and were reviewed by Seymour [g]. In 2011 Seymour led a working party for the National End of Life Care Programme to revise guidance for health and social care staff [h], drawing on the Centre’s analysis of staff’s educational needs (27118)
- **“As a result of this research more training is being introduced to help advisers understand the detailed issues faced by some people over the age of 50”** (43471)

Capacity building



Social mobility / equity

School readiness / School attainment /
Part. in educ'n / Part. in empl't /
access to prof.s / Access to services

- One of the OPAL Water Centre's primary objectives was to facilitate participation in water science among demographics that might not otherwise have the opportunity, by targeting survey distribution and public events within these communities. Of more than 45,000 OPAL Water beneficiaries (who actively took part in activities), 17% were classified as 'hard-to-reach' and included deprived communities, people with special educational needs, victims of domestic abuse and black and minority ethnic groups. 240 surveys were conducted in the country's 20% most deprived areas, and 483 in areas in the two highest crime domains. Participants included organisations such as the North Norfolk Workout Project, who work with the long-term unemployed, people with physical and mental health problems and adults with learning (34991)

Activity, behaviour, progression

- What people do
- Intention to act
- New skills
- Change in how manage lives

- At just one of 13 local schools with whom we have worked in our direct engagement, we interacted with more than 1,100 pre-GCSE to A-level pupils, through talks, visits, and the first live video links from a UK research ship to school classes. This Comprehensive School has reported a year-on-year increase in pupils applying to study marine sciences at University, with staff also noting "a massive and positive impact on teaching and learning with those groups of students" and that our contributions to CPD events for teachers "inspired me and many other teachers to include more contemporary marine science and ocean research examples in our day-to-day teaching" (42992)
- for half of participants this was the first time they had engaged in a scientific initiative (2788)

Collaboration / networks

- New / enhanced

- Since 2009 the coalition has gained 20,000 members from across the NHS, voluntary and independent health and social care sectors, community organisations and academia (27118)
- the conference raised both public and scholarly awareness of Seven Stories' collections and enabled Seven Stories to make connections with **children's literature communities** across the UK and beyond (21722)

Professional practice

- New frameworks / Changed practices

- Between March and September 2012 Gentle Dusk, a London-based consultancy specialising in preparing and supporting end of life care, trained 32 volunteers – one of whom went on to write an article for 'Heart Matters' magazine, which is sent to half a million people. In September 2012 Gentle Dusk secured new funding from NHS London to train 30 volunteers attached to GP practices. Twelve community groups benefited from courses run by Rowcroft Hospice, Devon, in March 2012 (27118)
- Pearson's research-based input to the Seven Stories' public events programme has also resulted in significant audience development, helping Seven Stories to fulfil its role as a nationally significant venue for public discourse on children's books. The attendance has been high for such specialist events, averaging over 30, and including writers, illustrators, collectors and booksellers, as well as teachers and librarians seeking to develop their own professional expertise (21722)

WITH WHAT IMPACT?

Capturing the impact of public engagement

Our review of the case studies allowed us to crystallise a framework that captures why public engagement with research ‘matters’ and helps to describe the types of impact that are typically generated.

Type of impact

Conceptual



Instrumental



Capacity building



Typical intentions or goals

- Challenge conventional wisdom
 - Challenge professional orthodoxies
 - Change understandings
 - Stimulate learning and reflection
 - Influence public debate
-
- Change standards / regulation
 - Change accountability regimes
 - Influence new products and services
 - Change policies
 - Change planning processes
 - Influence the public realm
-
- Inspire participation and progression
 - Teach new skills
 - Change behaviours, including participation and involvement
 - Influence practitioner and policy makers’ behaviour /practice / standards
 - Foster collaboration

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Outcome areas – where the difference is made

Knowledge and understanding

Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity

Attitudes and values

Access to resources

Quality of life

Economic return

Environment / public realm

Products/services

Policies/regulations

Social mobility / equity

Activity, behaviour, progression

Collaboration / networks

Professional practice

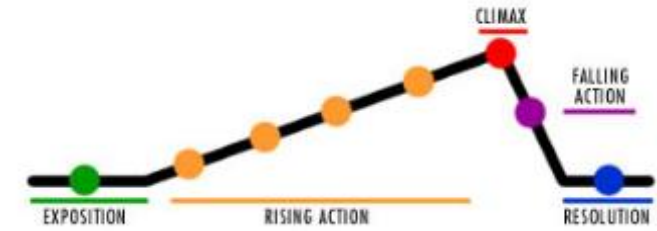


Three public engagement storylines...

Bringing it all together – proposing three broad impact storylines for public engagement, framed around the broad types of impact being realised

Three public engagement storylines

Every impact case study is a story: it constructs a narrative based on the characters, processes and outcomes arising from engaging ‘beyond academia’. Public engagement generally plays a supporting role in the impact narratives submitted to REF 2014.



If universities are to consider submitting case studies in which public engagement plays a more significant and central role, it would help if there was a clearer collective understanding of the very considerable potential of public engagement with research to deliver significant impact. As a ‘thought experiment’, informed by the case studies, we sought to identify three ‘grand narratives’ for public engagement which capture that potential.

These storylines of course assume that one can predict and control the process – which is not the case. But we feel they provide useful ‘heuristics’ to help people strive to be more ambitious in planning and accounting for their engagement activity. They help make explicit the rationale and logic that underpin excellent practice in public engagement, and key interventions which can contribute to impact. Hints of these storylines are present in many of the case studies – but are rarely clearly articulated. In many cases, more than one is alluded to. This section describes the three narratives and offers examples of how they feature within the case studies.

Storyline 1: Enlightenment and empathy

Research generates powerful new knowledge and insight. Public engagement can bring that knowledge into the public sphere and animate conversation and understanding in wider society, inspiring learning, reflection and empathy: circulating new ways of making sense of a complex, ever-changing world, and of one’s place within it.

Storyline 2: Social innovation

By involving the public in the practical ways in how products and services are developed and in the infrastructure and environments they live in, public engagement can bring public insight and expertise to bear on the fabric of the public sphere, generating innovation and enhanced quality of life, and improving accountability and decision making.

Storyline 3: Social action

Research generates new opportunities for people to develop their skills and capabilities, and to ‘live’ and ‘work’ better. By engaging the public in action and skills development, and by involving them in critiquing and influencing the practices of the key agencies –government, business, civil society and the professions – the capacity, capability and equity of society can be significantly enhanced

Research generates powerful new knowledge and meanings.

Public engagement brings that knowledge into the public sphere to animate conversation, inspiring learning, reflection and empathy: circulating new ways of making sense of a complex, ever-changing world.

