

BBSRC POLICY ON MAXIMISING THE IMPACT OF RESEARCH

BBSRC POSITION

BBSRC is committed to identifying, understanding, enabling and publicising the impact of bioscience research in the UK and more widely as part of its support to the UK bioscience community. BBSRC takes the view that the impact of research is very broad, and encompasses economic, social and wider impact. Impact can be achieved by all excellent research in some time frame, and awareness and understanding of impact is the responsibility of all those involved in bioscience research in the UK, whether as researchers, funders, policy makers or research users.

PRINCIPLES

Underlying the BBSRC support and delivery of impact are a number of principles:

1. All excellent research can achieve impact – making a constructive difference– in some way and at some time, that will ultimately benefit society,
2. BBSRC recognises that the full breadth and scale of potential impact from excellent research is increasingly realised by many involved in the research base, but also acknowledges that there is more to be done,
3. Research focused on application, or addressing strategic needs, is as valuable, challenging and important as fundamental research and should be recognised as such,
4. Impact is much broader than the direct and well understood impact on the economy. It includes scientific advancement, public good, influence on policy, public understanding and enthusiasm for science, and much more,
5. Impact may be achieved in a short period of time, but it commonly takes many years for the major impacts of research to be appreciated and evaluated¹,
6. Impact is not only achieved through the research of individuals, but is frequently achieved by groups and wider teams, working across disciplines and sectors, both publicly and privately funded,
7. Researchers who deliver significant impact should be recognised and rewarded accordingly, by their institution and the scientific community,
8. BBSRC seeks to capture and understand the widest outputs, outcomes and impact of bioscience research funding in the UK,
9. BBSRC intends that everyone involved in supporting or undertaking bioscience research should be aware of and involved in the understanding, delivery, capture and sharing of bioscience impacts, and
10. BBSRC and its employees are integral to the process of maximising the impact of bioscience research in the UK.

¹ † *Medical Research: What's it worth? Estimating the economic benefits from medical research in the UK.* November 2008.

MECHANISMS BY WHICH BBSRC WILL SEEK TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT OF RESEARCH

BBSRC has a number of mechanisms through which it creates, encourages, supports and helps to deliver economic, social and wider impact:

- Supporting [excellent research in the science base](#)
- [Improving public policy and services](#)
- The [BBSRC Case Studies Programme](#)
- Working with UK industry: for full detail please go to the [BBSRC Business Interaction Strategy](#)
- Delivering highly skilled people for research in the wider economy. For full detail please go to the following links:
 - [BBSRC Studentships](#)
 - [BBSRC Fellowships](#)
- Supporting Knowledge Exchange and Translation. for full detail, please go to the [Knowledge Exchange & Commercialisation Policy](#)
- [Supporting and developing Research and Innovation campuses](#), and innovation more widely in the UK
- BBSRC culture change competitions, such as [Innovator of the Year](#), [Excellence with Impact](#) Public Engagement and dialogue, see: www.bbsrc.ac.uk/engagement/

BBSRC will seek to support, maximise and demonstrate the impact of bioscience research in all these areas through current and future funding schemes and partnerships and through the capture, management, sharing, interpretation and dissemination of the outcomes of bioscience research.

BBSRCs management of impact is outlined in the [BBSRC Strategic Plan](#) and the [BBSRC Delivery Plan](#).

BBSRC commits to the cross council agreement outlined and managed by [RCUK](#), this also includes [Pathways to Impact](#).

In order to support and maximise the impact of bioscience in the UK, BBSRC will:

1. Use its full range of funding mechanisms to support internationally competitive, excellent research and in particular support world class bioscience of strategic importance to the UK, where the BBSRC can make a unique contribution,
2. Work with grant holders to ensure they produce excellent Pathways to Impact, thus encouraging all involved to consider the potential impact of an area of research,
3. Support researchers in exploring and understanding the potential impact of their research,
4. Support and develop the skill base of UK bioscience,
5. Develop partnerships with industry, policy makers and other users of bioscience research,
6. Work with other funders of research, including Research Councils', the Technology Strategy Board and other Government Departments to explore and support the impact of research,
7. Develop mechanisms that recognise and support the importance of impact across the higher education and research institutes, and reward its achievement,
8. Use the terms and conditions of award of grants to support and reinforce the BBSRC policy on impact,
9. Develop a culture that recognises and rewards the importance of impact for all BBSRC-funded researchers,
10. Develop methods and approaches for capturing, managing and sharing the outputs, outcomes and impact from research,
11. Develop methods and, where appropriate, metrics for interpreting the outputs and outcomes of research so as to describe the economic, social and wider impacts of bioscience research in the UK,
12. Disseminate these impacts (and their supporting outputs and outcomes) in appropriate ways including through the annual Impact Statement, regular web material, specific events and other communication routes as appropriate.

INTERNAL MECHANISMS BY WHICH BBSRC WILL SEEK TO MAXIMISE IMPACT

Impact Team

This office team has oversight of the BBSRC vision and strategy for Impact. It will ensure that all aspects of the Impact vision for BBSRC are identified and a strategy for their delivery is in place. It will also be responsible for overseeing the delivery of the impact strategy throughout the business and other internal and external mechanisms.

Evaluation Programme

BBSRC is committed to the effective evaluation of the research and training it funds, as part of its strategy for evidence-based decision making. Evaluation plays a central role in:

- enabling BBSRC to account to government, the public, the scientific community and other stakeholders
- justifying BBSRC funding allocation and contributing to the evidence that all Councils are required to submit to BIS
- informing internal funding decisions, providing evidence of progress and achievement, and facilitating the development of a strategic overview for future funding decisions
- helping BBSRC to improve its policy and practice,

BBSRC's [Evaluation Framework](#) outlines the Council's approach to evaluation and the methodology used (www.bbsrc.ac.uk/researchevaluation).

