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Research impact

A guide to creating, capturing, and evaluating the impact of your research

Guidance, developments, news, and ideas for Taylor & Francis authors

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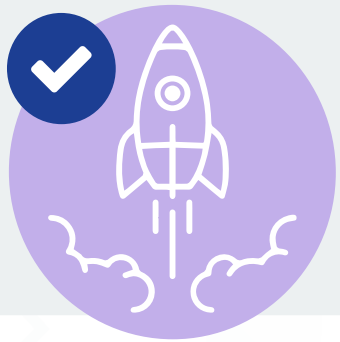
/ INTRODUCTION

Every researcher wants their work to have an impact, whether that's in the world of academia, in society, or both. But creating a real impact with your work can be a challenging and time-consuming task, which can feel difficult to fit into an already demanding academic career.

This guide is designed to help you understand what impact means for you and your work, why it's important, how to achieve it, and how to measure it. We've also included inspiration and ideas to help you get started.

RESEARCH IMPACT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Understand research impact and why it's important
- ☐ Learn how research impact is achieved
- ☐ Discover ways to boost the impact of your research
  - ☐ Engaging with policymakers
  - ☐ Choosing the right journal to publish in
  - ☐ Writing with research impact in mind
- ☐ Share and promote your research
  - ☐ Communications tips for sharing your research
  - ☐ Engaging with the media
  - ☐ Tips for using social media
- ☐ Learn how to measure research impact
  - ☐ Useful metrics for judging the impact of your research



/ WHAT IS RESEARCH IMPACT?

There are many different definitions of research impact. Not all academic organizations and funders agree on what it is. And the type of impact that's possible for a piece of research will vary considerably depending on the discipline.

However, in the broadest sense, impact is about looking at the effects a piece of research has had.

Some key areas of impact include:

Academic

For example advancing and developing understanding, methods, and theory within the field or across disciplines.

Cultural or societal

The impact research can have on people and the places where they live. There are some great examples and case studies of this, on the **UKRI website**.

Policy

The impact of research on policy formulation, for example using research as evidence to influence government decisions.

Environmental

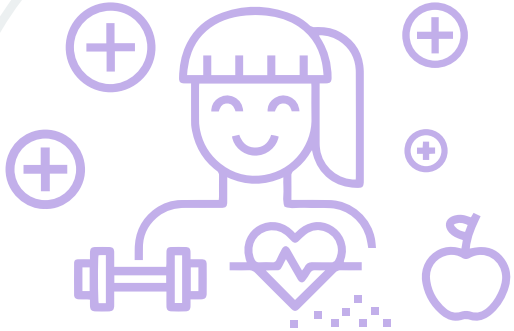
For example, research on climate change or the preservation of endangered species.

Economic

Impacting businesses and economic growth or development.

Health and wellbeing

Such as the development of new drugs or influencing change in medical practice.



Different organizations and funders are interested in different areas of impact. So it's important to check the different definitions of research impact put forward by your institution and potential funders to help you decide which areas of impact are important to you and relevant to your work.

/ WHY IS RESEARCH IMPACT IMPORTANT?

All researchers have a number of competing demands on their time – from the day-to-day running of research projects to busy teaching schedules. So why is it important to also consider and make time for research impact? Let's take a look...

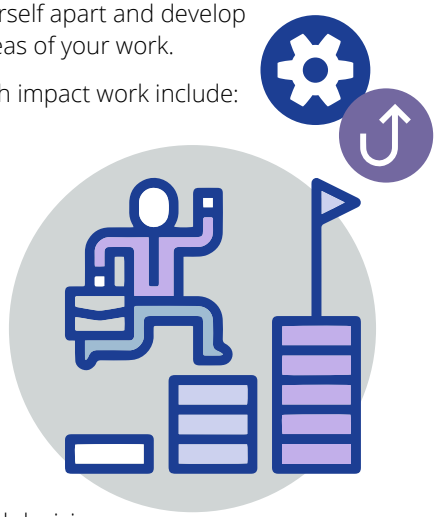
Research impact and your career

There is a demonstrable shift happening in the world of academic research. Both funders and institutions are now placing more emphasis on the impact of research – for both academia and society. And creating an impact with your research is becoming a more recognized form of academic success.

Driving career progression

Researchers who know how to deliver research impact can benefit in a number of ways – from securing funding to building their own academic profile and networks. It can help you set yourself apart and develop skills that can support a number of other areas of your work.

Some examples of skills you can gain through impact work include:



- **Communication skills** – for example, through writing a lay summary of your research, presenting at a conference, running a public engagement activity, or speaking to the media.
- **Project and stakeholder management** – for example, by coordinating a project with a wider network of stakeholders from both within and outside academia.
- **Using quantitative and qualitative information** – to make evidence-based decisions.

