SOLVING THE IMPACT CHALLENGE: MAKING IMPACT WORK FOR A UNIVERSITY

LAURA TUCKER (FEDORCIOW) VERTIGO VENTURES
BACKGROUND

• Founded in 2009 and has been working with leading research organisations globally to help them identify, capture and report the impact of their work

• VV provides a range of services such as impact training and workshops, consultancy services, and its unique proprietary software VV-Impact Tracker

• VV has delivered impact training/consultancy to 40+ research organisations

• VV-Impact Tracker released in 2014 and is being used by approx. 30 universities around UK, Australia and Hong Kong, with 4000+ academic users. It has proved very popular among academics and universities for development/management of Impact Case Studies in particular.

VV is currently:
• Training 150+ academics/month (Pro VCs, Research Managers, Associate Deans, Impact Officers)
• On-boarding universities at the rate of approximately 2 universities / month
• Delivering own content at VV hosted events
• Running an ongoing webinar program for UK/Australia/HK based organizations
• Distributing weekly Impact newsletter to 2,000+ subscribers
WHAT IS IMPACT?
BRIEF BACKGROUND – WHAT IS IMPACT?

“Impact is the **positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention**, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended”

- Used by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) & UK Department for International Development (DFID)

“Impact is the **effect research has beyond academia** and consists of benefits to one or more areas of the **economy, society, culture, public policy and services, health, production, environment, international development, public understanding, or, quality of life**, whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally”

- UK’s 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF)
What is impact measurement?

- What difference has been made to:
  - Impact measurement = performance measurement
  - NOT Alt metrics or bibliometrics, citations etc
UN Sustainable Development Goals - Impact!

1. No Poverty
2. No Hunger
3. Good Health
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Modern Energy
8. Good Jobs and Economic Growth
9. Innovation and Infrastructure
10. Reduced Inequalities
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
12. Responsible Consumption
13. Protect the Planet
14. Life Below Water
15. Life Above Water
16. Peace and Justice

IMPACT PRACTICE IS GROWING INTERNATIONALLY & ACROSS SECTORS
**WHY IMPACT IS IMPORTANT TO THE UNIVERSITY SECTOR**

- Impact is important to funders
- Real time monitoring essential
- Focus on amplifying impact
- Impact case study preparation
Why funders measure impact?

Accountability – to promote responsible management of research impact

Advocacy - To demonstrate the benefits of research to government and society

Allocation – To support the development of effective investments strategies

Analysis - To answer question about ‘what works’ and make improvements based on data

Johnathan Grant and Alex Pollitt, representing Rand and ISRIA on why funders measure impact, these key points were highlighted.
LOGIC MODEL FOR IMPACT

4* Check List

✓ Headline impact identified in the summary
✓ Clear need/problem statement identified
✓ Clear structure provided
✓ Pathway to impact understood
✓ Data included (where possible, sensible and relevant)
✓ Specific terms used (e.g. locations, stakeholder names)
✓ Impact included (not just activities)
✓ Appropriate evidence referenced clearly
✓ Context easily understood
✓ Impact has already happened (will happen in time period)
✓ ‘Change’ is evident – use of baseline data included
✓ Is a ‘deep dive’ example into a ‘reach’ stat useful to demonstrate significance?
EMBEDDING IMPACT
WHAT’S IN IT FOR ACADEMICS?

• Project funding

• Attracting collaborators

• Personal Development Reviews
EMBEDDING IMPACT – 2 SIDES TO THE COIN

If we can reduce the reporting burden, it allows the focus to be on affecting behaviour change and amplify impact.
## Barriers and Facilitators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time constraints and workload</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to/familiarity with research management system</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited understanding of impact / benefits of the system</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>System use difficulties</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Attribution or tracking of impact</td>
<td>5</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training and support</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raising awareness of impact and the system</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edit the content and navigation of the system</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Link systems and embed processes across university</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilise / produce reports from system (including REF)</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve ease of access</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase relevance of impact to academics</td>
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**Top barrier:** Time and workload

**Top facilitator:** Training and support

IMPACT IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT LIFECYCLE

1. Identify potential impact

2. Plan impact activities and set up evidence capture

3. Carry out impact activities

4. Capture impact evidence

5. Impact statement to funding organisation and project stakeholders

6. Use impact reports as evidence to scale the reach of the project

Funding opportunity

Write funding grant

Grant approval

Deliver project

Report results

Collecting Research Impact Evidence
http://www.vertigoventures.com/research-impact-evidence/
## EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE BY IMPACT TYPE

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<tr>
<th>Impact Type</th>
<th>Example Impact Evidence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Health and wellbeing</td>
<td>• Reports on changes in Quality Of Life Years (QOLYs).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Statistics reflecting changes to the number of admissions, presentations at hospital facilities over time.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Patient surveys.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Testimonials from clinical staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial and economic</td>
<td>• Company reports, e.g. annual reports.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Company websites.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Licence agreements.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Cost savings reports over time.</td>
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<td>• National government statistics showing changes over time.</td>
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<td>Public policy</td>
<td>• Policy documentation.</td>
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<td>• Regulation and standards documents.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Public meeting minutes.</td>
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<td>• Social media ‘shares’ over time.</td>
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<td>• Legal documentation.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• International non-governmental organisation policy briefings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Societal and cultural</td>
<td>• Audience surveys.</td>
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<td>• Testimonials from influential cultural figures.</td>
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<td>• Media coverage statistics such as readership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>• Government reports.</td>
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<td>• Charity reports.</td>
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<td>• Independent reports or reviews on improved functionality of machines.</td>
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Developing an impact literate culture

VISIONING: LINKING IMPACT TO ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY

What does impact mean to the organisation?

Mission
The core purpose of the University of Greenwich reflects our rich heritage and exciting future as a higher education institution. Our mission is:

To inspire society through the discovery, application and dissemination of knowledge.

We aim to achieve this through high-quality education, research and enterprise activities. Success is demonstrated by significant cultural, economic, environmental and social contributions at local, national and international scales.

Vision
The university's three main campuses are all within London's zone of economic, cultural and social influence, and our impact extends throughout the South East and beyond.

Today, we are a well-respected institution and compare favourably with our peers in the nation's capital; nonetheless, we believe that we can achieve more.

Our vision is:
By 2017, we will have an enhanced reputation as a leading London university.

Success in implementing this plan will lead to the university being positioned within the Top 50 universities in the country and the Top 10 in London.

The means to realise this vision is encapsulated in four strategic objectives which we amplify below:

- Learning and teaching
- Research and enterprise
- Community and experiences
- Services and infrastructure.

Although presented here as separate goals, each with individual projects and performance indicators, these objectives have been designed to be interlocking and mutually reinforcing. Where topics cross objectives, we have chosen not to duplicate discussion.
THANK YOU

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