Enlightenment and empathy

Storyline 1: Enlightenment and empathy



UNIVERSITY OF
SHEFFIELD



Storyline 1: Enlightenment and empathy

Here are four examples of case studies which exemplify 'enlightenment and empathy'



EARTH SYSTEMS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES: Explore the Deep: Public Engagement with Deep-Ocean Research

By putting public engagement at the heart of our deep-sea research, we have delivered benefits to society of generating inspiration and curiosity about science, raising public awareness of our research insights and their context, and providing cultural enrichment by supporting lifelong learning. We have achieved these impacts through: interactions with print, online, and broadcast media that have brought our research to millions; series of talks and events that have inspired specific audiences of tens of thousands; and a network of interactive online resources that has enabled people worldwide to share in our exploration of deep-ocean environments and their biodiversity (42992)

SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL POLICY: 'Reading the Riots' and increasing public understanding

The Unit's Criminal Justice group has carried out a significant body of research relating to youth disaffection, anti-social behaviour and policing. This led to Professor Tim Newburn being approached by *The Guardian* to establish a joint research project following the 2011 riots in England. The ensuing research achieved very wide reach via conventional print and other media, informing public understanding of the riots and challenging conventional wisdom about their causes. A wide range of public figures reacted to the research and the Home Secretary's response included the announcement of a formal review of police 'stop and search' practice. This was published in July 2013, and in a parliamentary statement the Home Secretary said she anticipated significant reform of the use of these powers. (40381)

HISTORY: The politics of memory: changing how Spain's recent history is perceived

Professor Paul Preston's work on the causes, course and long-term legacy of the Spanish Civil War (1936-9) has significantly influenced developments and activities in three areas:

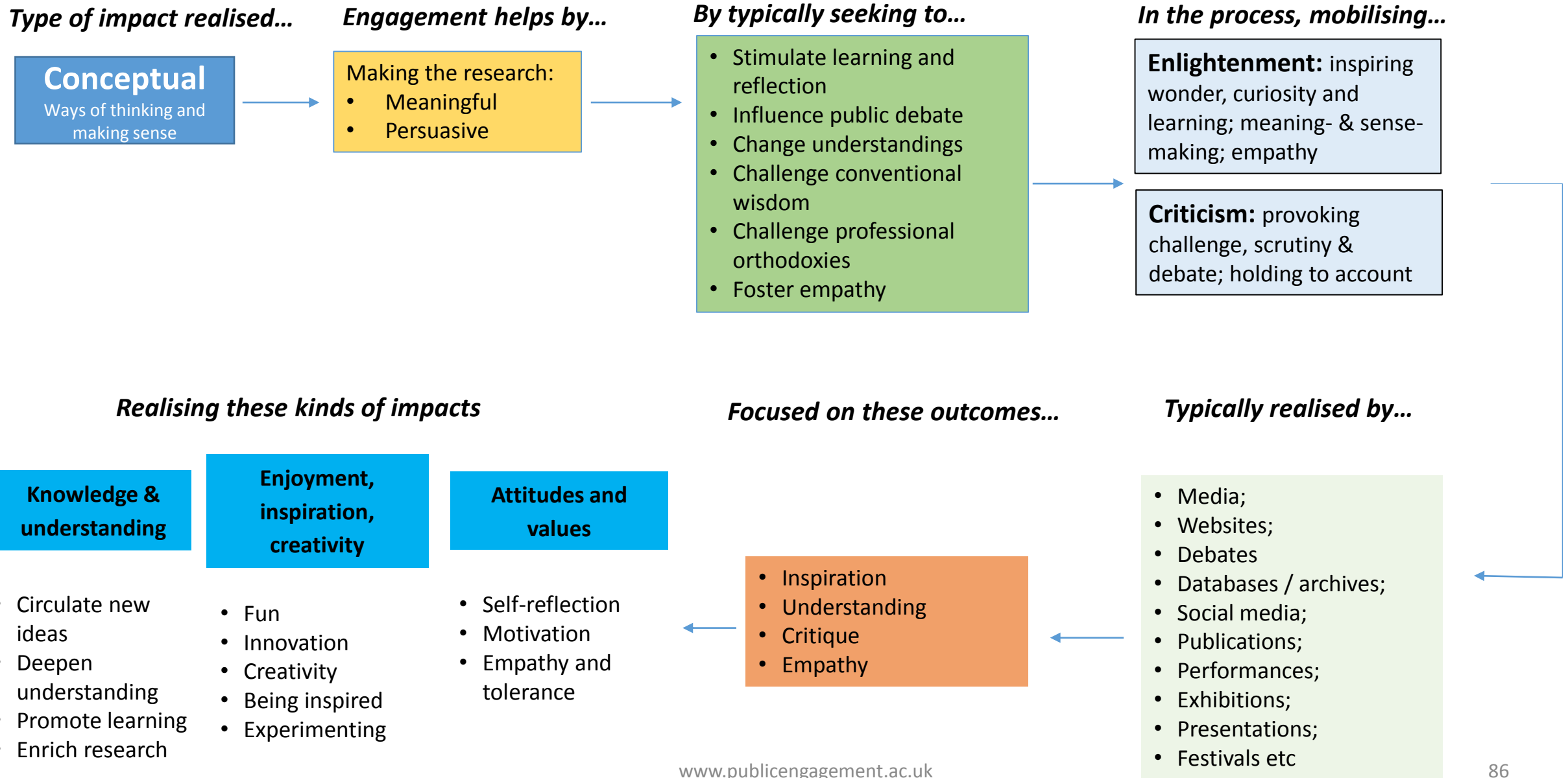
1. *Civil Society*: supporting the activities of NGOs and civic associations working to quantify, catalogue and commemorate the victims of the Francoist repression, thus contributing to processes of collective commemoration and memorialization;
2. *Public Discourse*: stimulating public debate in Spain, the UK and other countries over the historical origins of key political divisions within present-day Spain;
3. *Education*: stimulating awareness within the educational sector of Spain's recent, violent past. (40394)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE: New forms of memoir and the enrichment and extension of public discourse on family, identity, belonging and adoption

Professor Jackie Kay's memoir *Red Dust Road* (2010), her account of growing up black in Glasgow, the adopted daughter of white parents, and her search for her birth parents, challenges and extends public discourse on identity, family and belonging, using memoir to explore the complexities and emotional resonances of the difficult issues raised. Responses to the work point to its significant on-going impact in civil society on the understanding of adoption, including transracial adoption, and how society defines family. Its impact can be judged by the media coverage received and its widespread use in the public sphere in discussions of issues of identity, adoption and family. Its reach is evidenced through the number, range and popularity of Kay's readings as well as the book's sales and its reception within groups not traditionally thought of as typical audiences for literary memoir.

Storyline 1: Enlightenment and empathy

This flow chart models the typical 'moves' in such a storyline



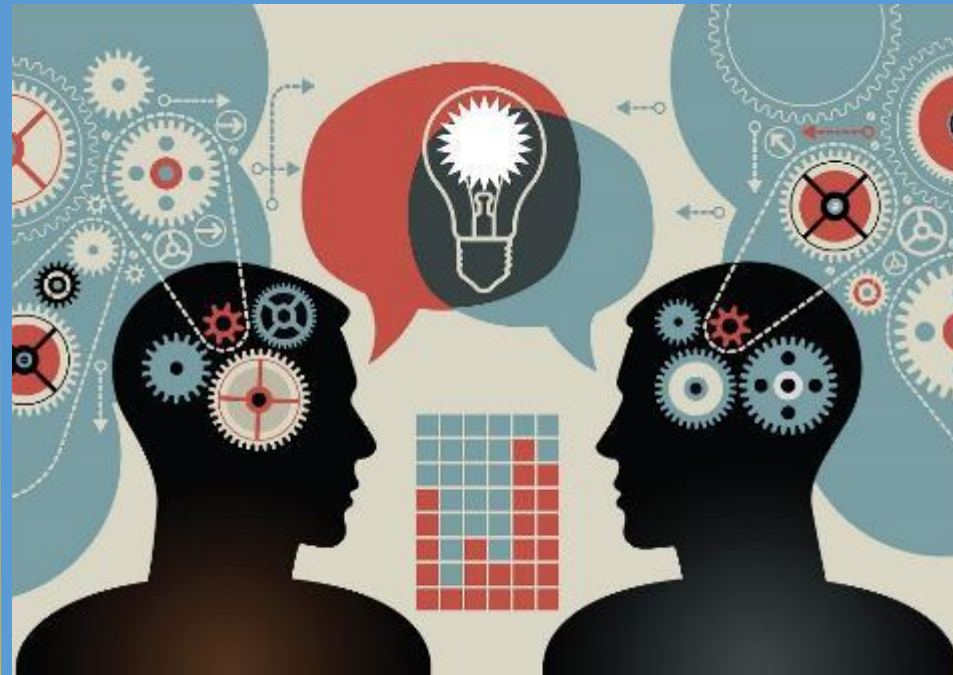
Involving the public as partners in research brings their insight and expertise to bear on how 'the world works'. It helps to generate innovation, enhance quality of life, and improve accountability and decision making.

