

AccessEd and Commonwealth Scholarship Commission Leaders in Sustainable Development Programme

Workshop: Preparing for Social Impact: Strategy Planning

Overarching workshop theme:

This training session will assist you in planning for true success in your research and beyond. You'll learn about social impact of research in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and logic models. You'll practice backwards planning for success in your research. After attending this workshop, you'll understand what social impact looks like practically in the context of your own research.

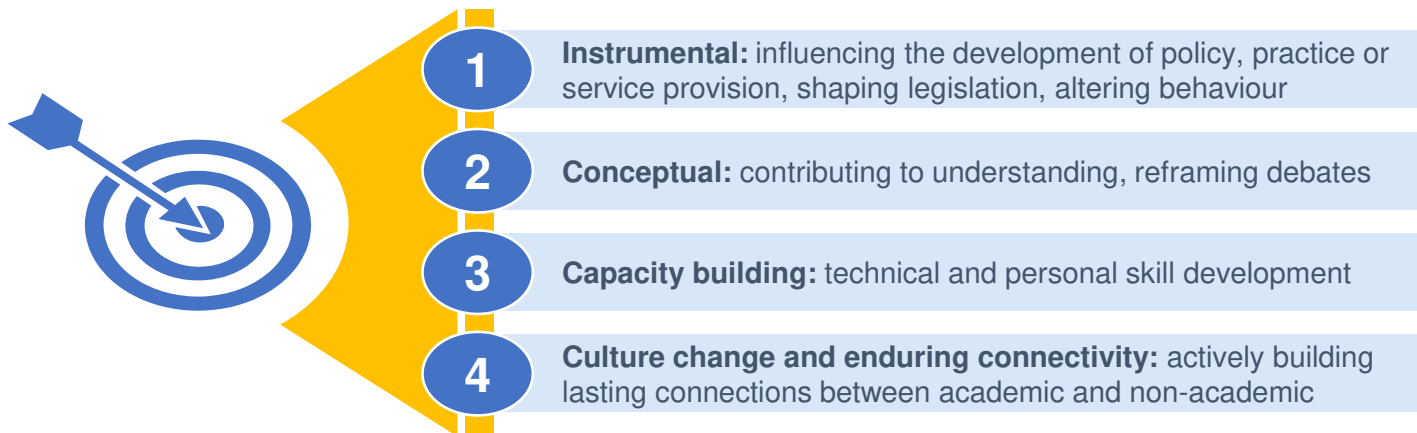
These sub-themes will be discussed during the training session:

- How can you link the social impact of your research to the Sustainable Development Goals?
- How do you formulate an impact statement as it relates to your research?
- How can backwards planning help you identify activities that you need to invest time in during the completion of your degree?
- What is the difference between research inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact?
- How can logic models help you to map the social impact of your research?

Session pre-work

As pre-work, we ask Scholars to do two short activities:

- 1) Read the pre-reading *on the next page* onwards.
- 2) We'll be discussing different types of impact you are likely to have as part of your degree. These are as follows:



Now, think about your own research and populate the diagram below. How do you think your degree might create instrumental, conceptual, capacity building, or culture change impact? We will discuss this further during training.

- 1 Instrumental: ??**
- 2 Conceptual: ??**
- 3 Capacity building: ??**
- 4 Culture change and enduring connectivity: ??**

Pre-reading

Read the follow article related to impact from research degrees.

Over the last five years, the London School of Economics (LSE) spoke to hundreds of researchers about their practices and needs in relation to dissemination and impact. As you'd expect, there is a wide range in terms of people's awareness and knowledge. Even where there has been a strong focus on impact and some excellent training is available, many academics remain unfamiliar with impact-related concepts and terminology.

Findings so far showed that:

- 51% of participants claim not to have received training to help them increase the impact of their research, while 44% stated they had.
- Only 33% of participants start thinking about how to maximise the impact of their research prior to the project beginning. 18% started to think about impact during their research project; 17% whilst preparing to disseminate outputs; 23% post-publication; and 9% hadn't thought about the impact of their work at all!
- 48% are focused on "conceptual impact" (building evidence, knowledge, and awareness). Only 26% are focused on "instrumental impact" (changing policy, behaviour, or practice); and 23% are focused on "capacity building" (building skills, expertise, and jobs).
- Academic networks (ResearchGate and Academia.edu, for example) are most popular for increasing awareness of research. This was closely followed by the use of identity systems such as ORCID, Scopus ID, and ResearcherID, email, and social media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn). The use of press releases to increase awareness of published work was the least popular channel.
- Researchers in the medicine and medical sciences fields scored most highly, closely followed by those in the electrical engineering and chemistry fields. Some of the subject fields featuring less in the top-scorer ranking are sociology, civil engineering and construction, and tourism, hospitality and events.

With 6,000 participants so far, from all over the world – largely in Italy, United States, United Kingdom and India – data suggests that the more widely the “impact agenda” is adopted, the greater the gap that emerges in terms of planning and managing impact, rather than simply trying to measure it.

For us, this means we can help people plan and manage communications around their project from a much earlier stage (rather than focusing on the post-publication phase, as is so often done).