Securing funding

Funders strive to ensure that research of the highest quality is carried out and that research can demonstrate a clear positive contribution to society. Being able to demonstrate impact allows them to continue to justify providing funding to research.

For example, government policymakers want to know that they can rely on government-funded research to be high quality and highly relevant. Charitable funders need to be able to show donors how outcomes are being improved as a result of their donations. And institutions such as universities want to prove that they are the best, to attract more students, more researchers, and more donations.

A good example of this requirement is the Research Excellence Framework (REF), which is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in UK Higher Education institutions. Impact is worth 25% in the REF2021 assessment which is used to allocate funding for research in the UK.

Research impact and society

> If you look at what's happening, what the human species is doing to its environment, it's so dramatic, it's so huge that sometimes it can be hard to take. So, I think having a job where you're trying to make a difference, helps to psychologically cope with the enormity of the issues.

– **Anja Kollmuss**, *policy analyst and communications expert on climate mitigation policies.* **Listen to the interview**.

Impact is also important at a societal level. Research could provide solutions to some of the biggest challenges facing our world today. But it can only contribute to those solutions if researchers strive to follow through on their research and create an impact with it.

Expanding the impact of research can reduce the barriers that may exist between those producing research and those that can apply it to create change in the real world – so our whole society will be in a much better position to take on the grand challenges faced by the world today.

Ultimately, a focus on impact helps us ensure the best possible return from the investments that we – as a society – are making in research.

Get inspired: How Researchers Changed the World

Want some inspiration and examples of how research can make a positive impact in society? Every episode of our podcast series **How Researchers Changed the World** features one passionate researcher and one cutting-edge piece of research that has shaped the way we think today.

You'll hear the story behind the research directly from the researcher: why this topic was so important to investigate, how the research was developed, and how it has gone on to impact the world we live in.

Visit **howresearchers.com** to listen in.

/ HOW IS RESEARCH IMPACT ACHIEVED?

Because research impact encompasses so many different types of impact, across every academic discipline, there's no set formula for how to achieve it. However, there are some common themes you can build on when considering your own research and how to make it as impactful as possible.

1 Focus on the change you want to achieve

You need to demonstrate to research funders and institutions how your work will/has had an impact. And you can only really attempt to measure that impact if you have a clear goal in mind from the start.

Think about the kind of change you want to create with your research from as early in the research process as possible – whether that's changing behaviors, attitudes, awareness, research processes, policy, product specifications, and so on.

2 Engage the right stakeholders at every stage of the research process

Your research won't deliver change if it's not relevant to potential stakeholders or beneficiaries, or if they can't understand it.

You need to interact with the people who can use your research to create change, whoever they may be – from other academics, industry partners, or policymakers, right through to the general public.

And this isn't something that you do at the end of your research project. In order to understand your target audience(s) and the questions they really want to be answered, you need to engage with them from the very beginning. Keep asking for their feedback as your work evolves.

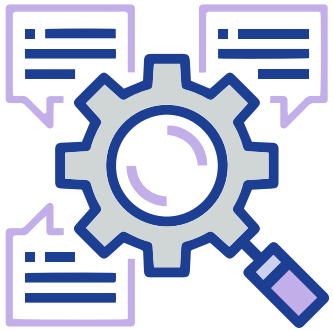
3 Create reach through effective communication

Your findings won't be able to deliver any kind of change if no one knows about them. Communication of the knowledge you develop is key to impact. You need to reach the audiences that can best build on or benefit from your work.

If you've followed step two and engaged them from the start, you should already have a clear idea of how to communicate with them in a way that will achieve the best results.

4 Maximize the effect of your research

To maximize the impact potential of your work, and the return on the investment that you and your institution or funder have made, you need to think about how any change you can bring about will scale.



You want the effect of your research to be as significant, widespread, and long-lasting as possible. For example, how can a benefit to the local community be translated to national or even international impact?

In the next section, we'll look at tips to help you boost the impact of your research – from engaging with policymakers to sharing and promoting your articles.

/ HOW TO BOOST THE IMPACT OF YOUR RESEARCH

Knowing what you need to do to ensure your research has an impact is the first step. But then you need to know how to do those things. While, as many successful researchers will tell you, much comes with practice, experience, and support from colleagues and supervisors, there are still practical tips you can follow to help you along the way. And that's what we're going to take you through in this section.