Social innovation

UWE Bristol
Social Science



Storyline 2: Social innovation



Storyline 2: Social innovation

Here are four examples of case studies which exemplify 'social innovation'



CLINICAL MEDICINE: Towards prevention of mitochondrial disease: changing government policy and influencing public debate

Research at Newcastle University, the only centre licenced in the UK, has shown that the in vitro fertilisation-based technique of Pronuclear transfer to prevent the transmission of mitochondrial disease from mother to child is feasible. As a consequence the UK Government asked the regulator responsible, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), to conduct both a scientific safety review of the techniques in which Newcastle research was widely referenced and to undertake a public consultation exercise. The findings from both these consultations and from a separate Nuffield Council on Bioethics report were supportive, to the extent that in June 2013 the UK's Chief Medical Officer announced that the Government would bring forward draft legislation to change the law in the UK to allow embryos created using the Newcastle approach to be used for the treatment of affected couples. (21692)

ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS, DENTISTRY, NURSING AND PHARMACY: Improving understanding, implementation and uptake of advance care planning for end of life care

The University of Nottingham's Sue Ryder Care Centre for the Study of Supportive, Palliative and End of Life Care has enhanced the understanding, implementation and uptake of advance care planning for end of life care. Its work has shaped public policy and influenced national initiatives that have improved quality of life and reduced the number of deaths in hospitals. The research has been cited as an exemplar by the World Health Organisation and has helped inform policymaking at European level. It has guided professional practice, educated care staff and contributed to a more positive public attitude towards talking about end of life issues. (27118)

SOCIOLOGY: Influencing the history curriculum at the local and national levels through oral histories about Bengali migration and settlement

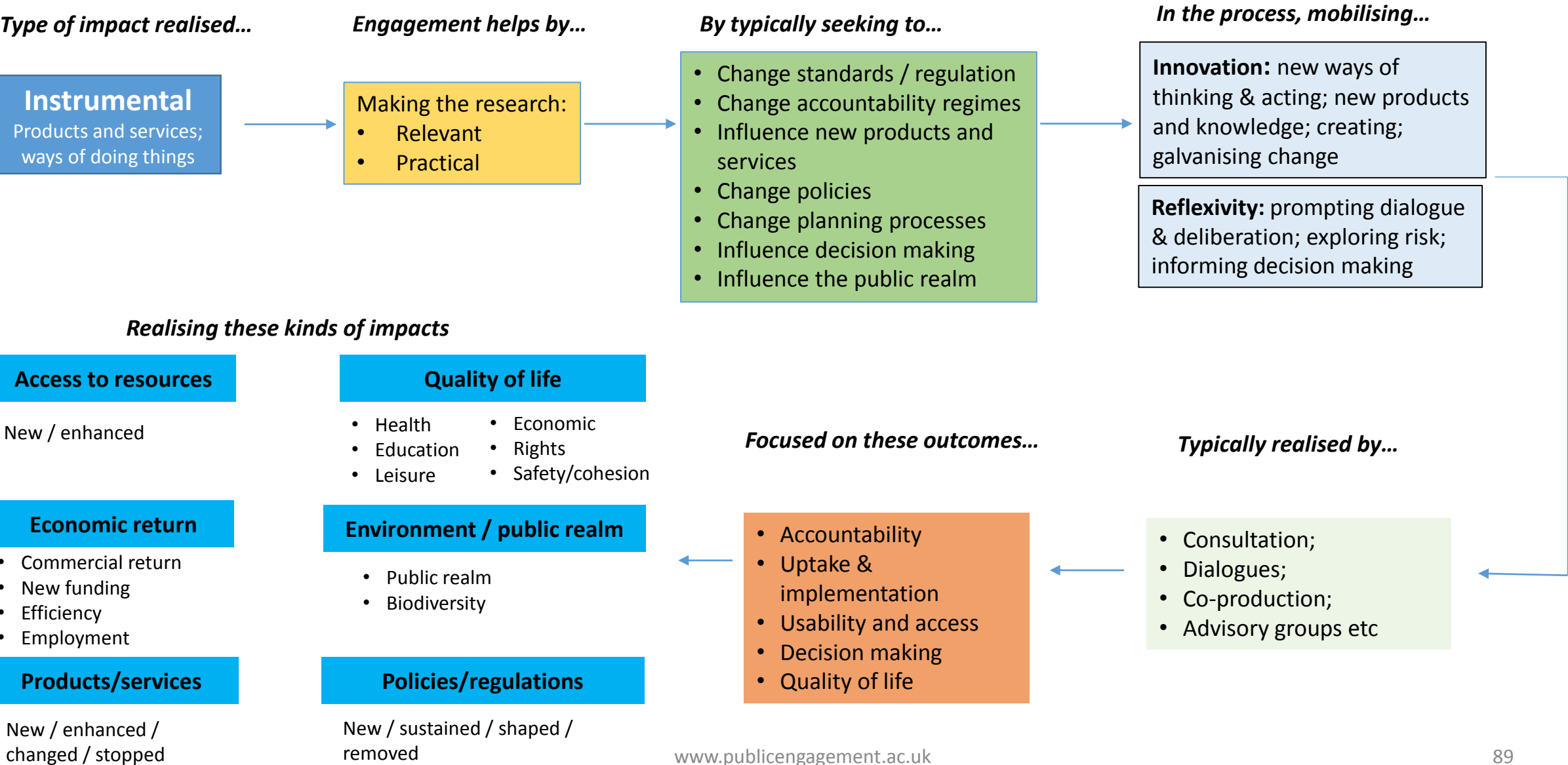
An Ofsted review of the National Curriculum found that diversity and multiculturalism is taught poorly in British schools and recommended that personal, family and local history be included in the curriculum. A joint project between LSE and Cambridge University used underpinning research on Bengali migration and settlement to develop a new approach for teaching history that is effective in addressing Ofsted's concerns. The project produced a website and educational resources for teachers and students, tested and proved the new approach in three diverse cities, and influenced Government revisions to the National Curriculum to ensure that important diversity and multicultural elements were retained. (27173)

MUSIC, DRAMA, DANCE AND PERFORMING ARTS: The Enchanted Palace: developing audiences and bringing history to life with a site-specific co-created installation.

