Planning Y3 work in WG2

WG2 meeting Friday 9th, 11.00

Paul Benneworth, Julia Olmos-Peñuela, Reetta Muhonen

Introduction to this session:2 activities for Y3
Repetition of Poznan approach (Y1 fiche)

- WG Meeting July 2018 – finalising a reporting framework (fiche) for Local Policy Contexts for impact generation

→STSM 2-3-1: "Understanding diversity of European Impact Contexts"

→ *Observe the structural requirements and conditions favouring the flowing of SSH knowledge towards society at large.*

- Collaboration with SIG ECI on mapping barriers to impact generation amongst ECI

→STSM 2-3-2: "Societal impact and career development of early stage researchers".

→ *Observe national policies to stimulate cooperation between the research sector and the socio-economic or NGO partners*

→*Propose measures to better value SSH.*

Preamble to the two group discussions

- Think-tank format of TS – feedback from ESRs

- Disquiet with 'unfairness' (NONLUK-centric) of Impact

- Assumes demanding local systems: knowledge → impact

- What about the **Non-Paradigmatic Impact Contexts**?
  - Underfunded research systems?
  - Uninterested policy-makers?
  - Hostile societal partners?
  - Losers from social change?

Introduction to this session:2 activities for Y3

- *WG Meeting July 2018 – finalising a reporting framework (fiche) for Local Policy Contexts for impact generation*

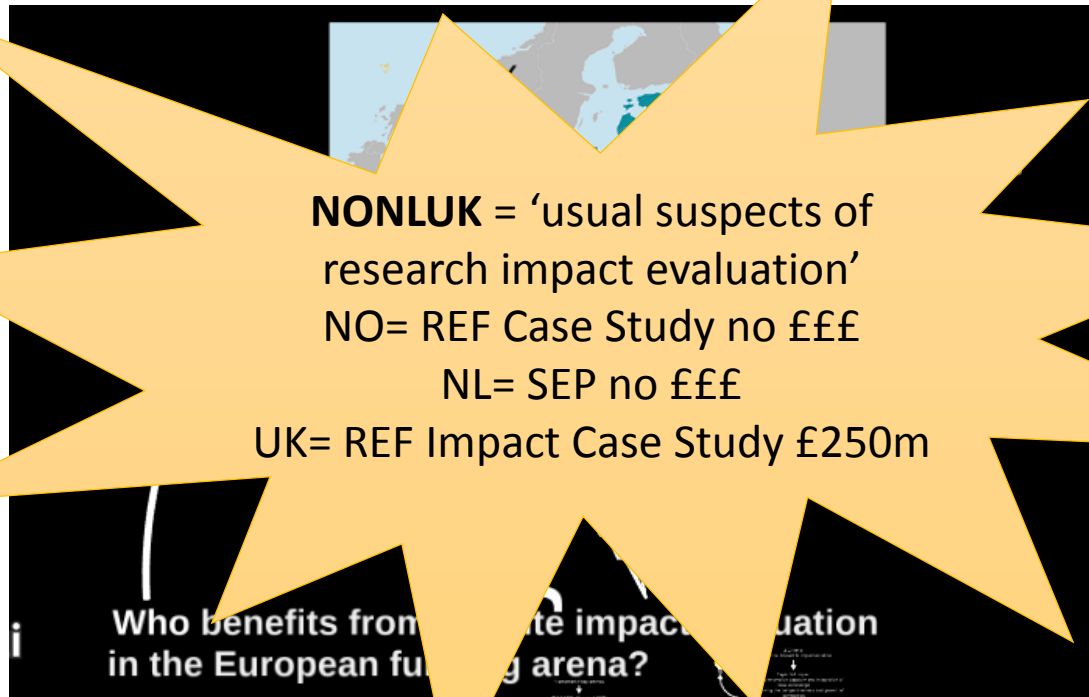→ "Understanding the dimensions of Local Contexts for Impact Generations"

→ **Long list of key issues that might affect flow of SSH into society in different European contexts**

- *WG Meeting July 2018 - Collaboration with SIG ECI on mapping barriers to impact generation amongst ECI*

→"Mapping key challenges raised by Impact requirements for ESRs"

→**Long list of challenges facing ESRs as basis for interviews/ probes to existing SIG work**

Part I:"Understanding the dimensions of Local Contexts for Impact Generations"

NONLUK = 'usual suspects of research impact evaluation'
NO= REF Case Study no £££
NL= SEP no £££
UK= REF Impact Case Study £250m

Who benefits from ~~~te impact~~~uation in the European fu~~~g~~~ arena?

Source: De Jong (2018)

- What do LPCs have to do to raise themselves up to the level of HPCs?