Engaging with policymakers

> "Research and policy should be the best of friends. With university researchers under increasing pressure to demonstrate the impact of their work, and politicians requiring evidence to inform their policies and convince the public they're making the best decisions, warm feelings should be mutual – research matters to policymaking, and policymaking influences research."
>
> – **Claire Doffegnies**, *Taylor & Francis.* Read the article.

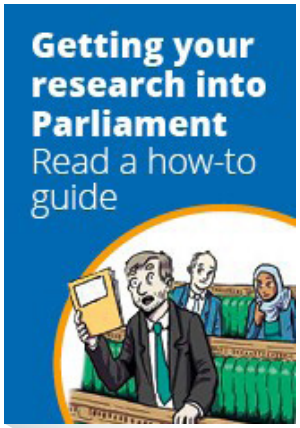
We've already touched on the importance of engaging with stakeholders. Policymakers, in particular, often hold the power to make lasting change with the results of research. But engaging with policymakers isn't always straightforward. Turn over to find our top tips to help you make connections...

6 tips for engaging with policymakers

1. Find out who is making the policy decisions relevant to your research. Then follow and engage with them. For example, keep a regular check on their websites and any newsletters, follow them on Twitter, go to their events – and invite them to yours.
2. Make sure that you're visible online so policymakers can find you. Linking to tip number one, it's important that you make your voice heard online and that you're communicating in spaces where the people you're trying to reach are too. (There are some tips for using social media on p28.)
3. Ask, "so what?" What is the policy problem that your research can help to solve? Don't tell policymakers what you want – instead, ask them what they need in order to drive the change you want to see.
4. Understand the context of the policy. Your research will never respond to the entire policy question, so try to understand the bigger picture of the problem that your research is looking at. Be honest about limitations and caveats.
5. Prepare your research in a way that's relevant to policymakers. According to Sarah Foxen from the UK Parliament's Knowledge Exchange Unit: "A one-page summary, with key findings/recommendations and top-line research context is ideal for initial comms. Pitch your comms at an intelligent, non-specialist audience. Lose the jargon and use bullet points, headings, and charts to make it accessible & digestible."
6. Use your networks. Seek out people who can help you make the right connections. This could be supervisors, colleagues, or other researchers that you've seen do this successfully already. You can also find out if your institution has an outreach officer or contact the policy officer of your scholarly society or professional association.

Working with UK parliamentarians

If you want to work with UK parliamentarians then read our guide, '**Getting your research into the UK Parliament**', featuring expert tips from POST (Parliamentary Office' of Science and Technology) on how to get your research policy-ready for the UK government. There's also a wealth of useful advice on the **Research Impact at the UK Parliament hub**.



Getting research into the European Parliament

If you think your research is relevant to EU policy, then read our guide 'Getting your research into the European Parliament'. Different routes into the European Parliament include:

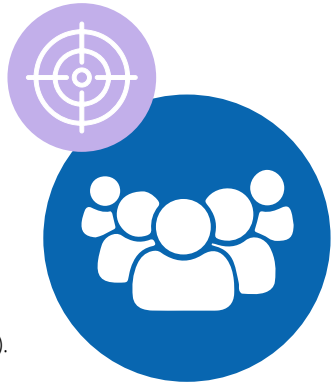
- Via the EPRS (The European Parliamentary Research Service)
- European Commission proposals
- MEP initiatives
- Intergroups

Choosing the right journal to publish in

> "The fact that my paper was published under an open access agreement led, I think, to the popularity of the article. Because it could easily be read and sent around, especially in the domain of planning practitioners."
>
> – **Marco te Brömmelstroet,** *Associate Professor in Urban Planning at the University of Amsterdam.* **Listen to the interview**.

Many factors will influence your decision on the best place to publish your research – in fact, we've written a whole **guide about choosing the right journal**. However, when you're thinking about research impact – there are a couple of important factors to bear in mind:

1 Your audience



It's important to think about the audience(s) you want to have an impact with. Do they read academic journals? And if so, which ones? Of course, you may be trying to reach people who don't read academic journals, in which case you will need to think about how else you can bring the research to their attention (see our later section on sharing and promoting your research).

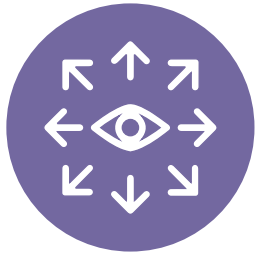
2 Publication options – e.g. open access

If you're trying to reach audiences like policymakers or practitioners, it could be helpful to consider publishing your research open access. These audiences are less likely to have subscriptions to academic journals and therefore may find it more difficult to access your research in a subscription-only journal. (**Read more about open access options**.)