The Enchanted Palace was a collaborative project between theatre company WildWorks and Historic Royal Palaces (HRP). It transformed the State Apartments at Kensington Palace into an interactive exhibition (26 March 2010 — 1 June 2012) which brought the stories and the palace to life. *The Enchanted Palace* enabled Kensington Palace to remain open during a two-year £12 million refurbishment. The project brought in income, safeguarded jobs and drew in new audiences. Thirteen community groups, schools and colleges were involved in its creation while 10 high-profile designers were invited to create work in response to the stories of the palace. The Enchanted Palace increased the numbers of Palace visitors (even during this refurbishment period) and was widely covered in the press featuring on the International Council of Museums website www.clothestellstories.com as an example of good practice. (44644)

Storyline 2: Social innovation

This flow chart models the typical 'moves' in such a storyline



Involving the public in research can help people to develop their skills and capabilities, and to 'live' and 'work' better. Involving them in critiquing and influencing the practices of key agencies – like government or the public sector – enhances the capacity, capability and equity of society

Social action

UoL LIBRARY
Social Sciences



Storyline 3: Social action



Storyline 3: Social action

Here are four examples of case studies which exemplify 'social action'



COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATICS: Extending Open Virtual Worlds for Cultural Heritage and Education

Virtual Worlds are challenging to develop and deploy in small community settings. Our research into their measurement, design, and usability has allowed us to radically reduce the cost and footprint of a platform needed to support the collaborative creation of content, letting communities share their histories with both local and global audiences. Integrating this platform with an approach to virtual fieldwork lets communities explore authentic recreations of historical scenes, giving new perspectives on cultural heritage that stimulate reflection and understanding across the generations and enhancing the visitor experience by making new modes of interaction available for museums. This has enabled educational and cultural heritage bodies in Scotland to connect with new audiences and increase public participation in local heritage (35279)

GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AND ARCHAEOLOGY: The Newport Medieval Ship Project

The Newport Ship Project is a collaborative project with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David as the academic lead, working with the Newport Museum and Heritage Service (Newport City Council) and the Friends of the Newport Ship, to protect, understand and display the most substantial medieval ship found in Britain in modern times. Impacts are demonstrated through a) significant developments in professional practice in the museum sector and b) in community engagement and educational outreach spheres which have seen substantial public collaboration and learning clustered around a major heritage project (21488)

COMMUNICATION, CULTURAL AND MEDIA STUDIES, LIBRARY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: Empowering children online through literacy and safety initiatives

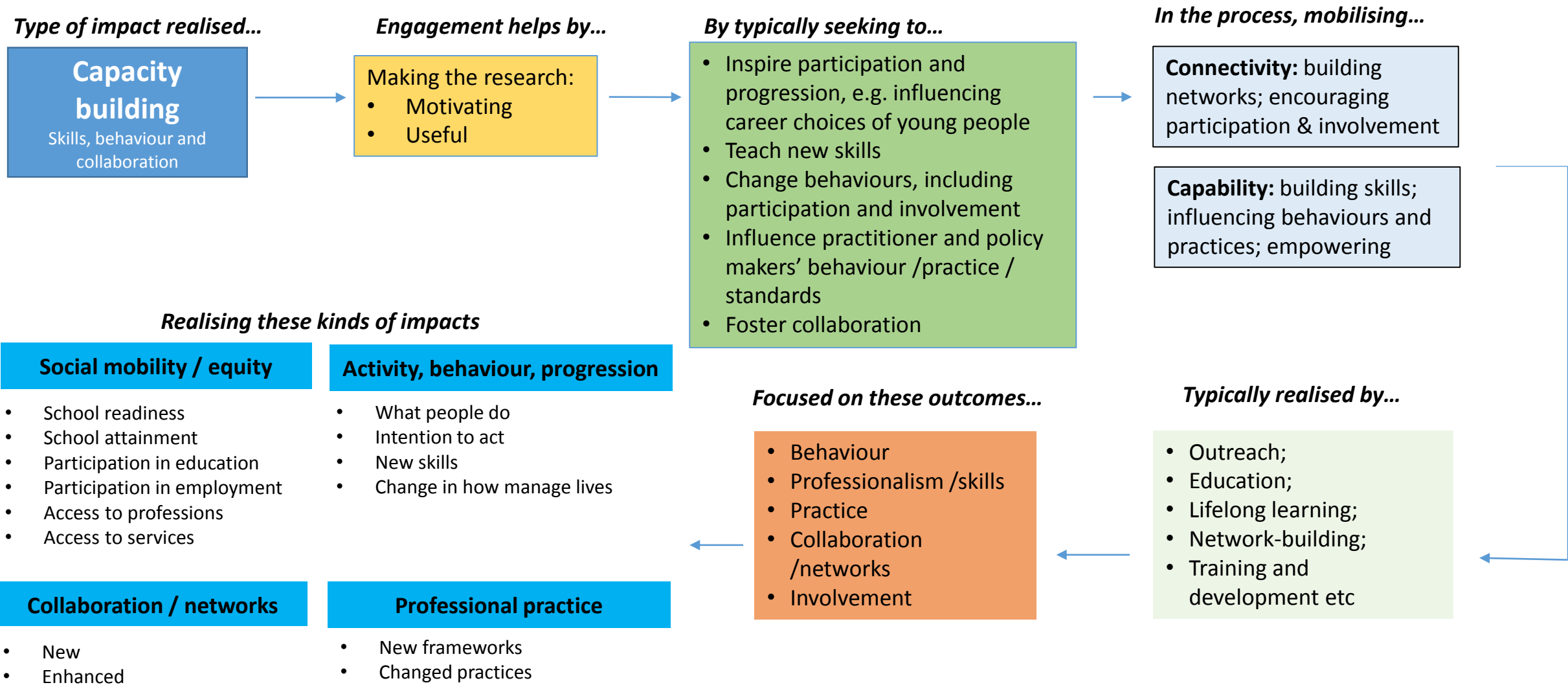
LSE research has helped shape children's internet literacy and safety policy. In the UK, the research informed the establishment of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) and the creation by the Council of the UK's first Child Internet Safety Strategy. Based on the research, the Council tasked industry to improve safety tools, and raised awareness among parents and teachers. This has enhanced children's online opportunities, digital literacy and ability to cope with online risks, thereby reducing the probability of harm. In Europe, the research informed the European Commission's Safer Internet Programme's work on industry guidance, safety tools and awareness campaigns, shifting the emphasis from protecting children to empowering them to use the internet safely and with confidence. Policy and practical initiatives around the world draw on the methodology and findings of the research (4231).

SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCES, LEISURE AND TOURISM: Building new capacity to increase children's outdoor play

Many children and young people are not sufficiently active to achieve a range of physical and mental health benefits. Extensive research undertaken at the University of Bristol has developed gold-standard methods of quantifying the important contribution that time spent outdoors and greater child independence make to children's daily physical activity. This work has provided unique data to support the development of a new, low-cost approach to adapting residential streets in Bristol for regular outdoor play. The Bristol model has been adopted nationally to provide street-play opportunities in the most disadvantaged areas. It is building capacity to promote outdoor play in a range of public- and third-sector agencies at local, regional and national levels. As a result, children are spending more time outdoors and undertaking increased physical activity, while both children and adults are engaging in more social interaction on residential streets. The model has also been showcased internationally, supporting a cultural shift towards reintroducing the street as a place for children's outdoor play. This shift is necessary to combat the marked decline in street play and child independence which has occurred in recent decades. (40312)

Storyline 3: Social action

This flow chart models the typical ‘moves’ in such a storyline



3. Reviewing 4* impact templates

Creating the conditions for public engagement to thrive

Creating a productive environment for public engagement

Mining the database revealed the various ways in which coherent and convincing case studies can be constructed. But the REF doesn't just assess the excellence of the research and its impact, it also seeks to make judgements about the quality of the infrastructure and environment in place within HEIs to support researchers to do excellent work to realise impact. Each submitting unit was invited to submit an impact template to outline its approach to impact, and its strategy. The template for these is included as an appendix. It is worth noting that the impact template is likely to be dropped from the next REF, and the approach to impact assessed as an explicit section of the environment element of the assessment.