- How does the Matthew Effect create a lock-in in LPC/HPC split?

- How far should LPCs mimic HPCs given this lock-in?

- How far should LPCs adopt NONLUK methodologies for stimulating & evaluating SSH impact?

Looking to the polar extremes of Impact Generating Contexts

- Stereotypical HPC Impact Generating Context
  - Properly funded research projects
  - Impact a requirement for research
  - Demanding local partners who give value-added feedback
  - Skilled local users with own resources
  - Respect for impact generation via 'intellectual role'
  - Acknowledgement by institutions of importance of impact

- Stereotypical LPC Impact Generating Context
  - δ Research funding via block grant
  - Impact not addressed by funders
  - Local partners who want definite answers to banal questions
  - Civil society organisations conflict with research authority figures
  - Disdain for academics infecting national body w 'foreign influence'
  - Naïve/ simplistic publish-or-perish/ tenure track approaches

European Platform for Impact Context (EPIC)

- Plan for Y3 is to generate understandings of different (especially **non-paradigmatic**) impact contexts
  - Avoid judgementalism and blame for LPCs for not being like HPCs
  - Acknowledge substantial SSH impact creation in 'LPCs'
  - Provide detailed understanding of variation in potentials for impact across Europe
  - **Avoid thin policy borrowing and a "New Silicon Valley" problems**

- Meeting to be held at end of Y3
  - Prepare fiche (summer 2018)
  - Analyse fiche (Winter 2018)
  - Prepare working report (Spring 2019)
  - Feedback from WG2 at Spring 2019 meeting
  - *Potential Platform Event for Policymakers in Non-Paradigmatic Impact Contexts in Western Balkans Spring 2019.*

What are the key dimensions that define local impact contexts (as basis for fiche draft?)

- A local impact context:
  - The systemic outcome of an interplay of different actors,
  - with different orientations to SSH research,
  - pursuing their own goals,
  - which give signals to **sincerely engaging SSH researchers**
  - making impact creation more or less 'easy'

- Write down variables/ issues/ tensions
- that you think might determine/ shape/ influence/ moderate
- what kind of societal response a **sincerely engaging (SSH) researcher** might receive

First **individually**

Then in **small groups (rapporteur)**

Finally **in plenary**

What are the key dimensions that define local impact contexts (as basis for fiche draft?)

1. A social structure (educated level) where society asks sophisticated questions of the kinds that SSH can answer. (*NL: National Science Agenda*)
2. Having tools that are immediately applicable e.g. SIA
3. Enthusiastic actors who need and benefit from the tools
4. Local actors who can make a difference with the knowledge
5. The direction of travel of the science system and the sophistication of policy-makers

6. Researchers do not always do research on their own local context
7. The availability of physical space to engage with citizens
8. Policy-makers may be antipathetic to particular kinds of research (e.g. minority research)
9. Policy-makers want facts and figures, not ambiguous academic discourse
10. The alignment of science with the political approach of the day

What are the key dimensions that define local impact contexts (as basis for fiche draft?)

1. Politics and history: determines conditions of relationship of research and society

2. SSH communicate in native language, so place of native language in evaluation

3. The lacuna for a lot of (high-level) science policy (RRI, OS, Citizen Science) and natural language

4. Are local policy documents informed by research and academics or refer to research/ see research as part of solution (Health)?

5. In living laboratories, they attract smart / sophisticated citizens, and not all citizens are smart and sophisticated

6. Academic incentive systems → publishing

7. Temporary contracts might undermine stakeholder collaboration

8. Real world problems experienced by citizens do not always align with researcher approaches

9. Stakeholders and researchers do not always understand each other and use discourses

10. Researchers might not understand policy processes, so a complicated/ opaque policy process might hinder SSH impact

What are the key dimensions that define local impact contexts (as basis for fiche draft?)

1. Objective knowledge brokers.
2. Three dimensions or actors / mechanisms that involve them
   - Academic/ researcher: publishing in English & high IF journals vs choosing an approach to society
   - Organisational environment: universities reward systems: different profiles: teaching and research, social impact, and reward them differently. Prizes, bonuses, recognition or rewards for stakeholder engagement.
   - Stakeholders : distrust/ distance or lack of awareness of the mechanisms of how science works, communications mechanisms, how academics & stakeholders work; work needs to be exciting
3. Better HR policy to support impact & training for individuals to get outside their comfort zones
4. Access to media, who access and work with, and schemes to link these things; culture of relations with journalists, the mutual trust and respect.