Writing with research impact in mind

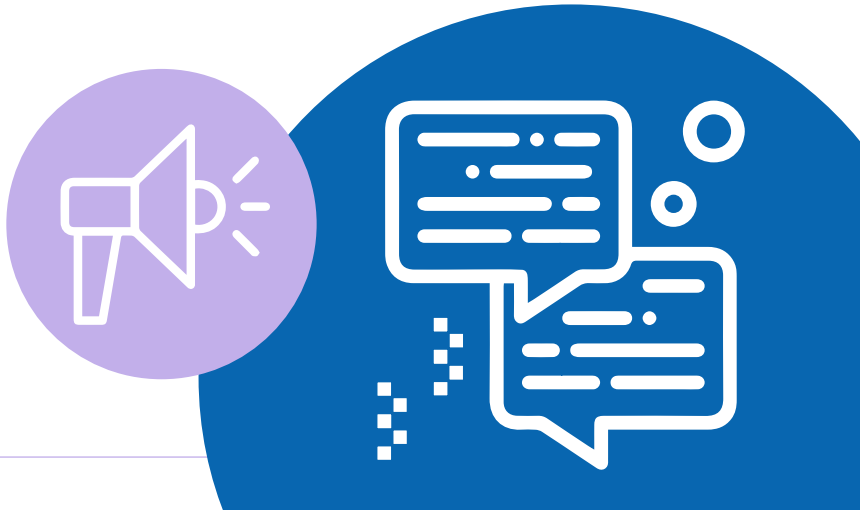
Your research can only make an impact if people can find it. And you can do a lot to help this by thinking about the impact you want to make before and during the writing process for an article. Below we've put together a number of tips to help you make your article as effective as possible.

1 Think about the 4 A's: aims, audience, awareness, and articulation



It's important to consider these four areas right at the start of the writing process:

- **Aims**: Identify your aims – in other words, in this context consider the impact you want to make. Keep this in mind when writing your paper and use it to guide your writing decisions.
- **Audience**: You need to have a clear idea of your target audience(s) – for example, fellow researchers, practitioners, policymakers – so you can tailor your paper to meet their needs and expectations. This might influence your decisions on the type of article you choose to write, the language you use, and which journal you choose to publish in.
- **Awareness**: Familiarizing yourself with existing research, political debates, and current policy issues in the area of your research will help you ground your work in the context of the wider landscape.
- **Articulation**: Plan out a logical structure for your article, so you can develop your ideas clearly and concisely. Consider writing your introduction and conclusion last, once your key points have become clear. (There are more tips on article structure and a step-by-step writing process in our **Writing your paper guide**.)



2 Choose the right keywords

Keywords are used to index your article on the journal or publisher's website, as well as on search engines like Google Scholar. These keywords will help others find your article more easily, so it's vital to spend time selecting the right ones.

But how do you choose your keywords with impact in mind?

- Think about your audience – research what words and phrases they most often use to describe what you're writing about. (You could even ask them!)
- Think about your own article and what keywords are most relevant to the focus of your work.
- Once you've drawn up a shortlist, try searching with them, to ensure the results fit with your article and so you can see how useful they would be to others.
- You can also check and compare specific keywords on Google Trends to see which are the most used.

3 Optimize for search engines (and your target audience)

Google, Google Scholar, and other search engines drive a huge amount of traffic to journal articles. You can play a crucial role in optimizing the search results for your article by writing it using the keywords you've already selected based on your audience(s).

In addition, thinking carefully about the language you use will make your article more accessible and appealing to a wider reader base.

Ultimately, these two things will help more people to find, read, and cite your work. So here are our quick tips for both:

Create a search engine- and reader-friendly title

It's vital to incorporate your most relevant keywords in your title. This will mean your article is more likely to be included in the results for relevant online searches. Ideally, it should include 1-2 keywords related to your topic and these keywords should be within the first 65 characters of your title.

In addition, try to make your title understandable to readers from outside your field. Don't use jargon or overcomplicate the language. And, where possible, avoid abbreviations, formulae, and numbers.

Optimize your abstract

To have the maximum impact in search engines, you should aim to place essential findings and keywords in the first two sentences of your abstract. Only the first two sentences normally display in search engine results, so if you make them enticing and keyword relevant, it should induce people to click through and read further.