We chose to review templates from the highest performing units of assessment to see:

- To what extent did PE feature?
- If it did, how was it framed?

What this revealed was that:

- High performing units of assessment typically embed a strategic approach to public engagement in their overarching approach to impact.
- Even if they submitted relatively few case studies featuring public engagement, they still recognised the value and significance of public engagement to their broader work as a department

The **key features** which consistently appeared, and which reflect critical cornerstones of effective support for PE included:

- Treating public engagement as an integral part of the impact strategy
- Clearly articulating who their 'publics' are
- Expressing an explicit rationale for their public engagement activity
- Having an authentic flavour to their public engagement, sensitive to their discipline, context and values
- Investing in building sustained partnerships and collaborations with external intermediary organisations
- Deploying appropriate methods, and investing in developing their expertise in engagement
- Investing in creating a culture in which researchers are supported and incentivised to engage with the public

Using the NCCPE's EDGE tool

These features of effective support for public engagement map usefully onto the NCCPE's EDGE tool.

The EDGE tool was developed in 2010 to describe the critical dimensions which underpin a successful culture and environment for public engagement.

There are three broad areas – purpose, process and people – and for each of these three focal points to attend to (for instance, 'leadership' is a focal point in 'purpose').

The following slides provide some short extracts from different Impact Templates to exemplify how high performing Units of Assessment chose to articulate their support for public engagement.

It is also important to reference **The Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research**. The core principles of the Concordat map closely onto the focal points of the EDGE tool.

<https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support-it/self-assess-with-edge-tool>

THE EDGE TOOL

Purpose

Mission

Leadership

Communication

Embedding a commitment to public engagement in institutional mission and strategy, and championing that commitment at all levels



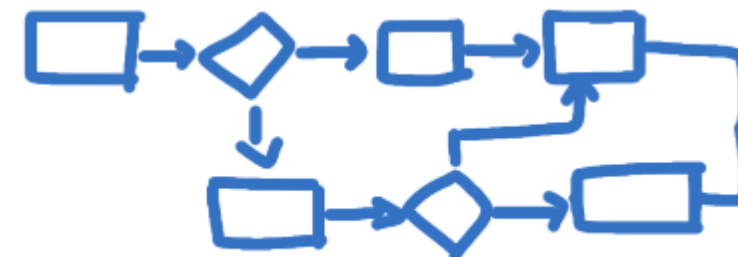
Process

Support

Learning

Recognition

Investing in systems and processes that facilitate involvement, maximise impact and help to ensure quality and value for money



People

Staff

Students

Publics

Involving staff, students and representatives of the public and using their energy, expertise and feedback to shape the strategy and its delivery



Purpose
Mission
Leadership
Communication



Prompts

- Treat public engagement as an integral part of your impact strategy
- Express an explicit rationale for your public engagement activity
- Have an authentic flavour to your public engagement, sensitive to your discipline, context and values

The Unit places high importance on public engagement as well as scholarly research. The overall approach of the Unit, across all research groups, involves: (i) ensuring high quality research is conducted to maximise potential for impact; (ii) significant involvement with users throughout the research process (e.g. participation in high level committees, evidence to select committees/advisory groups, active dissemination via meetings with and presentations to government, professionals and third sector organisations), and (iii) broader long-term public engagement, dissemination via public events, mainstream and specialist mass media, social media, and blogging, and continuous follow through to maintain engagement.

22: Social work and social policy (LSE)

We pursue a policy of interacting with the public and key stakeholders to influence public attitudes to science & engineering.

11: Computer Science and informatics (University of Southampton)

The **Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies (IAIS)** is one of the principal UK academic contributors to the formation of foreign and economic policy and to public engagement with Islam, the Middle East and the Muslim world. IAIS researchers act as consultants, nationally and internationally, to numerous government departments, think-tanks and NGOs. They train public servants in awareness of Islam and the Muslim world through dedicated, bespoke courses, and they inform the programmes of cultural bodies both in the UK and abroad through advice and collaborative projects with museums and cultural heritage organisations. The regular appearances of IAIS researchers in the national and international media enrich public debate around issues connected with the British Muslim community, and the Muslim world more generally. The aim of these activities is to create a more nuanced discussion and public understanding of issues related to Islam, and, in time, better informed public policy decisions, making Exeter a key contributor to the public understanding of the Muslim world.

27: Area Studies (Exeter)

www.publicengagement.ac.uk

The goal of the Centre for Professional Ethics was, from its very beginning, to promote excellence in research and public engagement in equal measure.

32: Philosophy (Keele University)

By putting issues into the public sphere, by asking awkward questions, and by offering evidence and arguments, academics in the humanities play an important role in shaping public opinion and thus influence policy agendas indirectly.

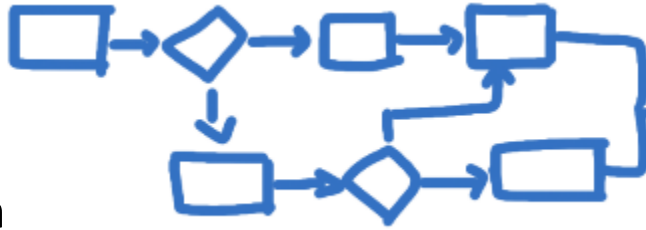
30: History (LSE)

Our approach to impact recognises the value of engagement with members of the public. The School has been a major resource for the *CUE-East Beacon for Public Engagement* run by UEA 2008-2012, one of only four such Community Engagement centres in the UK. [] Research in the School's Science, Society and Sustainability Group into how the public engage with environmental science and express their policy preferences has been used in the development of Government guidelines on public consultations and in informing governmental public dialogue on science and technology. []

The Centre receives over 6,000 unique web visits monthly and has 6,300 Twitter followers. The School's scientists appear regularly on national and international television and radio networks to convey their research to mass audiences.

7: Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences (UEA)

Process Support Learning Recognition



Broader public engagement is enabled via a range of activities, including extensive dissemination of research via reports, executive summaries for lay audiences, leaflets, newsletters, (upgraded) web presence and podcasts (e.g. on child protection). We place increasing emphasis on social media such as Twitter and research group blogs (e.g. LSEHSC) for knowledge exchange. LSE has an impact officer, and developments and experiences around knowledge exchange and impact are shared with the Unit. The press office supports dissemination, and the Unit has a strong presence in LSE policy, politics and impact blogs. Book and report launches are supported and promoted by the LSE's public events team, and appear as video and audio podcasts. LSE Research Online, the institutional repository for research outputs is utilised

22: Social work and social policy (LSE)

The UoA already has extensive and high profile public engagement and outreach activities, but until recently this rested with a few key individuals. There is an increasing appetite for work in this area among our faculty. Our Director of External Relations and Public Engagement will coordinate and encourage an expansion of our activities and promote training opportunities.

10: Mathematical Sciences (University of Oxford)

At a University level, the Personal Development Plan for early career staff includes impact/public engagement as an essential element for progression, and impact activities are built into progression criteria between grades.

27: Area Studies (Exeter University)

Prompts

- Deploy appropriate methods, and invest in developing their expertise in engagement
- Invest in creating a culture in which researchers are supported and incentivised to engage with the public

Achieving impact is underpinned by substantial investment, including the recent appointment of a Director of External Relations and Public Engagement for Mathematical Sciences []. Above all it depends on a culture in which impact is recognised and rewarded.