- The topology of the research system; where is the core or the periphery of the system, is it a single place, or is it spread through multiple actors, so you have an underlying network so does that pull you away from your local partners and local interests
- Indirect impact: don't forget that teaching and research are linked, they are education institutions, so the graduates have an effect
- The structure of an economy and the job market determines the fields that are being pulled through, determining signals where people are working and can profit from that, and their relationship to university.
- Power structures that allow voice to the potential users/ beneficiaries of the research & knowledge.

# Part II: "Mapping key challenges raised by Impact requirements for ESRs"

- The challenges of finding complementarity with other 'knowledge worlds' as ESR
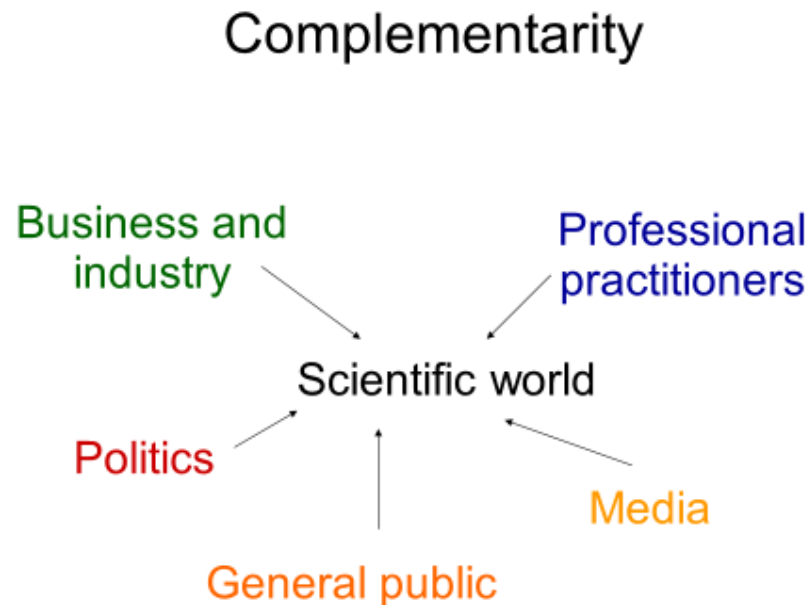
Source: Girkontaite (2018)

- As ESRs learn norms of academic communities, they are confronted with norms and values of other world-views:
  - *What are these tensions?*
  - *How do they manifest themselves?*
  - *How can they be ameliorated?*
  - *For which ESRs does pursuing impact make sense?*
  - *How can more supportive (policy) systems be built?*

"Escaping the ivory tower" exercize Zagreb
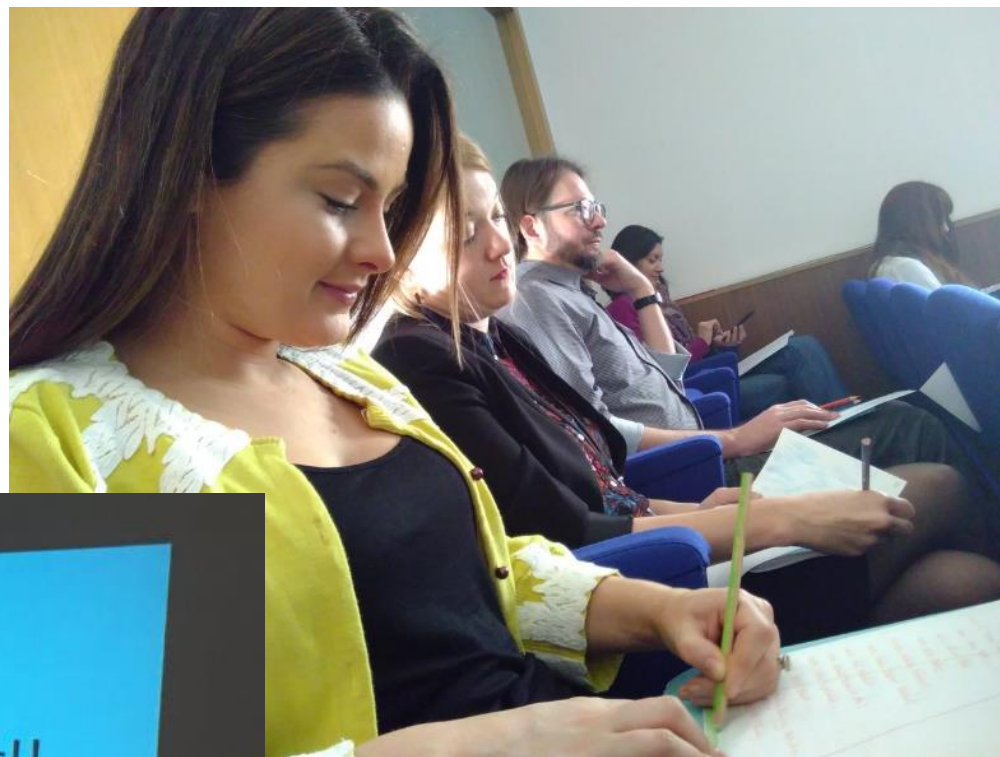
Escape the ivory tower!!

