



Research Impact Checklist for Bids

This checklist provides a structured set of prompts to support the strengthening of non-academic impact elements of research bids. It is intended for use by applicants, Engagement and Impact Leads, Heads of Research and reviewers during the process of preparing and reviewing grant proposals, focusing on the demonstrable contribution that their research makes beyond academia, to society, policy, practice, the economy and communities.

Area	Reflection Prompts
Purpose & Positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the intended change, for whom, and why now? • Is the rationale for impact clear and credible? • Is the ambition proportionate to the scale of the research? • What types of impact are expected? Is the proposed impact aligned with funders' priorities and policy landscape?
Stakeholders & Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are key audiences and users identified and involved? • Is a stakeholder map or matrix used? • Are relationships with stakeholders reciprocal, with shared goals? Are they involved in shaping the research design, methods, impact plans or outputs, individually or as part of an advisory group as appropriate? • Is equity, diversity and accessibility considered? • Is the project relevant to the needs of different stakeholder groups or communities?
Planning & Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are routes to influence clearly mapped? • Are activities tailored to audiences? • Is a logic model or alternative approach used? • Is the plan flexible and adaptive including contingencies to manage risks or unexpected changes?
Resources & Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the budget and timeline sufficient for the required engagement, and the timeline for the impact made clear? • Are applicants and delivery partners' roles and responsibilities clear? Are these costed appropriately? • Are ethical risks acknowledged and addressed? • Is UCL support (e.g. Impact managers, KE, policy, public engagement teams) being used effectively?
Legacy & Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will findings influence lasting systems (e.g. policy, practice, education)? • Are tools or skills left behind for communities to use independently? • Is long-term capacity built among stakeholders? • Are outputs scalable, adaptable, or open access? • Are future funding routes or sustainability plans identified? • Are there realistic plans to monitor, evaluate and demonstrate outcomes of the engagement and impact activities at different stages of the project?

Glossary and Further Resources

(in order of appearance in the checklist)

Research Impact - "the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy" (ESRC).

→ [ESRC definition and resources](#)

Public Engagement - "the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit (...) Public engagement with research is actively involving the public in research activity of the institution " (NCCPE).

→ [NCCPE definition](#) and [resources](#)

Types of Impact

ESRC outlines types of impact including conceptual, instrumental and capacity building: "The impact of research can include:

- instrumental impact – influencing the development of policy, practice or services, shaping legislation and changing behaviour
- conceptual impact – contributing to the understanding of policy issues and reframing debates
- capacity building through technical and personal skill development".

→ [ESRC impact types](#)

Stakeholder Map - a visual tool that identifies individuals or groups with an interest in or influence on a project.

→ [Civil service stakeholder mapping guide and blank template](#)

Logic Model

A logic model illustrates the sequence from inputs to outputs and intended outcomes, helping to clarify assumptions and test strategy.

→ [NCCPE logic model guide](#)

Research Sustainability

Refers to the ability to maintain project benefits, relationships, or resources beyond the initial funding period.

→ [Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice](#)