10: Mathematical Sciences (University of Oxford)

Impact begins with the recruitment process, and with retention of world-class staff. So, for both senior and junior appointments, we will continue to look out for candidates who show willingness to engage not only with the community of scholars but also, importantly, with the wider community outside of academia.

30: History (LSE)

We have a long-standing active PE policy. While our graphene, astronomy, particle and nuclear physics research are often subjects of particular public curiosity, our outreach activities have spanned the entire UoA research portfolio. Our approach has several elements: permanent visitor facilities, regular annual events, one-off projects, and on-going interaction with the media. A major element of this portfolio is the Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre (JBDC). Where possible, we have a strategy to produce legacy material (e.g. websites, posters, installations) for sustainable impact. We also aim to encourage young scientists, using PhD students, postdocs and early career staff in our events, to give PE experience to the next generation. Training courses are available through the Faculty development programme on various aspects of PE from getting started in outreach to dealing with the press and using social media.

9: Physics (Manchester University)

Public engagement and outreach. Our outreach and public engagement opportunities for research staff and students are coordinated through the Revealing Research Programme. This provides training opportunities for staff and students wishing to hone the skills required for effective communication of research and science to the public. The Dundee Science Centre is one of the city's major visitor attractions (>60,000 per year), and staff and students take part in a range of outreach and public engagement activities related to raising public awareness of science. The Café Science series of informal discussions between scientists/clinicians and members of the public is very popular, and we have numerous interactions with local schools. Within the Dundee Science Centre, the Science Learning Institute in which the University is a major partner) supports researchers in learning excellent science communication skills and presenting their research to the public. **1. Clinical Medicine (Dundee University)**

Research impact, KE activity and public engagement are all important aspects of **staff appraisal** and confirmation of appointment. These activities are recognised in the Department's Workload Model. [] Time and funding is given for public engagement in all three centres.

16: Architecture, Built Environment and Planning (Bath University)

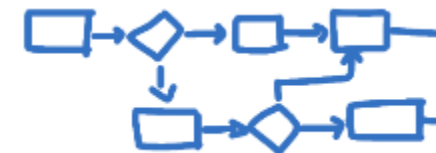
Institutional support from the University of Bristol

Examples of institutional support include the strong tradition of partnership funding and research in the sciences, now applied actively in social sciences, which we used to secure CBC funding; outreach activities aimed at the general public, for example, the Bristol Festival of Social Sciences and Law; the Centre for Public Engagement; and the University Press Office.

18 Economics and Econometrics (University of Bristol)

We aim to provide a strong research mentoring programme for research fellows, professors and other members of staff entering the University from freelance or non-academic career routes, to ensure that expectations about both research quality and impact are clear and that staff are properly supported to achieve both significant research insights and excellent public engagement for their work **35: Music, Drama, Dance & Performing Arts (Southampton University)**

Process Cont'd



The methods used for ensuring impact through user engagement include developing bespoke training courses, seeking consultancy that complements other research for relevant clients, public engagement through debates and the production of art, drama and film, the use of advisory groups for research centres and large projects, and of participatory and action research methods, and the co-creation of research agendas

17: Geography (Sussex University)

The School has a public engagement coordinator and we employ four dedicated science communication and public engagement staff. The **Edinburgh Beltane** public engagement network hosted by the University provides training and support in public engagement. [] We are implementing a new public engagement strategy that will focus on supporting researchers to identify appropriate public engagement plans for their research through a portfolio of opportunities and tailored advice.

5: Biology (Edinburgh University)

The Centre for Professional Ethics was ahead of its time, as it was founded with the explicit goal of promoting high-quality research and public engagement on an equal basis. Public and non-academic engagement has since become a more integral part of University-wide structures and is firmly embedded in the processes of appraisal, promotion, annual research planning and allocation of research leave. Yet, although it is mostly in the field of professional ethics and, in particular, that of public health and health care ethics, that clear causal chains can be established between the instigators and the beneficiaries of the unit's research, all members of the unit have engaged with non-academic audiences and beneficiaries at some level in this REF period.

32: Philosophy (Keele University)

Of course, impact is sometimes achieved serendipitously, in which case we support staff by responding contingently to their needs, e.g., by providing space, time, administrative support and/or research assistance.

24A Anthropology (LSE)

People Staff Students Publics



Prompts

- Clearly articulate who your 'publics' are
- Invest in building sustained partnerships and collaborations with external intermediary organisations

By maintaining a large and vibrant PhD programme, we shall continue to train social scientists who, whether within or outside academia, will be able to bring their anthropological knowledge to bear on complex societal issues, as many of our graduates have done so successfully in the past

24A: Anthropology (LSE)

In order to gauge the success of the technologies we are developing, we maintain strong links to the patient community. Patient involvement starts from the initial research ideas and continues throughout the development stage. We have built these links via the hospital and BRC initiatives around patient and public engagement. We host patient group meetings in which new research ideas and potential grant proposals are discussed. Patient representatives join the steering groups of major grants and continue to input as the research develops. Finally, we get important feedback from patients who take part in clinical trials of our new technologies and prototypes.

15: Engineering (Kings College London)

Music at Southampton has a strong culture of public engagement and established routes for achieving impact, particularly in cultural life and cultural sector economic activity but also in education and health. The main non-academic user groups for our work include:

- **Music audiences** Our research achieves cultural impact by enhancing audience experience: engaging new and existing listeners with challenging contemporary composition and unfamiliar historical music, and convincing them to reconsider familiar music in new ways.

35: Music, Drama, Dance & Performing Arts (Southampton University)

Since 2008 research from across the School, aligned along our 'Bench-to-Society' strategy, has had demonstrable impact in a range of diverse areas []. Major beneficiaries are related to Healthcare (patients, medical charities, drug companies, SMEs), Pharmacy Practice (government bodies, pharmacists, pharmacy users) and Public Engagement (teachers, pupils, general public).

3: Pharmacy (Nottingham University)

LSE Cities has an Advisory Board composed of urban academics, policy-makers and commentators drawn from major world cities.

23: Sociology (LSE)

The **user groups, beneficiaries and audiences** are:

- institutions and individuals in European, UK and Welsh government, public policy and planning, and civil society;
- creative companies, visitor centres and sites in the heritage sector in Wales and Europe; community organisations, cultural institutions and cultural/arts practitioners such as contemporary European poets, writers and digital artists; museums, libraries and arts promotion organisations in Europe and Wales, particularly through work supporting SMEs as well as established institutions such as the National Library of Wales, and the Cardiff Story Museum.
- migrant groups in Wales and Patagonia, e.g. the Polish Community of the Valleys, the Amici Val Ceno, the Somali Integration Society, the Sub-Saharan Africa Panel, community and arts organisations of Chubut province, Argentina and Cymdeithas Cymru-Ariannin.

28: Modern Languages and Linguistics (Cardiff University)

4. Reflections on the process

Judging excellence in realising impact from engaging the public with research

Measurement or judgement?

Our review of the REF impact case studies has revealed that impact arising from engaging with the public is hard to claim definitively. While many case studies provide concrete examples of the impacts realised, in all cases the context and narrative help to guide the judgement of whether these claimed impacts are both credible and significant. This suggests that we need to challenge a couple of assumptions about how research impact can be assessed. These are not necessarily widely held, but they need to be explicitly addressed:

- That it is possible to judge the results of an engagement process independently of the process undertaken
- That one can view impact as an absolute change, rather than a contribution to a change

We would argue that we need to move our thinking from how one **‘measures’** impact to how one **‘judges’** it. Of course it is helpful to identify indicators of impact, which will inform those judgements, but it is a fallacy to think that metrics alone could ever be adequate to the task.