Photo via Kate Maxwell
https://twitter.com/skatemaxwell/status/964422218947084288

Barriers, tensions and issues (1)

- Potential impact – defending methodology in a Ph.D. so thinking through creating an impactful methodology engaging with stakeholders as part of research process
- The issue with social sciences is that it is studying people and so there is that connection with the study subject that can bring good ideas/ energy into the project
- Coupling the impact creation activities into the core knowledge activities (teaching, researching, conferences …); embodying knowledge in own non-academic practice
- It is more like an elevator as people undertake different activities; but people can impose blinkers on themselves from either bottom/top, and remaining unblinkered throughout

- Shapin, S (2012) The Ivory Tower: the history of a figure of speech and its cultural uses. British Journal for the History of Science, 45(1): 1-27.
- There are 'cohorts of collegiality' that we may be within (e.g. science policy/ studies) and that may provide a natural flow to 'impact creation' within ongoing scientific work.
- 'Impact' is things that various people including ourselves find in some way good or having value and we have agency and control over.
- There is a need for a proper research agenda on impact and valuation so it can be better planned, organized and supported, and to deal with the harm reduction.
- The need to mobilise the colleagues who are not so conscious and engaged with impact in order to get this better organization.

Long-list of challenges impact poses ESRs

- Career and reward system disconnected from social impact?
- Fairly independent assessment procedures?
- Personal and organizational & institutional constrains?
- Cultural and national features
- Disdain for creating normal 'everyday' impact & 'questing for heroic extraordinary impact'

- Write down variables/ issues/ tensions
- that you think might determine/ shape/ influence/ moderate
- The effects of attempting to deliver impact by an **Early Stage (SSH) Researcher** might have

First **individually**

Then in **small groups (rapporteur)**

Finally **in plenary**

Long-list of challenges impact poses ESRs

1. Young people are more willing to engage with society (Spanish survey)
2. Impact evaluation and planning are a key issue: the support for that in the funding decisions
3. Do researchers know how to do it? SKILLS
4. Stakeholder engagement a social skill – some things can be learned, others are more personal – toolkits to help address those issues
5. The reward system – not interesting for ESRs to invest in it because not good for career

6. Different disciplines have different cultures – the small languages are not always applicable to citizens
7. Translateability of findings in to
8. Momentum/ serendipity in society – 9/11 and Arabic culture: ca ESRs 'seize the moment' when the opportunity arises
9. Do ESRs have the status to be heard?
10. There is a gender recognition here because of manels, 70% of talking heads are main
11. Juniors do not have access to resources, funding, networks
12. Professors could help junior researchers to get into their networks

Long-list of challenges impact poses ESRs

1. Employment opportunities and labour market for Ph.D.s; the LM might not demand Ph.D.s (or engaged Ph.D.s)

2. Feeling trapped between the two worlds – social and scientific

3. Policy at the institutional/ organisational level for managing the tensions – policy only as good as its implementation- concrete action points

4. Dispersion & displacement – where should you as ESR place your effort?

5. Impact is a long-term issue to create so there are other things more immediately rewarding

6. ESRs are a very diverse group – so Ph.D.s are very different to postdocs and junior teachers, there may be a single large project or collage of projects

7. The role of the supervisor and the networks, so it depends on the personality of the supervisors

Long-list of challenges impact poses ESRs

1. Mindset: 'challenges' may paralyse activity Impact is also an opportunity for ESRs

2. Who are the key players for ESRs to help them better achieve impact – supervisors, peers, → stability in their tasks

3. SKILLS are ESRs being trained for impact (in-)formally? Who is giving them the skills, what are the skills? The socialisation of social impact…

4. New career models, drastic change of academia – proletarianisation of ESR experience, short-term contracts, low income

5. New society models, ESRs should be given the opportunity to know that society needs impact, and private stakeholders have social needs that researchers can fulfi.

6. Media training for early career investigators, some disciplines have more difficulties to communicate with media about their research

7. Gender, and the time issue, and having a family/ care work not so well divided, women are lagging behind in this free time

8. Choosing the supervisor wisely, not necessarily someone v important but someone with the time to invest in the training of these impact skills

9. Different topics can get different support or maybe not get support; gender studies is not welcomed or financed in certain countries – v challenging to do that; challenging to do and then get the impact.

Next steps

- **→ Long list of key issues that might affect flow of SSH into society in different European contexts**
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