Case Studies Programme

BBSRC is committed to supporting the Case Studies Programme, thus providing a substantial body of robust evidence for the triennial and Comprehensive Spending Reviews.

BBSRC Impact Website

A set of pages dedicated to Impact; allowing the general public, BIS and Policy Makers direct access to BBSRC Impacts stories: www.bbsrc.ac.uk/impact

BBSRC Impact Portal

The Impact Portal provides an internal, office wide application for the visualisation, capture, management, assessment and dissemination of impact data.

Research Outcomes System (ROS)

ROS is an online, web-based system which allows Users to provide information about research outcomes to the Research Councils. It can be used by Research Council grant holders and by HEI research offices to input research outcomes information on behalf of grant holders and/or access the outcomes information of grant holders in their institution. The Research Councils will use the information in ROS to inform their analysis of research investments.

Within BBSRC, the outcomes received via ROS will be integrated with the BBSRC Impact Portal; thus forming a mature 'Impact Network' for BBSRC.

Cross Council Working

BBSRC will work closely with its fellow Research Councils to ensure the various impact strategies are united. This occurs via various methods such as the Impact Group and the 'Gateway to Research' Project.

APPENDIX 1: DEFINITION OF IMPACT

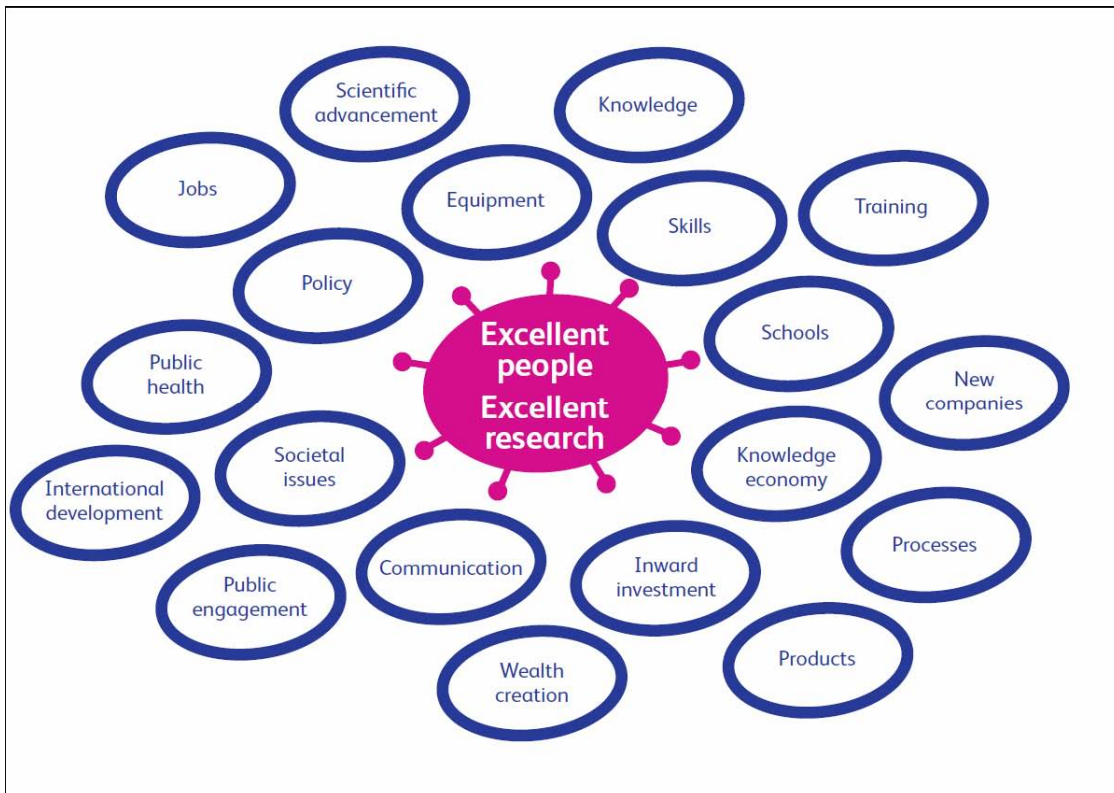
The impact of research, whether bioscience or any other field, is essentially the change for the good achieved, ultimately for society, in any timescale as a consequence of the outcomes of that research. The UK Research Councils have agreed the following definition of Economic Impact that more formally encapsulates this understanding:

RCUK Definition:

The Research Councils define impact as the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy. This definition accords with the Royal Charters of the Councils and with HM Treasury guidance on the appraisal of economic impact. Impact embraces all the extremely diverse ways in which research-related knowledge and skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations by:

- fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom,
- increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy, and
- enhancing quality of life, health and creative output.

In addition, BBSRC recognises that the impact of excellent research is extremely broad, and is experienced in as diverse areas as industry, schools, government, public interest, economic development and international relations. It can be represented as shown in the figure below.



APPENDIX 2: AREAS WHERE BBSRC WILL SEEK TO DELIVER IMPACT

BBSRC has a number of mechanisms through which it will create, encourage, support and deliver economic, social and wider impact. These are set out in the annual Impact Reports, which detail progress in all areas:

<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/news/planning/bbsrc-delivery-plan/>