So what would a more explicit and robust framework for forming professional judgements about impact look like?

The next slide offers a framework that attempts to make explicit the key ‘judgements’ which we believe are involved in assessing impacts arising from engaging the public with research.

Judging the excellence of impacts arising from research

The prompts listed below articulate the questions which we believe need to be asked and answered in the process of judging the excellence of impact case studies featuring engagement with the public:

Underpinning research - Is the significance of the research within its social context convincingly explained?	Societal context ‘beyond academia’ - Is the engagement activity intelligently ‘tuned’ to its context and stakeholders? - Are they aware of / alert to cutting edge thinking and practice?	The purpose and approach - Are they clear about what they are trying to achieve through their engagement, and is their activity animated by a clear sense of purpose?	The methods deployed - Is the engagement being executed in ways that are appropriate to its context and purpose?	The impacts claimed - What difference is it actually making? What changes has it contributed to? How convincingly are these described and evidenced? - How significant is its contribution to the field it works within?
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The following slide links these prompts back to the analysis shared earlier in this report

Judging the excellence of impacts arising from research: a framework

Underpinning research

- Is the significance of the research within its social context convincingly explained?

Societal context 'beyond academia'

- Is the engagement activity intelligently 'tuned' to its context and stakeholders?
- Are they aware of / alert to cutting edge thinking and practice in each area?

The approach

- Are they clear about what they are trying to achieve through their engagement, and is their activity animated by a clear sense of purpose?

The methods deployed

- Is the engagement being executed in ways that are appropriate to its context and purpose?

The impacts claimed

- What difference is it actually making? What changes has it contributed to? How convincingly are these described and evidenced?
- How significant is its contribution to the field it works within?

Research activity

Which aspect of public life is it seeking to investigate and explore?

Social context

Meaningfully engaged with existing knowledge and practice, and with public and professional interests

The intellectual landscape

What is its potential contribution to thinking and sense-making outside academia?

The practice landscape

Which areas of policy and practice does it contribute to?

The people landscape

Who has a stake in this work, why might it matter to them, how might they benefit?

Approach

Purposefully seeking to realise public benefit from the products and processes of research, for instance through:

Enlightenment and empathy

Enlightenment: inspiring wonder, curiosity & learning; meaning- & sense-making; empathy
Criticism: provoking challenge, scrutiny & debate; holding to account

Social innovation

Innovation: new ways of thinking & acting; new products and knowledge; creating; galvanising change
Reflexivity: prompting dialogue & deliberation; exploring risk; informing decision making

Social action

Connectivity: building networks; encouraging participation & involvement
Capability: building skills; influencing behaviours and practices; empowering

Method

Deploying methods that are appropriate to their context and aims

The methods deployed

Are the methods appropriate to the context and purposes?

The 'blend' of engagement

Is it involving the right people in a purposeful and intelligent way?

The timing of the engagement

Is the timing well judged to maximise its potential impact?

Peer review

Have they secured feedback and challenge from peers?

Societal impact

The impacts arising

What is the reach and significance of its impact 'beyond academia'?

Conceptual

Ways of thinking and making sense

Instrumental

Products & services; ways of doing things

Capacity building

Skills, behaviour and collaboration

Judging the excellence of impacts arising from research: implications of the findings

We hope that this framework is a useful starting point to help develop a more robust approach to assessing impact arising from engaging the public with research: it makes explicit the kinds of considerations which an expert assessor might apply, and allows those to be tested and shared. In the process, it should help us to be more precise about how we are choosing to evaluate the impacts that are being claimed.

Of course, metrics and measures matter too and we need to get better at collecting and sharing data and metrics that describe aspects of the change(s) that have arisen. But the framing of that data within intelligently constructed case studies will remain fundamental to impact assessment in the next REF. Developing a more explicit articulation of the process by which judgements are formed will be helpful.

What this also reveals is an exciting intellectual task: deepening our understanding of the critical processes through which impact is achieved. The case studies reveal a variety of processes in play, whereby subtle and /or profound changes to understanding, practice and decision making have been influenced or realised. In particular, the case studies invite us to explore the following areas further:

- How ‘meaning’ travels, animates the public sphere and can be scaffolded through engagement processes (for instance through a deeper understanding of the role of discourse)
- How people learn and innovate together (for instance through the lens of how social practices work)
- How networks of innovation are formed and sustained (drawing, for instance , on systems theory)
- How power and decision making can be meaningfully engaged with (drawing on governance and implementation science)

Underpinning all of this is a challenge to researchers and ‘knowledge brokers’: how can they use these insights to **plan for change** and put in place robust **evaluation methods** which are capable of producing meaningful insights to illuminate the engagement processes they are deploying and capture the difference that engagement makes.

5. Concluding comments

The promise of public engagement

Our review has explored how researchers have maximised the productive encounters that the public can have with the products and processes of research. It has highlighted the significant impacts which can be realised through engaging the public with research. We have identified three broad ways in which that impact can be realised:

Conceptual impacts: *ensuring research insights circulate freely and animate the public sphere*

Public engagement with research plays a vital role in mobilising conceptual impacts, through actively engaging the public in thinking, learning, and debate. Many of the case studies feature examples where the public have been inspired to deepen their understanding, to explore new ways of explaining phenomena, to engage in critique, or to empathise with the plight or situation of people different to themselves. In the process, the engagement has contributed to:

- Stimulating a love of learning; curiosity;
- Increasing debate, reflection and critique;
- Increasing tolerance, empathy and mutual understanding;
- Increasing access to resources which help make sense of and explain the world.

Instrumental ends: *Influencing policy and practice to better reflect public interests*

Many 'instrumental' public benefits are achieved without any public engagement in the research. The public are likely to benefit from the research impact (e.g. in changes to policy) – even if they haven't been meaningfully engaged in the process. However there are examples where the public are actively engaged – e.g. in feeding in insight or expertise to the research, directly influencing the impacts arising from it; or where they are actively involved in the implementation of the findings from the research. In the process we have seen public engagement with research:

- Influencing decision making and accountability to better reflect public interests;
- Stimulating innovation that serves the public good – involving the public in the creation of new products, services or in enhancing existing provision;
- Enhancing or improving the public sphere and / or the environment.

Capacity building: *Changing individual & collective behaviour to realise public benefit & building stronger, better networked professional and public communities*

In many cases, the public benefit from research not through directly engaging with it, but through the changes realised to the skills and practices of organisations and individuals with whom they engage in their daily lives (e.g. teachers being upskilled). But there are many meaningful ways in which the public can be engaged in capacity building impacts: through participating in training, or through a sustained programme of involvement. In the process, we have seen public engagement with research:

- Contributing to a society in which individuals are encouraged to fulfil their potential, and professionals strive to deliver better work that delivers public benefit;
- Helping individuals and communities to realise their potential; addressing inequality; increasing participation in civil society;
- Encouraging professionals in every sector to be more reflective and to take account of public views, attitudes and knowledge;
- Building stronger and more resilient networks and communities.

The craft of public engagement

Our review has also revealed an extensive array of approaches to realising these benefits. Public Engagement is woven across the collection of case studies. Nearly half feature some reference to engagement with the public - from a throw away line referring to the dissemination of the findings, to a profound animation of the research from conception through to active public involvement in exploiting the outputs.

At its best, public engagement is delivering well planned, meaningful and responsive encounters which are:

- Embedded in a strategic approach across the stakeholder base;
- Based upon a deep awareness of the significance of the research to its various audiences;
- With a coherent and expert approach to building collaboration across disciplines, professions and publics.

