

Impact, Exchange and Making a Difference: Utilizing
Academic Research to its Full Potential

School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences

The University of Birmingham

Friday 8th June 2012

9.30 – 17:00

Schedule:

9.30-1000: Registration (Room NG08)

(Hot Drinks and Pastries Provided)

1000-10.30: Professor Ron Martin (University of Cambridge)

10.30-10.45: Lucy Vernal (Ideas Lab)

10.45-1100: Fiona Heatlie (Research Development Officer)

1100-1200: Panel Session

1200-1315: Lunch

(Provided in the Main Foyer Outside NG08)

1315-1600: Third Sector/Policy or Business/Policy Workshop

(Hot drinks and cake provided)

1600-1700: Feedback from both Workshops

1700: Drinks & Nibbles

Overview:

One of the most important areas of debate in contemporary academic culture is the question of 'impact' – how academics can ensure their research is disseminated to, and used by, the widest possible audience, producing positive change in the wider world. This trend is increasingly reflected in the priorities of academic funding bodies, with research councils such as the ESRC and AHRC pushing the notion of impact to the forefront of their programmes. Moreover, the 2014 Research Excellence Framework has stated that 20% of their assessment on the quality of individual departments' research will be based on 'impact', underlining the fact this notion is only set to become more important in coming years.

And yet the notion of 'impact' is notoriously difficult to define and measure, and the question of how academics and early career researchers might achieve this modern holy grail of 'impactful research' continues to pose problems, especially in the face of shrinking higher education budgets. Academics are not alone in facing these challenges, however; third sector and business organizations are currently facing many of the same issues, and often meeting them with innovative and effective responses.

The Impact, Exchange and Making a Difference (IEMD) conference will take a two-pronged approach to the question of academic impact; the morning session will provide a forum to discuss and refine academic understandings of impact, asking where, how and why should academics generate impact and policy relevant research, and how can such impact be measured, with particular reference to what lessons could be learnt from the private and third sectors. The afternoon session will have a more practical focus, bringing Academics and Doctoral Researchers together with business and third sector representatives in workshops to facilitate mutual learning about impact and collaborative working practices

Conference Organizers:

Rachel Mulhall

Ram465@bham.ac.uk

Rachel is a final year PhD student in the Society, Economy and Environment research group at the University of Birmingham. Her research explores the role of manufacturing in the UK economy and long term adjustments in the metal processing sector. She is a co-founder of the Start2Finish research group, which has run a series of development workshops for early career researchers in the social sciences.

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/gees/people/dr-students/mulhall-rachel.aspx>

Megan Ronayne

msr772@bham.ac.uk

Megan is a first year PhD student in the Society, Economy and Environment research group within the School of Geography at the University of Birmingham. Her research is concerned with the long-term survival and competitiveness of UK manufacturing firms in the technical textile sector. Megan is also part of the Start2Finish research group.

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/gees/people/dr-students/ronayne-megan.aspx>

For more information on Start2Finish please visit the research group's website:

www.start2finishresearch.com

Tom Disney

TND044@bham.ac.uk

Tom is a first year PhD student in the Society, Economy and Environment research group. His research is concerned with the role of space and childhood agency in orphan care.

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/gees/people/dr-students/disney-tom.aspx>

Elly Harrowell

Exh198@bham.ac.uk

Elly is a first year PhD student in the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies. Her research is concerned with the links between collective memory and the post-conflict reconstruction of the urban environment.

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/gees/people/dr-students/harrowell-elly.aspx>

Before you Arrive:

We would like to ask all attendants to prepare a short answer to the statement:

Impact is...

This should be one sentence on what you think impact is or what impact means to yourself. This will enable you to start thinking about the role of impact in your own research or your discipline.

Please note these statements will be anonymous and will provide background slides to enable all attendants to be reflective throughout the day. Your statements should be done as part of your registration forms.

To get the most out of this conference and to utilize the expertise available, please consider before the day where and how you could have impact in your own research? And can you think of any clear examples of research where there has been impact?

Useful Reading:

James A., (2006) Critical moments in the production of 'rigorous' and 'relevant' cultural economic geographies, *Progress in Human Geography*, 30, 289 This paper begins to develop appropriate strategies on how academics might achieve impact in practice

Martin R., (2001) Geography and public policy: the case of the missing agenda, *Progress in Human Geography*, 25(2), 189-210 – This paper is advanced a theoretical debate within geography by making a plea for a new 'policy turn' in the discipline, and concludes with suggestions for how geographers might move towards a 'geography of public policy'.

Getting There:

Please arrive at the foyer outside NG08 in the School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences at the Edgbaston Campus (please refer to map overleaf).

By Rail:

From Birmingham New Street Station there is a train to University Station every 10 minutes. The train journey takes about 10 minutes from New Street to University with a 5 minute walk to the campus.

By Bus:

The bus numbers 61, X62 and 63 all travel to the University Campus from the City Centre

By Taxi:

Taxi journeys take approximately 10 minutes from the City Centre

By Car:

Approaching from the north west or south east along the M6

- Leave at Junction 6 (signposted Birmingham Central) to join the A38(M)
- At the end of the motorway, keep to the right, go over a flyover, then through some underpasses to join the A38 Bristol Road
- The University is on your right, two and a half miles from the city centre

Approaching from the M42 north:

- Leave at Junction 8 to join the M6 northbound and follow the instructions above

Approaching from the south west:

- Leave the M5 at Junction 4 signposted Birmingham SW) to join the A38
- The University is approximately eight miles from the motorway

Approaching from the M40:

- It is easier to turn south on the M42 and leave at Junction 1, heading north on the A38 Bristol Road
- The University is approximately eight miles from the motorway

Visitor car parking

Visitors to campus are requested to park in any of the 4 pay & display car parks, those are:

- South Car Park (access via Edgbaston Park Road)
- North Car Park (access via Pritchatts Rd)
- Pritchatts Road Car Park (at the junction with Vincent Drive)
- Grange Road Car Park (Main Campus)

Non University Permit Holders

- Up to 1 hour £1.00
- 1-3 hours £3.00
- 3-5 hours £4.00
- 5-8 hours £6.00

Visitors who require access to the main campus for business purposes should contact the department they are visiting to request a permit which should be hung from the rear view mirror of their vehicle.

Any Enquiries:

If you have any enquiries before or on the day please feel free to speak to any of the conference organizers or contact the team at impactconference@hotmail.co.uk or telephone 0121 414 3282