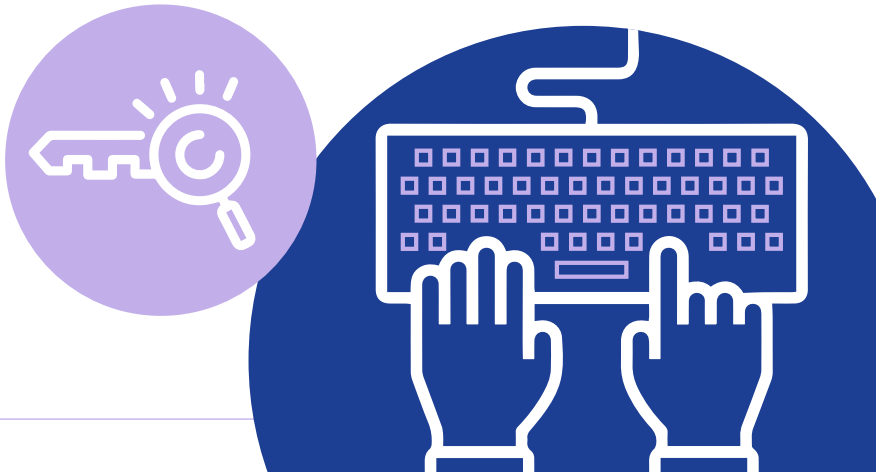
Aim to repeat your keywords a few times within your abstract. But try to do this naturally, as the purpose of your abstract is to express the key points of your research, clearly and concisely.

Again, think carefully about the language you use in your abstract to make it understandable to readers from outside your field (if they're one of your target audiences). And don't forget to clearly lay out the impact that the research could have.

Use keywords throughout your article

For search engine optimization, keywords aren't just important in your title and abstract. You should aim to ensure you use them consistently throughout your article. In particular, if you're able to incorporate keywords into headings, this will help search engines to understand the content and structure of your article.

For full guidance on how to prepare and write an effective research paper, take a look at our **Writing your paper guide**, which goes into more detail on all the tips mentioned above (and more).



Sharing and promoting your research

Sharing and promoting your research is a vital part of ensuring it has an impact. After all, change can only come from your findings if people know about and understand them. This section covers suggestions for where to share your research and tips for how to do it effectively.

Where can you share your research?

There are any number of ways you can share and promote your research, here are some of the key ones:

- **Presenting at conferences and events (both academic and non-academic)**
  Attending and presenting at conferences and events can help raise awareness of your work. As well as our communications tips in the next section, you can also take a look at our **guide for how to get the most out of academic conferences**, including how to present at conferences for maximum impact.

- **Press releases and media relations**
  Promoting your research through the press is a great way to reach a number of your audiences at once. You can find detailed tips for working with the media on p24.

- **Social media**
  Increasingly researchers are turning to social channels to help share their research. See p28 for advice on using social media effectively.

- **Writing for specialist non-academic publications**
  Does your audience all read a particular niche publication? Think about publishing an article with them to reach the exact people you're targeting.

- **Join an academic research sharing network**
  There's a range of research sharing and networking sites out there that many researchers take advantage of to share their research and raise their profile. A couple of the common ones that you might be familiar with are ResearchGate and Academia.edu. If you have a profile on any of these platforms, then add a link to your articles on your profile. Not sure which version you can post? **Find out how you can share your work**.

- **Create a Google Scholar profile**
  Google Scholar is a popular search engine for finding scholarly literature, so adding your articles and publications to your Google Scholar profile can help drive the readership of your work. Be sure to make your profile 'public' when you create it. **Here are some useful step-by-step instructions for creating a Google Scholar profile**.

- **Write a blog post**
  Hone your writing skills by distilling a paper or thought process into a brief, readable blog post (while at the same time driving the impact of your work). Read our **how-to guide for writing an academic blog post**, including how to structure it and examples.

- **Create a video abstract**
  A video abstract lets you introduce readers to your article in your own words, telling others why they should read your research. These short videos (three minutes or less) are published online alongside the text abstract when you publish with a Taylor & Francis journal. They're an increasingly popular way of getting others to engage with published research, increasing the visibility of your work. **Find out more about creating a video abstract**.

- **Share your eprints**
  An eprint is a free, online link to an author's article sent to all authors who publish in a subscription-based Taylor & Francis or Routledge journal as soon as their article is published. (Other publishers provide similar services.) Authors are sent the link via email and can access it at any time from **Authored Works**, as well as check how many they've used.

- **Newsletters**
  Are there any popular newsletters in your field – or that are read by your target audience? If so, see whether you can contact the owner to get your research featured.

- **Include your article in your email signature**
  Why not include a link to your research in your email signature, alerting everyone you email to your latest article? Many of the people you contact professionally are likely to be working in the same or similar fields as you. This is a quick and easy way to tell them you're published. (If you've published in one of our journals, you can request a banner to add to your signature using our **banner request form**.)

- **Update web pages**
  Do lots of people browse your institutional and departmental websites? Use this to your advantage by adding links to your papers on your departmental profile page, directing people to your latest research.

