

Impact, Exchange and Making a Difference

A free one-day conference

Friday 8 June 2012

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham

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 organisations 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.

- The conference is **FREE** for delegates to attend.
- Refreshments will be available throughout the day, lunch and drinks and nibbles at the end of the programme will all be provided free of charge.
- This is a one-day event (9.30-17.00).

[Download the conference programme here \(/Documents/college-les/gees/conferences/IEMDConferenceProgramme.pdf\)](#)

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