We have identified three stylised storylines which we believe capture the promise of public engagement with research. They reveal what is possible and what is being achieved – but also focus attention on where there is still considerable scope for improvement in how, collectively, we plan for, deliver and evaluate the impact of our work. They set us the challenge of improving our professionalism and craft to ensure we are delivering and leading public engagement well.

In particular, there are significant opportunities to:

- Develop greater clarity about the different purposes that can animate our public engagement;
- Build a deeper understanding of why and how different publics engage with research;
- Draw on a more extensive repertoire of techniques and methods to improve the ‘craft’ of engagement;
- Strengthen the quality of partnerships and collaborations that support our efforts at engagement;
- Develop shared frameworks to support intelligent evaluation, and a more precise and explicit language to describe the value generated by public engagement;
- Be more modest and considered about the impacts we claim – and more precise about the areas where we have made a contribution.

We look forward to continuing the conversation on all of these fronts.

Annexes

More information about the REF submission requirements

1. The REF
panels and units
of assessment



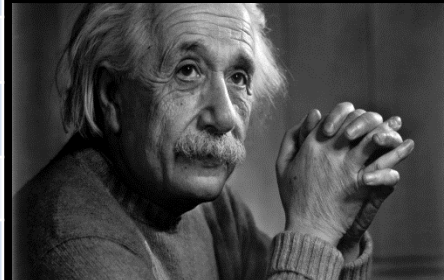
MAIN PANEL A	
1	Clinical Medicine
2	Public Health, Health Services and Primary Care
3	Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy
4	Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
5	Biological Sciences
6	Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science

MAIN PANEL C	
16	Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
17	Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology
18	Economics and Econometrics
19	Business and Management Studies
20	Law
21	Politics and International Studies
22	Social Work and Social Policy
23	Sociology
24	Anthropology and Development Studies
25	Education
26	Sports-Related Studies



MAIN PANEL B	
7	Earth Systems and Environmental Sciences
8	Chemistry
9	Physics
10	Mathematical Sciences
11	Computer Science and Informatics
12	Aeronautical [] Engineering
13	Electrical Engineering, Metallurgy and Materials
14	Civil and Construction Engineering
15	General Engineering

MAIN PANEL D	
27	Area Studies
28	Modern Languages
29	English Language and Literature
30	History
31	Classics
32	Philosophy
33	Theology and Religious Studies
34	Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory
35	Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
36	Communication, Cultural and Media Studies



2. The Impact Case Study Template

The template required the following information:

- Title of case study
- Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words), a brief statement of what impact is being covered by the case study
- Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words), the key research insights or findings that underpinned the impact, and details of what research was undertaken, when and by whom
- References to the research (indicative maximum six references), references to key outputs from the research described in the previous section, and evidence about the quality of the research
- Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words) including the way in which the submitting unit's research contributed to the impact or benefit, and the nature and extent of the impact or benefit
- Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum 10 references).

REF guidance suggested authors should provide a narrative, with supporting evidence, to explain how the research underpinned (made a distinct and material contribution to) the impact and the nature and extent of the impact. Case study authors were advised to provide a clear explanation of the process or means through which the research led to, underpinned or made a contribution to the impact (for example, how it was disseminated, how it came to influence users or beneficiaries, or how it came to be exploited, taken up or applied). Where the submitted unit's research was part of a wider body of research that contributed to the impact (for example, where there had been research collaboration with other institutions), authors were advised to specify the particular contribution of the submitted unit's research and to acknowledge other key research contributions.

Authors were also asked to provide:

- Details of the beneficiaries – who or what community, constituency or organisation has benefited, been affected or impacted on
- Details of the nature of the impact – how they have benefited, been affected or impacted on
- Evidence or indicators of the extent of the impact described, as appropriate to the case being made
- Dates of when these impacts occurred.

The outcomes of the REF impact assessment was an impact sub-profile for each submission, published in December 2014. The impact sub-profile shows the proportion of the submission at each starred level (1* to 4* and 'Unclassified'). Case studies were assessed against the broad generic criteria of reach and significance of the impact or benefit.

3. The Impact Template

Impact template (REF3a)

Institution:
Unit of assessment:
a. Context
b. Approach to impact
c. Strategy and plans
d. Relationship to case studies

From REF 02.2011: Assessment framework and guidance on submissions

Submissions must include a completed impact template, describing the submitted unit's approach during the assessment period (1 January 2008 to 31 July 2013) **to supporting and enabling impact from research** conducted within the unit. This information is intended to enable a **more holistic and contextualised assessment** of impact than would be possible from case studies alone, through the provision of:

- **context** for the individual case studies (though panels will recognise that case studies are underpinned by research over a timeframe that is longer than the assessment period, and that individual case studies may therefore not relate directly to the approach set out in the impact template)
- **additional information** about a wider range of activity within the submitted unit and its capacity for impact, than may be captured in the case studies.

150. The inclusion of the impact template also provides a mechanism for the assessment to take account of particular circumstances of a unit that may have constrained its selection of case studies (for example where it is a new department, or where the focus of its research may have limited opportunities for application).

The impact template will seek information on each of the following:

- **context**
- **the unit's approach to impact during the period 2008-2013**
- **strategy and plans for supporting impact**
- **the relationship between the unit's approach to impact and the submitted case studies**

152. The impact template recognises that the submitted unit **may not have had a specific strategy for impact in place during the REF assessment period**, and therefore enables submissions to describe their approach to impact during the assessment period as well as their development of a strategy and plans for the future.

154. The completed impact template should:

- a. Focus primarily on the approach taken by the submitted unit to achieving impact from its research – not the approach of the HEI as a whole. However, part of the submitted unit's approach could include a statement of how it has made use of institutional resources and infrastructure, and aligned with a wider HEI strategy.
- b. Not repeat detailed evidence that is included in case studies, though the completed impact template could refer to submitted case studies.
- c. Include evidence and specific details or examples of the submitted unit's approach, rather than broad general statements.

4. References

REF publications, guidance and data

REF (2011a). Research Excellence Framework 2014. Decisions for assessing research impact
http://www.ref.ac.uk/media/ref/content/pub/decisionsonassessingresearchimpact/01_11.pdf

REF (2011b). Research Excellence Framework 2014. Assessment framework and guidance on submissions. July 2011.
<http://www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02/>

REF Impact Case Study database
<http://impact.ref.ac.uk/CaseStudies/>

The Stern Review: Building on Success and Learning from Experience An Independent Review of the Research Excellence Framework (2016)
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/541338/ind-16-9-ref-stern-review.pdf

Understanding impact and value

ESRC – Impact toolkit
<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/impact-toolkit/what-is-impact/>

Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project, Geoffrey Crossick & Patrycja Kaszynska
<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/publications/cultural-value-project-final-report/>

NCCPE Publications

NCCPE Discussion Paper: Assessing impacts arising from public engagement with research (2012)
https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/impacts_arising_from_public_engagement_discussion_paper_0.pdf

NCCPE After the REF - Taking Stock (2014)
www.publicengagement.ac.uk/sites/default/files/publication/nccpe_after_the_ref_write_up_final.pdf

NCCPE EDGE tool
<https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support-it/self-assess-with-edge-tool>

The Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/scisoc/concordatforengagingthepublicwithresearch-pdf/>

The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) is internationally recognised for its work supporting and inspiring universities to engage with the public. We work to change perspectives, promote innovation, and nurture and celebrate excellence. We also champion meaningful engagement that makes a real and valued difference to people's lives.

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