4 top communications tips for sharing your research

The avenues you choose to communicate your research will depend on who you're trying to reach. But no matter which channel(s) you choose you can follow these tips to make your communications more impactful:

1. **Consider your audience**

   Not only should your audience influence where you choose to promote your research, but it should also influence how you promote it. Are they policymakers? They're probably short on time, so if you're writing something make it short and punchy. Perhaps a short video would be even better. Are you talking to members of the public? You'll need to think about the language you use and whether it's understandable to them.

   If you've followed our tips and engaged with key stakeholders from the start of your project, you'll hopefully be aware of what's going to interest them about your research and how they'll want to hear about it. Use what you already know or even talk to people in your target groups to refine your approach.

2. **Simplify your language**

   Even when you're talking about your research to fellow researchers, there's no need to overcomplicate things. No one is ever going to complain if you make something straightforward and enjoyable for them to read or listen to. In fact, they'll undoubtedly thank you for it.

   "Many times, I think, we probably even struggle to articulate to ourselves what our research is actually about. It's easy to get caught up in complex, abstract theories or infinitesimal details of our data. We can then start to lose the bigger picture of what we're actually doing and why."

   – Jamie Khoo, 3 Minute Thesis People's Choice Winner 2018

3. **Tell a story**

   Think about the best presentations you've seen or non-academic writing you've read. A common thread running through all of them is likely to be the ability of the author or speaker to tell a good story – one that made you feel something as you were reading or listening.

   Storytelling is an art – and one that takes practice. But the key thing to remember is that you always need to consider how to capture your audience's attention first and how to engage them in why what you're saying really matters.

   Often this means trying to invoke emotions or perhaps giving them a teaser of what is to come to get them excited. If storytelling is new to you, start with something simple, like telling a personal story about why the research matters to you. What made you want to study it in the first place? What was the research process like? Did anything surprising or unexpected happen during the research? Try to bring your readers or listeners along with you on the journey.

   "I ensured that my three-minute presentation was composed of a story that captivated the listener by taking them on a journey through my research, first introducing them to the background of the disease, raising the research question in the middle, and then using an analogy in different parts of the presentation to deliver the research idea."

   – Nazira Albargothy, 3 Minute Thesis Winner 2016

4. **Keep learning and keep practicing**

   Try to find researchers who you think are doing a great job at promoting and communicating their research and then go out of your way to read, watch, or listen to them. If you can identify what it is about their communications that you find compelling, you can then think about how to apply that in your own work.

   At the same time, seize as many opportunities as you can to try out your skills. Effective communication really does come with practice. Any opportunity – from writing for your department newsletter to speaking at an event – can help you to refine the way you communicate about your work.

Engaging with the media

Engaging with the media is one of the best ways to raise awareness about your research to a whole range of audiences. But if you've never done it before, it can seem daunting. To help demystify it, we're going to look at the benefits, what research will be of interest to journalists, and our tips for working with the press.

The potential impact of pitching to the media

Pitching your research to journalists can help to increase awareness and impact. We regularly support authors who publish with us to pitch to the media. Here's what happened to an article our press office worked on...

45 **media** mentions including **Forbes, Inside Higher Ed** and **Die Welt**

600 **tweets** from 511 accounts, with up to 1,073,150 followers

23,413 **article** downloads

An **Altmetric** score of 853

9 new **blog** posts

"My research has implications for daily behavior, but I had no idea how to bring it to the public. Taylor & Francis organized a press release and my research has been covered around the world."

– **Arnold Glass,** *author of* ***Dividing attention in the classroom reduces exam performance****. (Educational Psychology 2018)*

What makes research newsworthy?

Not every research article will appeal to journalists. So before you jump into a pitching process, it's worth considering what makes research newsworthy. To give you an idea of what the media is looking for, we've gathered some of our top-performing media campaigns and explained how they appeal to journalists.

A major breakthrough in the field: Significant advancement on a popular subject ...

New species of the 'first bird' Archaeopteryx uncovered

Altmetric 341
Article Views 6,735
Media hits 66

Impact on society: Relevant to the everyday lives of people ...

Many young people don't know when female and male fertility declines, study finds

Altmetric 319
Article Views 2,464
Media hits 80

Timely: Relating to current events or popular ideas ...

Urgent need to reduce meat and dairy consumption to meet climate targets, says expert

Altmetric 310
Article Views 6,852
Media hits 92

Recommendation for change: An idea to help improve practice or policy ...

Web-based teaching can improve science understanding for struggling pupils

Altmetric 188
Article Views 1,981
Media hits 63

Top tips for working with journalists

Here are 10 top tips for working with journalists from Fran Abrams, Chief Executive of the Education Media Centre:

1. **Take advice**
   You're not alone. If you're in a university, its press office can help with support, contacts, and media training. Many publishers will also help if you're hoping to promote an article published with them. And there are also organizations (like the Education Media Centre) that help connect academics to good, specialist journalists.

2. **Be strategic**
   Before you start, think about why you want to publicize your work, and what you want to achieve. Consider timing – approach journalists at a time when you think they're likely to be interested – that is, when it's topical.

3. **Don't expect journalists necessarily to share your agenda**
   Just because you think something's academically significant, it doesn't mean it'll be a big story – journalists want to be surprised. Remember the maxim that 'dog bites man' isn't news, but 'man bites dog' could be.

4. **Do your research**
   Listen to the radio, read the papers and websites where you'd like to see your work featured. Then make your pitch relevant to their interests.

5. **Try to give journalists some notice**
   A week is ideal for a daily news outlet; but if you're approaching someone for a longer, more in-depth feature, more time is needed.

6. **Have a clear message; deliver it in plain English**
   If you're writing a press release or emailing a journalist, use the kind of language you might use when describing your work to a friend – don't use slang, but don't use jargon either.

7. **Remember journalists are up against it**
   If you're approached for a comment, you'll need to respond within a few hours if it's for a daily news outlet. And if you're approaching them, remember they have hundreds of emails every day and very little time. So be short and to the point.

8. **Consider how much time you can devote**
   Even when you've been interviewed, there's no guarantee anything will appear. It can be frustrating, but it's very worthwhile when it works.

9. **Think about your comfort zone**
   If you're nervous, take small steps. A blog post or some activity on Twitter can be a good place to start. If you're worried about how an aspect of your work might be represented, say so.

10. **Remember journalists are human**
    Most of them want to get it right. If you feel you haven't been treated fairly, take it up politely with the individual journalist first before moving up the chain of command if you really need redress.
    And don't forget to say 'thank you' if you liked the report.

For even more information on working with the media, take a look at the guide on our website.

Tips for using social media

Social media is a powerful tool for sharing your research and connecting with the people who could help it make an impact. Here are some quick tips to help you get the most out of it.

1. **Focus on the channels that matter**
   As a first step, check to see which social media platform(s) your peers and intended readership are using and engaging with the most – you don't need to be active on all the channels.

2. **Connect and engage with the right people**
   Social media is, well, social. You won't have much success promoting your research on social media unless you take the time to actively connect with and engage with your target audiences. Like, comment on, and share other people's posts. Follow or connect with people who are relevant to you. If you put the effort into building relationships on social media, when you promote your research it can pay dividends – because the people you've engaged with are then far more likely to share your posts.

3. **Be human**
   You might be there for a purpose – i.e. to promote your work – but you also need to show that you're a human being. Don't just share links to your articles. Talk about your day-to-day research life and things that matter to you outside of work.

4. **Tag people when you share your work**
   When you announce a new article, make sure you tag co-authors, your publisher (e.g. @tandfonline), funder and institution, and anyone else you think might be interested in your paper. If these accounts share your post, it'll be seen by far more people – and they can only do that if they know it's there (hence the tagging).

5. **Use hashtags**
   Always include hashtags that your intended audience is using. Do a little research beforehand to find the best ones to use. This will make your post part of a bigger conversation, meaning you can reach an even wider audience for your research. If you're attending a conference use the conference hashtag (e.g. #ScholarlySummit) to discuss ideas raised during the conference, as well as to make connections during and afterward.

6. **Use images, graphics, gifs, or video**
   Consider including a relevant and engaging image, gif, or video, as this can make posts more appealing and encourage people to read and click. Also, make sure the image is copyright free before using it, or ensure you get permission to use it from the copyright owner.

7. **Simplify your language (again!)**
   We've said this now in a few places, but on social media, it's important to avoid technical jargon. While it's not easy to do, you'll need to translate your research into one or two sentences that non-experts can understand.

For more on using social media, take a look at our **guide to Twitter for researchers**.

/ HOW TO MEASURE RESEARCH IMPACT

As a researcher, you'll be used to gathering facts and evidence to back up the claims you make in your work. The same is likely to be true of the work you put into improving the impact of your research.

However, measuring impact purely quantitatively can be challenging, depending on the type of impact you're trying to achieve. While there are a number of useful metrics (which we'll run through below) that can help you to judge the impact of your research, you should also think about whether you want to consider qualitative measures too.

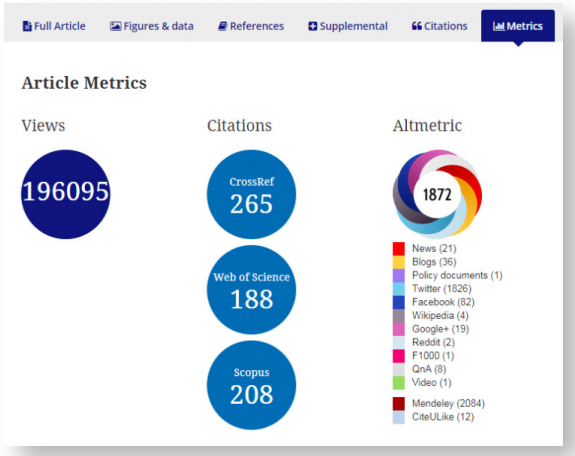
For example, you could create some in-depth case studies with your target audience groups about how the research has influenced them or their behavior.

Useful metrics for judging the impact of your research

Article-level metrics

Each individual article you publish will accrue data that will help you judge the impact of your work. Useful measures for you to take into account include:

- Article views
- Citations
- Altmetric Attention Score



A closer look at the Altmetric Attention Score

Altmetric Attention Scores can help you build your online presence, demonstrate the broader impact of your work, and increase the chances of receiving grant funding. They enable you to see the attention your articles are getting from non-academic sources, including:

- Mainstream and social media
- Public policy documents
- Patents
- Online reference managers
- Wikipedia

You can use Altmetric to explore the conversations occurring around your work and understand the impact it is having beyond the academic world.

Read more about article-level metrics, including the Altmetric Attention Score.

Journal-level metrics

Your work contributes to – and can benefit from – the impact potential of the journal you publish in. The impact profile of a journal might be an important consideration for you when choosing where to publish.

Our **extensive guide to journal-level metrics** will help you to learn more about these metrics, including weighing up the pros and cons.

/ WHERE TO NEXT?

Found this guide helpful? Why not take a look at our other researcher guides to help you with everything from choosing a journal to publish in, to writing a compelling research paper:

> Choosing the right journal for your research
> Writing your paper
> Article submission and peer review

/ GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Academia.edu	An American commercial social networking website for academics.
academic impact	The impact research makes in academia, for example advancing and developing understanding, methods, and theory within the field or across disciplines.
Altmetric Attention Score	The Altmetric Attention Score is a weighted count of all of the online attention Altmetric have found for an individual research output. This includes mentions in public policy documents and references in Wikipedia, the mainstream news, social networks, blogs and more.
cultural or societal impact	The impact research can have on people, culture, and society. There are some great examples and case studies of this, on the UKRI website.
economic impact	Impact on businesses and economic growth or development.
Education Media Centre	The EMC is the UK`s first independent charity dedicated to raising public and media awareness of research and evidence behind the education stories in the news.
environmental impact	Impact on the environment – for example, research on climate change.
eprint	A free, online link to an author's article sent to all authors who publish in a subscription-based Taylor & Francis or Routledge journal
European Commission	The executive branch of the European Union (EU), responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the EU.
European Parliamentary Research Service	The in-house research department and think tank of the European Parliament.
Google Scholar	A publicly available search engine, providing a simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature, including articles, theses, books, and abstracts.
Google Trends	Google Trends is a website by Google that analyzes the popularity of top search queries in Google Search across various regions and languages.
health and wellbeing impact	Impact such as in the development of new drugs or influencing change in medical practice.
Intergroups	Groups formed of Members of the European Parliament from any political group and any committee, with a view to holding informal exchanges of views on particular subjects and promoting contact between Members and civil society.
keywords	Keywords are ideas and topics that define what your content is about. In terms of SEO, they're the words and phrases that searchers enter into search engines to find the content they're looking for.
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
open access	Choosing to publish your research open access (OA) makes it freely and permanently available online. Anyone, anywhere can read and build upon it.
policy impact	The impact of research on policy formulation, for example using research as evidence to influence government decisions.
POST (Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology)	The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology is the Parliament of the United Kingdom's in-house source of independent, balanced and accessible analysis of public policy issues related to science and technology.
press release	A press release is an official statement delivered to members of the news media for the purpose of providing information, an official statement, or making an announcement.
Research Excellence Framework (REF)	The REF is the UK's system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. It first took place in 2014. The next exercise will be conducted in 2021.
ResearchGate	A European commercial social networking site for scientists and researchers to share papers, ask and answer questions, and find collaborators.
SEO	Search Engine Optimization (in relation to research articles) is the process of optimizing a paper so that it can easily be found on search engines like Google or Google Scholar.
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

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